

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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PRICE TWOPENCE

*Specious names,  
Learnt in soft childhood's unsuspecting hour,  
Serve as the sophisms with which manhood dims  
Bright reason's ray.*

—SHELLEY.

## Two Irreconcilable Doctrines.

To any unsophisticated thinker nothing is more indisputable than the fact that the Christian idea of salvation is essentially immoral. To admit a notorious and life-long criminal to the bliss of Paradise, simply because he is penitent, can be good neither for the criminal nor for Paradise. Yet the dying Jesus is represented as saying to one of the malefactors who shared his doom and who confessed that he fully deserved it, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43). Why was the culprit promised a habitation in Paradise? Merely because he expressed his faith in Jesus. He did not even say that he was sorry for his evil life, but only asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. Afterwards faith in Jesus came to be insisted upon as a fundamental condition of salvation. In Mark xvi. 16 we read, "He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." In John iii. 36 we find these strong words: "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." In verse 18 the lack of faith in Jesus is spoken of as the direct cause of damnation. Justification by faith occupies a central position in Paul's teaching; and this was the dogma on which the Protestant Reformation laid its supreme emphasis. Evangelical preachers wax passionate in defence of what they consider to be the marrow of the Gospel, namely, that "so long as the lamp holds on to burn the vilest sinner may return" and pass straight on to the glory of heaven. Acceptance with the Father as righteous is conditional on acceptance of the Son as the only Savior. Christ came into the world to save sinners by the sacrifice of himself. That sacrifice, known as the sacrifice of the Cross, the atonement, or the propitiation, whatever theory of it be held, is everywhere understood to be the objective ground of salvation, and the greatest stress is put upon the statement that without faith in it no one can be saved.

Such undoubtedly is the New Testament scheme of salvation. It is a thoroughly cruel, brutal, and unjust scheme; but it is not at all ambiguous. He that runneth can catch its meaning. But there is another doctrine in the New Testament which gives this the direct lie. We find it on the lips of Jesus himself and repeatedly on those of Paul. In its simplest form it is that "God will render to every man according to his works." In Galatians vi. 7 it is stated thus: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." An "Enquirer," writing to the Rev. Professor David Smith, says: "It seems impossible for both these statements to be true of the same individuals." In his Correspondence Column in the

1,680

*British Weekly* for October 3, Dr. Smith replies thus:—

"Both statements are absolutely true, and it is only the crudeness of our conception of the Atonement, and the forgiveness which it ensures, that makes them appear irreconcilable. Grasp the solemn and immovable fact that our deeds, whether good or bad, are irrevocable, and have their inevitable effect upon our future lives and our eternal destinies. Each is the introduction of a new factor into the case, and it will operate beyond our control or calculation. Whatever we do, our lives will never be quite the same as they would have been if we had not done it.....No deed is ever done with when it is done. It is like a derelict on the man's track [1 Sam. xxx. 11-29], and some day, when he least expects it, it will overtake him and reckon with him for good or ill. And nothing, not even the Atonement, can undo what has once been done. This is the truth which popular theology, with its loose and dangerous doctrine of forgiveness, generally ignores. Forgiveness does not undo the past."

But if forgiveness does not undo the past, what does it do? Dr. Smith has ventured beyond his depth. When a man repents of his sins, believing in Christ, he receives forgiveness, that is to say, the guilt of his past life is cancelled, as the reverend gentleman puts it; but what is the use of cancelling it if the sense of it is allowed to remain? "Think of Paul," cries Professor Smith:—

"His conversion did not alter the fact that he had helped to stone Stephen. To the end of his life he was haunted by the shameful memory that he had been a persecutor and a blasphemer. Though repented of and forgiven, the fact remained. What difference, then, did his repentance make? It procured his forgiveness; it cancelled the guilt of the past; it separated him from his sin. This is the blessing of forgiveness. The moment a man casts his sin from him, it is no longer a part of himself."

Now, on Dr. Smith's own showing, to the end of his days Paul did not succeed in casting the sin of persecution from him. The memory of it haunted him like an evil spectre as long as he lived. What difference, then, did forgiveness make? None; for he continued to feel guilty all the same. The truth is that, once a man recognises the undeletability of the past, he has in reality completely undermined the Christian religion. He has emptied forgiveness of all its meaning. If Christ cannot cut the connection between a bad man and his past, what can he do for him? "He does not destroy the past," says Dr. Smith; "he transfigures it." There is no Scriptural warrant for such statement. If Paul's past was transfigured, why was he so heartily ashamed of it? To transfigure a wicked past would be an immoral act; and it cannot be done. The past is unchangeable as well as irrevocable.

"The moving finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line  
Nor all your tears wash out a Word of it."

Dr. Smith is mistaken. The Biblical doctrine of forgiveness rests on the assumption that the past can be blotted out like a cloud from the morning sky. We read of blotting out transgressions from the tablets of the memory. This is how the penitents are addressed: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Jesus was welcomed by the Baptist as "the Lamb of God,

which taketh away the sin of the world." Bunyan's Pilgrim got rid of his burden at a certain point, and it was left behind. Such is the promise of the Gospel. It undertakes to sink a man's past out of sight and out of consciousness, or to wash it clean away. And certainly such a doctrine cannot possibly be reconciled with the scientific truth that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Here is a man who has lived a long life in the service of greed and lust, ever grovelling in the filthiest forms of debauchery. But in his sixtieth year he attends a revival meeting and gets converted. He glories in having become a new creature in Christ Jesus, and sings with rapture in his regenerate heart. In less than a year he dies, and, according to Dr. Smith, though a saved man, and washed in the blood of the Lamb, God will render to him in eternity according to the deeds of his disgraceful life. What difference, then, have his repentance and forgiveness made? According to Galatians vi. 7 none whatever; but, according to Dr. Smith, his past will be with him still, but *transfigured*, metamorphosed, so that whilst before conversion it was repulsively ugly and hateful, it is now as beautiful and fragrant as a rose, and a channel of blessing all round. It is easier to swallow the popular theology denounced by the Professor than the strange medley he offers us. He at once robs the superstitious of a really great Gospel and woefully misrepresents a greater natural truth.

The only rational conclusion is that neither doctrine as stated by Dr. Smith can be true. It is quite possible for a man to change his attitude to the past, even to turn it, in spite of itself, into a source of strength; but to alter it, to transfigure it, is not within the range of possibility. Dr. Smith says that "the message of the Gospel is that there is no life so defiled and broken that, if only it be placed in Christ's hands, he cannot cleanse it and fashion its fragments to beauty and glory"; but the truth of the message is disproved by the fact that there are such countless multitudes of defiled and broken lives in this twentieth century. The Professor introduces a condition, "if placed in his hands," but the condition would be dishonoring to the Divine Savior of the world, because, if he existed, he would make it his business to *take* them into his hands, in order to cleanse them and fashion their fragments to beauty and glory. Neither in the Biblical sense nor yet in Dr. Smith's does the Gospel commend itself to us as in any degree true. All people are, and remain, just what the past has made them. We have power only over the present moment, and extremely little even over that. Within certain narrow limits a man can modify his character for better or for worse, and many people do; but the law, from which there is no escape, is that a man reaps what he and others have sown. Cruel beyond words often is the tyranny of the past. It controls not simply the reaping but very largely the sowing as well. We cannot tinker with yesterday. We live on our inheritance, and shall hand it down to posterity in much the same condition as that in which we received it from our ancestors. All we can do is to study this great law of sowing and reaping, in order, if possible, that we may learn how to improve the quality of the seed we sow.

J. T. LLOYD.

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

(Concluded from p. 627.)

WITH rare and commendable modesty the writer of "Notes of the Week" in the *New Age* passed over the exposure of the "actual fallacies" in Professor Schafer's address to "our more expert colleague." This "more expert colleague," at whose hands the Professor was to receive his quietus, turns out to be one who signs himself "M.B., Oxon," and if Pro-

fessor Schafer ever sees his notes I do not think it will cause him great uneasiness. When a man can pen such a sentence as "whether evolution started itself and evolved matter, or whether matter started and evolved evolution," his criticism from a sanely scientific point of view is not likely to be very illuminating. Apparently, Professor Schafer's opinions are negligible because he is a born physiologist, and "as a good cobbler, has stuck to his last." I do not know whether "M.B., Oxon" is under the impression that a man can nowadays become an eminent physiologist without an understanding of general biological principles; but whether this is so or not, Professor Schafer's address was not based upon mere isolated experiments. He was but expressing the conclusions to which a host of experimenters in England, Germany, France, America, Russia, and elsewhere are moving. His conclusions are not new, as I have already said; and he may, if it suits, be eliminated from the discussion altogether. It is not a question of the isolated speculations of an Edinburgh Professor, but a question of a general tendency in scientific circles. The remark of the *New Age* expert that there is "now a tendency to non-materialism" may be dismissed as a mere echo of theology. The main principle of Materialism cannot be eliminated from science without the destruction of science itself.

There is some conception of this—allowing for a certain looseness in phrasing—in the remark that "The Creator of the Universe is the cause by which the universe was and is being created, and whether we label it matter, or energy, or spirit, or God is of æsthetic importance only." Quite so. It is of no vital consequence to the Materialist or Materialism whether we use the word "matter" or some other expression. The essential thing is that cosmic processes are the expression of non-conscious mechanical forces free from external coercion or direction, and that life and intelligence are ultimately a product of these forces, whatever name we may care to give them. To say that this is what the true religionist means by God is absurd. "God" does not, and never did, mean this. If some people try to make it mean this, their attempt is not proof that Materialism breaks down or cannot make headway, but only that religionists find it no longer possible to fight against it, and under a religious guise are actually stating the Materialistic conclusions.

After this aside, made in honor of the "expert colleague," I may return to the original "Notes" of the editor of the *New Age*. By some not over clear method of reasoning, the editor connects the exploitation of the masses by the classes with the prevalence of Darwinism. In a healthy society, we are informed, Professor Schafer's address would have been received with good humor. Allowance would have been made for the omission of God and the soul, "the two most important things," and there the matter would have ended. But our society is not healthy. "There is, as the world knew before Darwinism descended upon it, one healthy state of society; it is justice." But "we all know what use has been made of the doctrines of Darwin..... We know, indeed, that there is scarcely a crime to which anybody with the power to do it is inclined that has not been justified in the name of Darwinism; and more particularly is this the case in what may be called social crimes." And the editor's case is summed up by saying:—

"The argument is that Darwinism distorted has intensified the injustice already existing, has given it the appearance of justice, and, in so doing, has facilitated the exploitation of wage slaves by capitalism. No doubt about it. But if pseudo-Darwinism has encouraged this effect, what may be anticipated of the new doctrine of science, put forward, as it has been, with a shamelessly curt dismissal of the soul."

But instead of there being no doubt about the case against Darwinism, it is not only open to doubt, but it is also doubtful whether the editor of the *New Age* knows either what he is driving at, or, granting that, how to get there. In the first place, if these frightful consequences are due to a pseudo-

Darwinism, why find fault with a genuine Darwinism? And as Darwinism is here taking the place of Materialism, why blame Materialism for consequences that may be foolishly deduced from its principles. We have a pseudo-Materialistic philosophy—the editor himself proves this—as we have a pseudo-Darwinistic philosophy, but it is plainly unfair to make either Darwinism or Materialism responsible for wrong inferences that are deduced by incompetent thinkers. As a matter of fact, all teachings are more or less capable of wrong construction and wrong application; but it is not usual to cite these as arguments against their veracity. And, as a further matter of fact, I am not aware that Materialism has ever been used as a philosophic justification for exploitation or injustice, while, on the contrary, everybody knows how the belief in God and a soul has been used for that purpose. Surely the *New Age* must have heard of the doctrine of the divine right of kings, of the teaching of non-resistance, of the religious support given to slavery. It is well not to forget common facts, even while in a fever of Anti-Materialism.

Next, the world that Darwinism descended on is not yet much more than fifty years old. And it seems needful to remind the *New Age* that injustice and exploitation are much older than that. Darwinism had nothing to do with the colossal land robbery of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It could have had nothing to do with the growth of the factory system, with the degrading labor of women and children in mines, or with the child murder in the interests of profit that obtained in England for so many years. These and many other similar things went on with people who were fully convinced of God and the soul—"the two most important things in the world." But, on the other hand, things have got better since Darwinism descended on the world. There is at least a keener sense of justice among people. If people do not know exactly what they need, they at least feel the need of something better than they have, and that is certainly to be placed on the credit side of the account. And, let me put it quite plainly, fifty years of Darwinism has done more to make people realise the nature of the social bond, and the necessity of basing our institutions upon justice, than five thousand years of quite aimless meandering about God and the soul. These are not the most important things in the world, but the things that are of least consequence to intelligent men and women.

So far as one can see, the only ground on which Darwinism can be said to have formed an excuse for the exploitation of people, is a special interpretation given to the doctrine of the Survival of the Fittest. Some may have held, some did hold, that any attempt to protect the weak from the consequences of their own weakness, spelt disaster, since it encouraged the survival of the unfit. But the sane reply to this is not to be found in such foolish clap-trap, to use Mr. Bax's apt description, as the *New Age* gives us, but by pointing out that in any state of human association we do not, and cannot, get an expression of the survival of the fittest in such a way that each person reaps the full consequences of his degree of either mental or physical fitness. It is not by physical or mental superiority that certain individuals "exploit" other individuals. In any naked struggle for existence property and power would soon change hands. People, in the main, hold possessions and wield power in virtue of social traditions and regulations, as other people are subservient to them from the same causes. And the editor of the *New Age* is surely capable of realising the truth that if all people were dominated by their crude and unscientific notion of Darwinism, its application to sociology would involve, not the enslavement of thirteen millions by a handful of "human blackguards," but a continuous change of places between the possessed and the possessors.

But the truth is that neither Darwinism nor pseudo-Darwinism can be held responsible for exploitation or injustice. Let it be granted that

some have applied Darwinism to sociology in such a manner as to favor the exploitation of the weak. An impartial critic would ask whether this was either a legitimate or a universal interpretation of Darwinian principles. And the editor of the *New Age* must be strangely in the dark concerning Darwinian literature if he does not know that a quite opposite view has been taken by scores of writers in hundreds of volumes. Instead of Darwinism being taken as a warranty for exploitation and a ground for the denial of justice, it has been shown that a sense of justice is implicit in the very constitution of society, and that in its absence society would simply disintegrate. It is not denied that this sense of justice is less developed than it might be, and it is an easy task to point to its absence or quiescence in certain individuals, as well as to its abuse in the name of "Law and Order." But this does not affect the essential fact that a scientific foundation for the belief in the organic unity of social life, and for the interdependence of its units, was first supplied by the evolutionary philosophy of the last fifty years. Mere poetic rhapsodising about the value and dignity of life is well enough in its way, but if we are to labor for a profitable and rational organising of social forces, it can only be accomplished by a knowledge of the forces and conditions that mould and remould human nature. In working to this end, the reformer may find his path obstructed by the misrepresentation or by the abuse of scientific teachings. But he cannot, in the name of science, be denied the right of criticism, nor can teachings put forward in the name of science be surrounded with a halo of sanctity that will protect them against modification or revision. And in that fact lies the surest guarantee of permanent progress.

C. COHEN.

#### Shelley and Mr. Robert Blatchford.—IV.

(Concluded from p. 610.)

SOME friends have asked me if I consider Matthew Arnold a little poet. I should be sorry if I thought my words were legitimately susceptible of that interpretation. Surely there are many grades between little poets and great ones? In the early 'seventies I gave some ridiculously high-class readings in West London, and the program brought me a letter from Robert Browning, in which he regretted that he was unable to attend, especially as I "knew where the gold lay"—the one poem he expressly referred to being Arnold's "Forsaken Merman." That is, indeed, a beautiful poem, and I have sometimes wondered how Arnold came to write it; which I say even in the face of "Thyrsis" and "The Scholar-Gipsy." But all these poems, and other fine ones, come after all within the scope of the qualities I allowed Arnold in my previous articles. The qualities I did not allow him are easily recognised if one turns to his "Philomela" and then to Keats's Ode "To a Nightingale" and Shelley's "To a Skylark." Matthew Arnold was a fine poet. Keats and Shelley were great poets. And a man who does not see this after reading those three poems is best left to his own opinion—unless he sets up as an authority on such matters.

A beautiful passage I quoted from Francis Thompson's essay on Shelley dealt with the opulence of the great poet's imagination. A subsequent passage referred to the way in which Shelley turned, as no other poet did, from the concrete to the abstract, and back from the abstract to the concrete, as it suited his temper and purpose at the moment. Now in this connection I may point out what I meant by saying that Mr. Blatchford lacked imagination, and that there was no abstract quality in his mind,—a statement, by the way, which I did not leave resting on my mere personal authority, for I referred to his blunders on the subject of Determinism when it passed from the physical into the

psychical stages. Mr. Blatchford complained that there was neither music nor any other good quality that he could discern in "Adonais." In reply to this, and to drive home my point, I will quote the following stanza, setting forth the personages who came forward to welcome Adonais (that is, Keats, just dead) in the realm of immortality (that is, the immortality of fame).

"And others came,—Desires and Adorations,  
Winged Persuasions, and veiled Destinies,  
Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations  
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;  
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam  
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,  
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem  
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream."

This stanza is a high example of abstract imagination. It personifies the mental and moral qualities that had been displayed in Keats's poetry and career. It is evidently lost on Mr. Blatchford,—lost altogether, both in music and in meaning. I dare say he wonders what on earth (or elsewhere) the poet is talking about. Well, that is *his* look out; other persons are less unfortunate.

Of course there may be something in the fact that Mr. Blatchford did not begin to read poetry until he was thirty-five; at least, that is what I understand him to say. It is a question whether any man, beginning at that age, could ever appreciate the quintessential poetry of Shelley. Certain imaginative qualities, starved and stunted in youth, may be hopelessly aborted by middle age—if we may adopt Dante's chronology of human life.

For the rest, in this direction, if Mr. Blatchford cannot see great poetry in "Adonais," in "Epipsy-chidion," in the "Ode to the West Wind"—not to carry the list further—one must simply pity him and pass on.

I will not refer him, but I will refer my readers, to Shelley's great drama, "The Cenci," as an exhibition of other than lyrical qualities—although there is at least one lyric in it that Shakespeare himself would not have disowned. Robert Browning, apostrophising Shelley, called this noble play "your superb achievement." The blank verse is extremely beautiful, and the character of Beatrice is a triumph. No wonder J. A. Symonds called "The Cenci" the "greatest tragedy composed in English since the death of Shakespeare."

Shelley had this also in common with Shakespeare. He was "second only to Shakespeare," Symonds says, "in the sympathetic delineation of a noble feminine ideal." "Like one of Shakespeare's women" was the highest compliment that Shelley could pay to a lady that he admired. And here let not the gross worldling thrust out his tongue. He does not, and he never will, understand Shelley; not even if he were to read and re-read one of the most golden passages in "Epipsy-chidion."

Mr. Symonds said of Shelley that "He was the loftiest and most spontaneous singer of our language." But he did not esteem Shelley's humor "at a high rate." Certainly it was not one of his most distinctive qualities. Arnold, however, went further (and Mr. Blatchford follows him) in asserting that Shelley "had no humor." He had quite as much humor as Arnold, who only shone in that line in the irony of his controversial prose. "Peter Bell the Third" contains some exquisite satire on Wordsworth, especially on his too fraternal love of nature. The passage is really Rabelaisian. The stanzas on Coleridge are of extraordinary merit. No one but Shelley could have written them. They throw Carlyle's picture of Coleridge into the shade. There is delicious humor enough in the "Witch of Atlas" and the translation of the "Hymn to Mercury" is one of the most highly sustained pieces of delicate humor in the English language.

Mr. Blatchford seems to have as much respect for Shelley the man as for Shelley the poet. He has even struck a new note of insolent criticism. He asks, "Was Shelley sincere?" The shortest answer would be to ask "Is Mr. Blatchford sincere?" But

I will adopt another method. Read the following magnificent lyric from "Hellas":—

"Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream,  
Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying day!  
I saw her ghastly as a tyrant's dream  
Perch on the trembling pyramid of night,  
Beneath which earth and all her realms pavilioned lay  
In visions of the dawning undelight.  
Who shall impede her flight?  
Who rob her of her prey?"

Was the poet who wrote *that* insincere? Are *these* the accents of insincerity? Happily we have better authorities than Mr. Blatchford on Shelley's character. All who knew him personally agree that his was a most lovely nature. It was to Shelley himself rather than an imaginary character in "Julian and Maddalo" that the following lines applied:—

"It were  
A cruel punishment for one most cruel,  
If such can love, to make that love the fuel  
Of the mind's hell—hate scorn, remorse, despair:  
But *me*, whose heart a stranger's tear might wear  
As water-drops the sandy fountain-stone;  
Who loved and pitied all things, and could moan  
For woes which others hear not, and could see  
The absent with a glass of phantasy,  
And near the poor and trampled sit and weep,  
Following the captive to his dungeon deep;  
*Me*, who am as a nerve o'er which do creep  
The else-unfelt oppressions of this earth."

Read the following beautiful extract from Shelley's letter to Leigh Hunt, stating that he had invited the physically stricken Keats to stay with him at Rome:—

"I am anxiously expecting him in Italy, when I shall take care to bestow every possible attention upon him. I consider his a most valuable life, and I am deeply interested in his safety. I intend to be the physician both of his body and his soul; to keep the one warm, and to teach the other Greek and Spanish. I am aware, indeed, in part, that I am nourishing a rival who will far surpass me; and this is an additional motive, and will be an added pleasure."

Such words do more than honor to Shelley: they do honor to human nature.

Shelley's influence on Byron was all to the good. Byron knew it, and he was grateful, in his own way, when Shelley was dead. One curious statement of his was that Shelley was the only companionable man he had ever met under thirty. In a letter to Moore after the tragedy in the Bay of Spezzia, Byron wrote: "There is thus another man gone about whom the world was ill-naturedly, and ignorantly, and brutally mistaken. It will, perhaps, do him justice *now*, when he can be no better for it." Writing to Murray, he said: "You were all mistaken about Shelley, who was, without exception, the *best* and least selfish man I ever knew." "I never knew another man," Byron said afterwards, "who was not a beast in comparison with him."

And the Shelley whose poetry and character have been so praised by the best judges of both was only twenty-nine when he died. His best verse had probably not been written, his best deeds had probably not been done. What if he had lived another twenty-nine years? One is staggered at the thought of what he might have achieved. He was reaching the very maturity of his genius and character when the waves closed over that noble head and that "heart of hearts."

G. W. FOOTE.

### One World at a Time.

THE obvious difference between the charities of a Freethinker and those of a religious sectarian is that while with the latter the betterment of the beneficiaries is but a side issue to the manufacture of more sectarians, with the former the improvement of the individual and the community is the whole purpose, and there is no ulterior design to enlarge "the kingdom of God," as the Church calls itself, on earth, or to provide the party benefited with a set of professions alleged to favor his prospects in the unknown hereafter.

This definition of the charities of a Freethinker describes the work which Mr. Edward Tuck, an American resident of Paris, France, is doing both here and there, in co-operation

with Mrs. Tuck, who has the same objects in view. We have previously made allusion to the fact that Mr. Tuck, while at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, was a classmate of the late Samuel P. Putnam, of splendid memory among Freethinkers, and that Mr. Tuck is Dartmouth's favorite son. The last-named information came to us through our having prepared, not long ago, a life-sketch of Putnam for the "Class Book of Dartmouth for 1862," edited by Horace Stuart Cummings, of Washington, D. C. Mr. Tuck's sketch is the longest in the book, and Putnam's comes next.

The benevolences and benefactions of the Tucks in America are well-known. Amos Tuck, father of Edward, endowed at Dartmouth a School of Administration and Finance. Edward's gifts to his alma mater have amounted to a million dollars. His other public gifts are scattered throughout New Hampshire, his native State—the Cottage Hospital at Exeter, in which town he was born, the Historical Society Building at Concord, the public park at Stratham, and so on—and he has been a special providence to his old classmates. In New York, Mr. and Mrs. Tuck support a Diet Kitchen, and but a short time since he joined with three other wealthy men in a gift of \$40,000 for the completion of a fund to build a home for the aged and a training school for nurses in the rear of the French Hospital in West Thirty-fourth-street.

In France, his adopted home, he has been an uplifting force. In the town of Rueil is situated his country house, which he has named "Vermont," probably because the word comes easy to the French tongue, being a contraction of Vert Mont, or Green Mountain. What Mr. and Mrs. Tuck are doing in France is told in an article printed by the New York Sun, which we are able to reproduce through the courtesy of the Sunday editor and the art editor. The title "chatelains," given to Mr. and Mrs. Tuck, is a feudal survival. A chatelain is the lord of a manor or commander of a castle and its dependencies. The position has its opportunities and its responsibilities, and how well the present chatelains are meeting them appears in the article which follows:—

Close to the historic chateau of Malmaison, its park running along the shaded lane which leads to the beautiful Saint Cucufa woods where Josephine, wife of Napoleon, was wont to roam, stands Vermont, the chateau now owned by an American, Edward Tuck. Mr. and Mrs. Tuck are cited all over France as model chatelains in every sense of the word, for they have quietly assumed every responsibility that was wont to belong to the lord of the manor of old without exacting any of the tithes the former owners obtained from the people living about them.

When some years ago Mr. and Mrs. Tuck bought Vermont the people of Rueil and Malmaison sighed, for another piece of fine property had left French hands and gone into those of strangers, and there was nothing particularly friendly in their attitude toward the new proprietors or their acquaintances.

To be sure, the general attitude throughout France toward the proprietors of chateaux is, one may fairly say, unfriendly. There is none of the close feeling that exists in England among the lords of the manor and the people living about them. The memory of the Revolution still haunts the chatelain, and envy and a desire to own a part of the land belonging to his rich neighbors, makes the French peasant and small bourgeois sullen, silent enemies of the proprietor of the chateau.

Even the good French chatelains find their way to the hearts of the peasantry a hard one, and its doubtful if it is ever a lasting one or a route which the smallest differences could not close. Indeed, many well meaning people have ceased trying to find the road to the hearts of those about them.

There is something spontaneous in the American character, however, which pleases the French people of every class, and it was not long before the workmen called upon to improve Vermont returned to their homes with pleasant accounts of the new occupants of the chateau.

When the improvements were completed the new proprietors felt that the people around them would enjoy a popular fête, and the grounds were opened to the population with music and refreshments. This was the first contact between the people living around them and the chatelains, and I must confess the result was not to the credit of the people in general, for they carried away everything in the form of refreshments they could lay their hands on, and the wine cellars were short of 3,000 bottles of champagne, so rumor said. The neighbors of the better class were thoroughly ashamed of the vandalism and are still ashamed of it and still comment on the affair, although it happened years ago.

But neither Mr. Tuck nor Mrs. Tuck ever referred to the matter, and they accepted the abuse of their kindness with indulgent philosophy. The people would learn to be more

discreet, and, strange to say, they did learn not only to be discreet, but also to love and respect both chatelains; and no one is to-day more ashamed of their escapades than some of the very men who threw whole bottles of champagne over the wall of Vermont Park into the ravine and then jumped over themselves and made away with their spoils.

Soon after establishing their home at Rueil, Mr. and Mrs. Tuck found that while there were some twelve thousand inhabitants about Rueil there was neither a hospital nor a free dispensary for the sick and poor, and they decided to found one for the benefit of the town.

Stell Hospital, situated at 19 Boulevard de Magenta, Rueil, thus came into existence, thanks to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Tuck, and is open to all persons suffering from acute maladies, whatever the nationality or religion of the patients, provided they are residents of Rueil.

The property bought for the hospital was known as the Clos du Chat (cat's enclosure). The beautiful park and house belonged to an eccentric proprietor whose great pet was a large Angora cat. In 1870 the bullets and shells falling about him (the date of the Franco-Prussian war), the old man fled from his home, leaving behind him his beloved cat. Filled with remorse, he used to go every night to the place with food for his feline pet. Finally, his visits ceased, and the cat, unfed, filled the air with cries of distress. This attracted the attention of a band of prowlers, who scaled the walls and captured and killed the cat, which they cooked and ate at once, washed down with the best wine they could find in the old man's cellars.

This is why the property bought by the Tucks in 1901 was known as the Cats' Enclosure.

Two years were devoted to remodelling the building and transforming it into a model hospital. Everything is free—this is the absolute rule.

There is lodging for the directress and for the nurses, each having a separate room, and there are twenty beds for the sick, ten being reserved for adults, six for children, and four for cases requiring surgery.

The latter service is installed in a separate wing with a private entrance, and there are two rooms for those operated on, a sterilising room and an operating room.

There is also a lower floor where the kitchen, directly connected with the dining-room, is situated, as well as the drug store, the consulting room for outside patients, the cloak room, and the disinfection rooms. Everything in the way of sanitary arrangements is in up-to-date perfection. All angles were rounded, walls varnished, and the rules concerning disinfection and sterilisation so well observed that microbes seem to have given up the battle and deserted Stell Hospital.

The children's quarters are separated by glass partitions, so that the little ones are always under the nurse's eye.

As, unfortunately, death necessarily invades the hospital, although the death rate is unusually low, great care was taken to install the room for receiving relatives and friends of the dead as far away and as unobtrusively as possible so that the living sick might not be affected by the sight of grief.

Everything about the hospital shows thoughtful consideration, a desire to minister kindly to the sick and afflicted, and the whole aspect of the place is gay and attractive, a characteristic too often lacking in hospitals.

Convalescents have full liberty in the park, and a fine vegetable garden and a poultry yard are attached to the establishment.

The doctor in charge gives a free consultation at the hospital every morning at 8 o'clock, and there is a surgery consultation every Sunday at 10 o'clock.

All the medicines and bandages and other necessary accessories are delivered absolutely free of charge, and when a patient is not too ill to stay at home he may be taken away from the hospital. Some idea of the benefits of the hospital may be gained from the statement that 21,903 free consultations have been given since the hospital was opened in August some ten years ago; 1,126 sick people have been taken care of in the hospital, and the death rate is the lowest in France.

The development of the surgery department has been remarkable. In the last six years more than 250 operations have been performed, and one of the greatest, if not the greatest of the surgeons of the younger school, Dr. Lannay, the favorite disciple of the renowned Pean, has charge of the surgery department and personally performs the operations. In securing so eminent a master of science, Mr. and Mrs. Tuck have rendered service to the entire countryside. The medical director of the establishment is Dr. Lavie, a fine French physician, who is aided by Dr. Poussard.

Exclusive of the large foundation expenses, Mr. and Mrs. Tuck have spent for the general expenses of the hospital 245,062 francs, and the expenses are increasing every year owing to the fame of the hospital and the number of people who make use of its benefits. The hospital is a model one.

The surveillance is more constant than in most hospitals, the food notably is unusually good, of the best quality, and the doctors are warmly sustained and admirably seconded by Mr. and Mrs. Tuck in every measure.

It is not astonishing, therefore, that after bestowing on the inhabitants of Rueil such a munificent gift as a free hospital, Mr. and Mrs. Tuck should in turn be loved and revered by the people living about them.

Yet the hospital is now only one of Mr. and Mrs. Tuck's good works. Other needs, and these touching closely one of the most important social questions of the day, attracted Mrs. Tuck's attention, that of a modern school for housewives. To this work the American chatelains have just turned their attention and founded a housewives' school for young girls which has attracted attention all over the world.

Much of the unhappiness in married life, much misery, poverty, and disease is, as everyone knows, due to the ignorance of young girls who have never been trained to housework, who have no idea of cooking, none of elementary hygiene, and who jump blindly into one of the most important situations in life, wifehood and motherhood, without the slightest preparation.

Mrs. Tuck was struck by the fact that with new systems of education girls have finally grown to ignore the homely necessary details of domestic life. Parents sacrifice money and time on piano lessons and never think of initiating their daughters into the science of cooking, of managing a house, of washing, ironing, sewing, sweeping, and dusting.

The School for Housewives (Ecole Menagere) to teach the home arts was founded at Rueil not long ago, but has already been visited by numbers of people interested in the vital economic questions and social conditions. The school, a plain red building, in charge of Mlle. Perrier, stands in an attractive garden on Rue Josephine.

Everything about the place is essentially practical. There are no class distinctions observed. Girls of well-to-do parents as well as those belonging to the poorer classes are admitted. The sole object of the place is to teach all girls entering to be model housewives. Such a school should be added to every educational institution in the world for girls.

How many working men, clerks, and even men of the better classes would be kept at home, away from amusement places, away from temptation if they found their homes well kept and well organised, if thrift and economy and wise management reigned; if young women were scientifically taught household management and how to get the most nutritious food for the least money, and how to prepare it to make it appetising.

To get the best for the money each husband or father brings home, is what Mrs. Tuck wants to teach girls whose ignorance in household economics might eventually wreck the family budget, just as their ignorance in the art of cooking might wreck the family stomach.

The Tuck school is divided into several sections, the most important of which is, of course, the cooking department. There is a large model kitchen furnished with a range and all the best, simplest cooking utensils, tables, chairs, and a blackboard—for every cooking lesson is accompanied not only by a lesson on the theory of cooking but also by a demonstration of the price each meal costs.

The classes are open Sunday afternoons in order to permit girls working during the week to take a lesson on Sunday. They are allowed to dine at the establishment on the meal they have cooked, which is a saving of a meal for the parent much appreciated by the poorer classes. The course opens Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock.—*Truth-seeker* (New York).

(To be concluded.)

### 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, £33 4s. 0d. Received since:—L. G. Singer, 1s.; C. Jortan, 2s. 6d.; R. Taylor, 3s.; J. P., 3s.; E. Richmond, 2s. 6d.; W. J. Lewis, 2s. 6d.; G. Matheson, 2s. 6d.; A. D., 10s.; Sheffield Branch N. S. S. (delayed acknowledgment), £1; S. Valentine Caunter, 10s. 6d.; Harry Tucker, 10s.; Sunny, 2s. 6d.; A. Hurcum, 10s.; H. Silverstein, 5s.; A. Button, 1s.; R. S. Pengelly, 10s.; W. Harris, 1s.; C. Shepherd, 2s. 6d.; Alfred Potts, 1s.; R. Lanchester, 5s.; M. Morris, 6s.; T. W. Hicks, 2s.; H. M. Ridgway, £1; A. E. Hammond and A. Harvey, 7s. 6d.; Aldershot "Saints" (per C. H.), 5s.; F. B., 2s. 6d.

### Acid Drops.

One of the subjects down for discussion at the Church Congress was "Miracles"! Dr. Sanday read a paper on "The Historical Evidence for Miracles," and his essay was chiefly remarkable for not producing any. What he considered "sound historical foundations" is this. He said: "We cannot doubt that it was common belief, not only that our Lord worked miracles, but that the working of miracles was characteristic of his ministry." But that does not give us any evidence that miracles occurred; it only proves that people believed they occurred. And no one ever denied this. The mere fact of their being recorded is demonstration that people would believe. Even a deliberate lie is not put into circulation unless there is some prospect of its being accepted as the genuine article. But, instead of the miracles being accepted as "characteristic" of Jesus, it was precisely because they were not peculiarly so, that they were. They were characteristic, but of a species, not of an individual. They belonged to religious professors as a class, and as one of a class Jesus was endowed with their peculiar qualities. That is the real psychology of the situation.

There was a women's meeting held at the Middlesboro Town Hall in connection with the Church Congress. It was an afternoon meeting, it was crowded, and hundreds were turned away from the doors. The Rev. Sydney Smith said that there were three sexes—men, women, and clergymen. The second and third sexes were represented at this meeting. They generally get on well together; sometimes too well. But there must have been a large number of good women at the meeting in question, and few of them knew anything about history, so they were easily deceived into believing that religion and priests were the best friends of their sex. No doubt they applauded all that the third sex said at the meeting that was got up for women's special benefit. But they will learn differently some day. Meanwhile, it is somewhat surprising that they don't see through some of the tricks of priestcraft. Those pious meetings for "men only" that have long been in vogue ought to open their eyes a bit. "What," they might ask, "can they have to say to men that women ought not to hear?" And the same question, with the sexes reversed, might be asked by the first sex (in Sydney Smith's classification).

We pointed out long ago that the "militant" Suffragists didn't understand the average man; that they would do no good, but a great deal of harm by deliberately vexing and annoying him at every possible opportunity; that women were bound to lose by appealing to violence, that they would sooner or later find that civilisation was only skin deep amongst the vast majority of human beings, and that a constant appeal to the underlying brute in the average man would not only succeed in making him act like a brute, but would also weaken his higher nature, through which all reforms must be won, if they are to be won at all. We were called a nasty man, a woman-hater, and various other flattering names for our pains. But we never unsaid a word of our warning, and it has all come true in the course of events. Most of all true at Mr. Lloyd George's meeting the other day at Llanystumdwy, when the Suffragettes who insisted on interrupting the orator by questions that had absolutely nothing to do with the object of the meeting, were not only expelled but thrown to the mob outside. To expatiate on this is needless. One felt ashamed of one's sex the next morning when reading the report in the newspapers. The women were in the wrong to begin with; the crowd of men who treated them with such disgusting brutality were tremendously more in the wrong. We felt too sick to say anything about it then. So many others were denouncing the Welsh mob's brutality that there seemed no special necessity for our joining the chorus, particularly as the whole affair (it was not a fight for free speech) was rather outside our province. We are moved to refer to it now by some foolish and ill-conditioned words from the pen of Mrs. Margaret Wynne Nevinson. This lady we take to be a Christian; at any rate, she writes like one; and it is rather odd to see her curious fleers at Freethought given a place of honor in the *Clarion*:—

"No wonder Mr. Lloyd George wants to abolish the Church! But had he not better sweep away the chapels too, and all semblances of a vain Christianity, and return to heathenism and the ancient night."

This throwing of the blame on Mr. Lloyd George savors very badly of political partisanship. The proverb that there is no honor in politics seems borne out by all parties. We do no see that the party which Mrs. Nevinson belongs to is any exception. But let that pass. We want to challenge the lady's suggestion that the shocking treatment of those

Suffragettes was an expression of the non-Christian temper, and that it would never have taken place if there had been more churches and chapels in Wales. In fact she says that "at the time of the Welsh Revival, when all Wales lived upon the Mountain of Transfiguration, such scenes would have been impossible." Now, if the lady means anything definite—which may perhaps be doubted—she must mean that there is some real and serious connection between Freethought and the ill-treatment of women. We do not lose our temper at this idea. We can afford to smile at it. It is so egregiously ridiculous. The best friends of women for a century past have been Freethinkers. One has only to mention such names as Godwin, Shelley, Robert Owen, and Mill—not to come down to the names of those who are still amongst the living. Mrs. Nevinson may be quite sure that no Freethinker struck helpless women and tore off their clothes. Maybe she is sure of it already, but likes to insinuate the contrary in order to gratify a passion which has committed more cruelty in the world than is ever likely to be inflicted even on English Suffragettes.

Viscountess Howick has her own reasons for supporting woman suffrage. Speaking at Newcastle-on-Tyne on October 3, she said "she was perfectly certain that women's votes would strengthen the Church all over England tremendously. She did not believe there would ever be questions of Disestablishment and Disendowment if women had the vote. On all questions affecting the Church the votes of women would be an enormous strength to religion throughout the country." We are afraid there is a good deal of truth in this. We do not, however, like Lady Howick, regard it as an argument in favor of woman suffrage. Neither is it an argument against woman suffrage. But it is certainly a warning to Freethinkers that the war against priestcraft and superstition is far from finished.

Canon Green, of Manchester, asks the question, "What are the Churches doing to teach the duty (surely fundamental to all good citizenship) of being willing to allow a temperate expression of views from which one may differ?" The answer is, of course, nothing at all. But that is only a part of the truth. Not only are Churches not doing anything in this direction, and never have done anything, but their whole teaching and influence has been in the other direction. People have been taught that the most important thing in life is religion, and that people ought neither to read nor to listen to opinions that run counter to religion. In other words, intolerance in religion has been treated as a virtue, and the principle has been applied in other directions. Canon Green was writing with reference to the brutal assault on the women who interrupted Mr. Lloyd George's recent meeting in Wales. And it is surely not without significance that the most brutal attack on women yet made in this connection occurred amid a population that prides itself upon its religious fervor.

The clergy spoil everything they touch. Being puffed up with the notion that it is for them to push every secular reform along, they take up one after another and hurry all into confusion. According to Mr. C. D. Whetham, whose book was reviewed in our columns by Mr. Cohen some time ago, the Anglican clergy at Chicago are making themselves busy with what they consider Eugenics. The following is from the *Daily Chronicle* report of Mr. Whetham's recent lecture in connection with the Church Congress:—

"Early this year the Dean of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul, Chicago, announced that clergymen of that Cathedral would not marry any couples unless they were able to produce a certificate signed by a reputable physician declaring that both parties were physically and mentally qualified to contract marriage, and 200 clergymen of Chicago were pledged to assist the Dean in carrying out this policy."

Could anything be sillier in the present state of Eugenics? So little is known and so much is asserted! But assertion is good enough for the clergy; and no wonder, for all their religion is based upon assertion. Where others fear to tread they *rush* in. Fancy demanding a "reputable physician's" certificate that bride and bridegroom are both "physically and mentally qualified" for marriage. What is a "reputable" physician? This would tend in practice to mean an *orthodox* physician. Catholics in Belfast, Protestants in Dublin, and Freethinkers everywhere, would be declared to be *mentally* unfit, even if they were obviously in the very best condition *physically*. No committee of scientific men could possibly determine whether human beings were really fit for marriage or not, except in cases where the common sense of unscientific citizens would be able to pass a sufficient judgment. All they could work towards would be the elimination of human beings either above or below beside the average type. In the course of time every

exceptional man or woman would be ruled out from the race; average men and women would possess the planet completely; the human race would go on marking time for some generations; then it would slide down gradually into the pit of decadence, and in the course of ages it would be in a state that priests would find positively delightful.

The Rev. J. Walleit, of Westcliff, invites Agnostics to attend his adult Bible class. This is a sign of the times. A few years ago Freethinkers were warned off the premises.

The British and Foreign Bible Society's annual report contains Hood's lines on "Gold! gold! gold! gold!" from "Miss Kilmanseg," facing the first page. The editor might have added Omar Khayyam's "Take the cash and let the credit go."

Archbishop Alexander is quoted in the British and Foreign Bible Society's Report as saying that English Christians place the Bible "inside the coffin of the dead." Not a bad place for a dead book about a dead "God."

The late Ven. Archdeacon Colley was a Spiritualist crank with a mixture of Theosophic moonshine. He partly frightened, partly disgusted, and partly entertained his congregation last New Year's Day by getting into the coffin he had ordered beforehand for himself, and being carried round his church in it. His object in this eccentric performance was to impress on his parishioners that "death is the gate of life." He expected at least a second innings on this planet. "I hope and expect," he said, "that after death and a spell of rest—which may be one year or 500—I shall return again for useful work." Fancy 500 years' rest! What an idea he must have had of the energy he had put forth in his first lifetime!

A newspaper says: "In Servia the women do all the hard work while the men take their leisure." How true this is of many Christian churches!

The Baptist Union Annual Assembly has had a narrow escape. One of the speakers was Dr. A. C. Dixon, of Spurgeon's Tabernacle. He told the meeting that he had thought of lecturing to it on the Origin of Life, as "he knew all about it." He got all his facts from the first chapter of Genesis. That is how he came to know all about it. Dr. Dixon's ignorance is deplorable and obvious, and he has not even the grace to be ashamed of it. But a more deplorable feature still is that he should be given a prominent position in the Baptist Assembly, and that large numbers of people should look to him for guidance. If the guide is better informed than those he guides, the position of the latter must be sad indeed. In the course of his address, Dr. Dixon said he was not ashamed to say that, as a boy, he was frightened at hell. Well, as this was taught him by others, the shame rests with others, not with him. But what he ought to be ashamed of is that, as a man, he is helping to frighten others with the same teaching. There is really no excuse for such men in these days. And yet, on the strength of different clothing and a more elaborate vocabulary, they consider themselves more civilised than savages! It is a curious delusion.

Professor Stefanson, the reported discoverer of a tribe of blonde Esquimaux, told an interviewer that, if he had the power, he would bar missionaries from converting them. He said, "A live Esquimaux without salvation was better than a dead one with salvation." With the missionaries came disease, and with disease death. In Mackenzie there were 2,000 Esquimaux fifty years ago. There are now only 40 remaining. At Point Barrow, in 1884, there were 300; there are now only 20. The Esquimaux of Alaska and Canada had declined over 50 per cent. The newspaper report adds that religious opinion is "shocked" at Professor Stefanson's desire to exclude missionaries. Naturally. They are most concerned with conversion; and if disappearance follows conversion, the land, at least, is left to the Godly whites. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Dr. Nansen was of the same opinion as Professor Stefanson, and said that the very best thing for the Esquimaux would be for all the whites to withdraw—including the missionaries—and leave them alone. Then they might recover. This, however, they are not likely to do. The missionary is there, and is bent upon conversion. The trader is there, and is bent upon "developing local industries." The Esquimaux must be converted in order to be industrialised. When Dr. Grenfell was here appealing for funds to carry out his mis-

sionary work, he dwelt upon the possibility of developing various industries among the natives, which in practice means exploiting them for the benefit of white traders. And the *Methodist Times* remarked on that occasion that it was a tribute to the genius of the English people that we were able to combine "a deep devotion to religion and a good eye to the commercial possibilities of a country." Our exploitation is sanctified by our religion; our religious zeal rewarded by our commercial success. It is a beautiful dispensation of Providence, and none but an Atheist would question either its wisdom or its justice.

The process of destruction was well put by Nansen. He says: "The Eskimos fell in with Europeans. First it was our Norwegian forefathers of the olden time; then they gradually overcame. But we returned to the charge, this time bringing with us Christianity and the products of civilisation; then they succumbed, and are sinking even lower and lower." It is idle laying the fault on the shoulders of the trader. He comes and goes. The missionary remains; and his deliberate aim is to break down customs that have stood the test of time, and habits for which the people are fitted. Among the Esquimaux, the missionary deliberately aimed at changing the life of the people. He forced them to live differently, to dress differently, to house differently. He found them so honest that goods were left about anywhere, and no one thought of stealing. They were kind to their children and to each other. All their habits, however, "offered great hindrances to their conversion." They were gradually changed. They were taught to live in houses that became breeding-grounds for tuberculosis. They were taught the use of money, and became greedy and dishonest. They were given brandy, and made drunken. They were inoculated with European diseases, and killed off. And having accomplished all these things, the missionaries appeal for funds to combat the vices and the diseases they have introduced, and to develop industries that may reduce the native to the level of our own slum laborer.

Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree is reported as having said that he would regret the Sunday opening of places of amusement because it would "deprive the people of religious exercise and of the spiritual uplift and beauty associated with the English Sunday, on the preservation of which the national character largely depended." We wish this particular cobbler would stick to his last, and not venture into regions for which he seems wholly unfitted. The better aspect of the English character no more depends upon the English Sunday than it does upon the existence of Sir Herbert Tree. Shakespearean England, for instance, belongs to a period anterior to that of the English Sunday. The idea that a nation's greatness depends upon all the people resting upon a special day, and shunning every sort of harmless and legitimate amusement, is one that appeals only to the bigoted and to the ignorant. We hesitate in believing that Sir Herbert Tree really entertains this notion, and we regret that he has seen fit to give it expression.

A very religious correspondent of the *Church Times* very aptly calls upon Sir Herbert Tree to live up to his expressed opinion. Quoting from the *Railway Magazine*, he points out on Sunday, October 22, no less than 112 theatrical companies were carried by the L. & N.W. Railway. There were 30 special trains, carrying 2,734 performers, besides scenery trucks. Among the theatrical companies travelling on Sunday are those belonging to Sir Herbert Tree. The conclusion properly drawn by the correspondent is that the meeting of actors that listened to Sir Herbert Tree, and who endorsed his speech, all spent their Sundays in running about the country getting ready for Monday's performance, the speaker among them. Sunday is at present their best day for travelling, and they use it for that purpose. But if Sunday performances were given the company would have to travel on a weekday, which might involve a greater financial loss. So, concludes the correspondent, the Sunday performances were condemned, not because they were wrong, but because they would not pay. We are inclined to agree with the writer of the letter.

Rev. Hubert Theobald Walter Butler, of Greasborough Vicarage, Rotherham, who had been attending the Church Congress at Middlesboro', was charged at the Police-court of the latter town with stealing a book worth 1s. 6d. from a stall at the Ecclesiastical and Art Exhibition. When he was arrested £30 was found in his possession. The case was therefore dealt with as one of kleptomania. Defendant was "bound over without a conviction being recorded against him." Lucky for him that he wasn't a Freethought lecturer.

We take the following vindication of the National Secular Society from a long letter by Mr. E. Burke in the *Middlesex Chronicle* in reply to a Christian Evidence writer called Boyden:—

"Mr. Boyden concludes an amazing letter by asking what has the National Secular Society done during the 70 years of its existence beyond having offices in a blind lane off Farringdon-street! Such language is contemptible. The work of the N. S. S. needs no defence; but for the information of those who would like to know, I may mention that it has enriched the human mind by contributing to the increase of knowledge and clear ideas; it has compelled a hearing from Christian Churches and scholars; and, by discarding supernatural delusions, it has directed attention to the affairs of this world and indirectly added to the happiness of mankind. It insisted from the very beginning on the equality of the sexes; it fought for liberty of thought and the peace of the world. It emptied churches, and is the parent of the Rationalist and Ethical Societies.

"The influence and teaching of such men as Bradlaugh, Ingersoll, and Mr. Foote, on 'legislation' and 'general progress,' is incalculable. It has always denounced tyranny, ignorance, superstition, and all other evils. It has sought no rewards and received no bribes. Its greatest asset is human intelligence. Its Church is the whole world, and its congregation the whole of humanity. Drums and canonicals are foreign to its cult and taste. Its teachers do not live in palaces and do not spread the light in cathedrals and fashionable chapels, but have sacrificed health, wealth, and worldly pleasures for the cause of 'Truth.' With the schools, the endowments of past ages, and the millions subscribed by the people, no wonder Mr. Boyden looks down with contempt on these societies that have to struggle through the darkness.

"Freethinkers have been persecuted in all ages, and the wonder is they have done so much for humanity.

"The Secular Society is the terror of hypocrites, obscurantists, and all persecutors of human liberty.

"The whole future belongs to the Secularists.—I am, Sir, yours, etc., E. BURKE."

We congratulate the *Middlesex Chronicle* on its impartiality.

Tobaccoists are showing cigar boxes bearing a lithographic representation of Buddha, the Light of Asia, on the lid. What a fuss Christians would make if some Oriental firm put a picture of Jesus on their smokes!

Dr. Ewing, speaking at the Baptist Congress, said that "They must apply Gospel ethics to the whole life of the State." The late Dr. Magee, Bishop of Peterborough, said that any State that tried to do that would go to pieces in a week. We agree with the Bishop.

The *Jewish World* complains of "the wiles of the missionaries in East London." All sorts of efforts are made to get hold of Jewish children. As to adults, very "material" methods are applied to "spiritual" conversion. "A glance at a batch of Hebrew-Christians," our contemporary says, "will readily convince one that a bank-note is more eloquent than a tract; if one reads the tract the conviction is even deepened." "There is work enough," our contemporary tells the Christian missionaries, "for zealots amongst their own people. There is the large submerged population of the towns with no religion at all. Let them turn their attention to the squalor and misery, the wretchedness and filth, the drunkenness and debauchery that abound among the large masses of slum dwellers, and when they have succeeded in winning these over to their standard, they can seek fresh woods and pastures new."

The frolic wind sometimes justifies its name. "The Beast Rev." was the startling announcement outside a tin tabernacle at a seaside resort. Public curiosity was aroused; but speedily allayed when it was found that it had originally been worded "The Beast in Revelations."

Cinematograph pictures of sacred subjects are being used by the clergy to assist them in their work. We should like to see a film of Jonah and the whale or the procession into the Ark. Perhaps the procession out of it would be a still more striking spectacle.

Mr. William Ward, a Brotherhood hot-gospeller, speaking at Southend-on-Sea recently, said that "God intended the land for the people." How did the landlords prevent his generous intention from being realised?

Greece hurried away from the Mersey the four destroyers she had purchased from Cammell, Laird, & Co. Every boat had to be rechristened. This was done by the Greek Archimandrite. All four destroyers put to sea with that pious official's God-bless-you—on behalf of the Prince of Peace.



### Mr. Foote's Engagements

Sunday, October 13, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, Regent-street, London, W.: at 7.30, "The Pulpit and the Stage on Sunday."

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

### To Correspondents.

- PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1912.—Previously acknowledged, £222 7s. 7d. Received since:—T. Hibbott, 5s.; A. D., 10s.; S. Valentine Caunter, £1 1s.; Ernest, 5s.; F. B., 3s.
- J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—October 20, Glasgow; 27, Birmingham. November 3, Croydon; 10, Manchester; 17, West Ham; 24, Leicester. December 15, West Ham.
- C. JORTAN.—It was only a slight postponement, as you will see. We are really glad to see so much interest taken in these Shelley articles. Many friends have written us very interesting private letters on the subject; some of them men whose names are well known in the world of letters; and they are all grateful to us for undertaking this task.
- E. B.—Many thanks for cuttings, etc.
- W. J. LEWIS—There would be plenty if all did their share in supplying the sinews of war. Thanks for your pleasant letter.
- A. MURRAY.—Yes, presently; but the fact is we have too much to do, and it would probably be good for our readers as well as for ourselves if we could be relieved from the mere drudgery of the paper.
- J. ROBERTSON.—Thanks for account of the Edinburgh struggle for free-speech in the open air. A permit to hold meetings to some parties, denied to others, has been decided at Chicago (see our last week's "Sugar Plums") to be illegal; and we should imagine that the same decision will be arrived at by the Edinburgh judges. We note your amusing remarks on Shelley and Mr. Blatchford.
- W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.
- J. GRANON.—May use it next week. Thanks.
- J. K. (Canada).—Glad you are still "delighted with the *Freethinker*" and that the type is grateful to your 86 year-old eyes.
- J. GLEDHILL.—Huxley, not Spencer, originated the word "Agnostic."
- H. SILVERSTEIN.—We know you have a real, time-rooted interest in this fight for freedom against the London County Council.
- J. M. HURCOM.—Will write shortly.
- J. W. GOTT and T. A. JACKSON.—Glad to hear the Northern Tour goes on with the constant success that precludes striking reports. You were bound, of course, to meet the ill-mannered youth of to-day, and we are not surprised it was at Stockport he gave you so much trouble. But go on; you'll wear him out.
- A. E. HAMMOND.—Suggestion noted. Glad you were so pleased with the lecture.
- R. S. PENGELLY.—Pleased to have your good wishes in the fight. A good deal of correspondence stands over till next week.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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. 6d.

### Sugar Plums.

The Queen's Hall course of lectures by Mr. Foote opened well on Sunday evening. There was a most excellent audience in spite of the fog, which everybody found uncomfortable and a good many distressing. Mr. Victor Roger made a model chairman. Mr. Foote was in capital form, and his lecture on "Sir Edward Carson's 'God'" was enthusiastically applauded. Several questions were asked and answered, and the meeting broke up in the best of good spirits. It was pleasant to see so many ladies in the audience, and also so many strangers,—the very people we want to reach.

Mr. Foote's lecture at Queen's Hall this evening (Oct. 13) deals with the burning question that so many clergymen, actors (including Sir H. B. Tree), and other public entertainers (including Harry Lauder), have been discussing so much lately. How far should the demand for Sunday recreation be permitted? It is a question at once important and amusing. Mr. Foote will try to do it justice from both points of view.

The newly formed National Committee for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws is at a standstill for want of a Secretary. Is there any young man (or young woman) who feels moved to take this post? There is no salary, and on the other hand the work is not very heavy, though it might take some hours a week. Who speaks? We are waiting to hear.

London Freethinkers will remember the "social" under the auspices of the N. S. S. Executive on Thursday evening next (Oct. 17) at Anderton's Hotel. There will be the usual program of music, recitations, and some dancing for the younger folk; and either "a few words" or a dramatic reading by the N. S. S. President. Members of the N. S. S. have the privilege of attending these "socials" and introducing a friend. Outsiders who would like to attend, but cannot get introduced in that way, should apply for a ticket from the N. S. S. secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, at 2 Newcastle-street, E.C. There is nothing to pay for the tickets.

It has already been intimated that, pending the discovery of other available halls, the Secular Society, Ltd., has arranged to co-operate with the West Ham Branch in the use of the Workmen's Hall, Stratford. On certain Sunday evenings the Secular Society finds the lecturer, does the advertising, and takes both the collection and the whole financial responsibility. The second of these lectures takes place this Sunday evening (Oct. 13), when Miss Kough will occupy the platform. We hope to hear of a crowded attendance.

Our readers have been told that the new arrangement for the Sunday evening Freethought lectures at the Queen's (Minor) Hall, under which Mr. Foote takes the whole course from October 6 to December 15, inclusive, is a part of a large plan for carrying Freethought propagandist work over the whole of Greater London. The greatest difficulty is finding decent halls. This will only be overcome gradually. Fortunately the secretary of the Secular Society (Ltd.), Miss E. M. Vance, has succeeded in booking the large Public Hall, Croydon, for a course of Sunday evening lectures during November. Mr. Cohen, Mr. Lloyd, Miss Kough, and Mr. Moss, will fill up the program. It is hoped it may be possible to carry on further Freethought lectures at this hall.

The new N. S. S. badge has caught on, and is much appreciated. We are asked to remind our readers that this simple method by which Freethinkers may introduce themselves to each other is very inexpensive. The price of the badge is only 6d., with an extra 1d. for postage.

The Birmingham Branch begins its new winter season's propagandist work at the King's Hall, Corporation-street, to-day (Oct. 13), Mr. E. Clifford Williams being the lecturer. On the following Sunday there will be two (afternoon and evening) lectures by Mr. Cohen in the Town Hall, under the auspices of the Secular Society, Ltd. Friends willing to aid in the distribution of tickets, and other advertising matter, should apply at once to the Branch secretary, Mr. J. Partridge, 245 Shenstone-road, Rotton-park.

We have often remarked with what affection the *Freethinker* is regarded by so many of its readers. Here is another case in point. Mr. T. Hibbott, of Ramsbottom, sends a subscription to the President's Honorarium Fund, with this message:—

"A thank offering for restoration to sight, and ability to read my *Freethinker*, after operation for cataract. Age three score and ten, and subscriber to your paper from the first number, deriving much pleasure and profit from it still."

A cheerful and encouraging letter!

A Glasgow reader, who desires a identification beyond the initials of "A. D.," in forwarding a subscription to two Funds now open in the *Freethinker*, thinks it would interest us—as indeed it does—to know how he "passed from darkness into light." We think it will interest our readers too:—

"It was at the time of the Conference in Glasgow of the N. S. S. I had been for many years previous to that time an earnest and devoted member and elder in the then Free Church of Scotland, but always painfully alive to the defects and inconsistencies of the system and its adherents. I was not satisfied, and was eager to embrace the truth whenever it was presented to me, whatever the cost might be. I attended the evening meeting of the Conference, heard what I was in search of, and went home determined to have done with superstition for ever. I became a subscriber to the *Freethinker* and have read it with ever increasing pleasure and profit, never having missed a copy. I am now fully emancipated, and do all I can, as circumstances will permit, to spread the light."

Letters like this are the real reward for all our labor.

## Voltaire in Hades.—II.

*A Lecture delivered in the Studebaker Theatre, Chicago.*

BY M. M. MANGASARIAN.

(Concluded from p. 630.)

BUT who was Voltaire? That his story is worthy of careful perusal is shown by the high esteem in which he and his services have been held by the world's leading minds. Goethe says of him:—

"If you wish depth, genius, imagination, philosophy, originality, art, magic, an eagle sweep of vision, an excellent tone, pathos, eloquence, rapidity, music—behold Voltaire."

Well, it seems as if Goethe wanted to tax the resources of language to describe the magnificent mind of Voltaire. But here is something more enthusiastic still from the same critic: "After having given birth to Voltaire, Nature had to take a rest."

Edouard de Pompery, in his *The Real Voltaire*, pays him this tribute:—

"Voltaire was the most virtuous man of his age because he did the most good to his kind, and because there was in his heart the most burning love of justice and truth."

And this is Browning's salutation to Voltaire:—

"Aye, sharpest, shrewdest steel that ever stabbed  
To death, imposture through the armor-joints!"

Then there is the glorious praise of Macaulay:—

"Bigots and tyrants who had never been moved by the wailing and the cursing of millions, turned pale at his name."

In his *Life of Frederick the Great*, Carlyle, flinging all his early prejudices aside, shouts forth the praises of Voltaire as the giant who strangled superstition in Europe, which he calls "a most worthy service."

And this is what Frederick the Great himself wrote to Voltaire:—

"I shall believe myself richer in having your works than in the possession of all the transient and contemptible gifts of fortune, which the same chance gives and takes away."

We will omit the tribute of Buckle in order to have space for the thrilled and thrilling words of Victor Hugo. At the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Voltaire's death, Victor Hugo addressed a mighty concourse of people in Paris, and we cull the following from his oration delivered on that occasion:—

"Voltaire fought single-handed the most powerful coalition of iniquity ever organised on earth. And what was his weapon? That, which is as light as the wind and as puissant as fire. A pen! Let us salute his memory! He possessed the tenderness of a woman and the wrath of a conqueror."

Then referring to Voltaire's smile, he compared it to the tears of Jesus:—

"Let us say it with a sentiment of profound respect, Jesus wept, Voltaire smiled; of that tear and that smile are born the sweet humanities which bless the world to-day.

"That smile is wisdom. That smile, I repeat, is Voltaire. Against the great it is raillery, for the little it is pity. Let us be moved by that smile. It had in it rays of the dawn. It lighted up the interior of superstition. On the day when the identity of wisdom and clemency will be recognised, the day when the amnesty will be proclaimed, I affirm it, up there in the stars, Voltaire will smile!"

"To overthrow falsehoods and superstitions, to take a whip and drive the money changers from the sanctuary, to protect the weak, to struggle for the oppressed—that was the war of Jesus Christ. And who waged that war? It was Voltaire!"

"If Law means oppression, if Church means persecution, then, we say to the judge, we will not have your law, and to the Church, we will not have your religion. We reject the dogma that builds torture-chambers on earth and a hell in heaven!"

"Augustus Cæsar, Alexander, Louis XIV., were 'masters' of States; Voltaire was more—he was 'master' of Ideas."

And now to this sincere and joyous tribute of a generous and just soul, let us add the comprehensive compliment of the English statesman, Lord Brougham:—

"Nor can anyone since the days of Luther be named to whom the spirit of free inquiry, nay, the emancipation of the human mind from spiritual tyranny, owes a more lasting debt of gratitude."

Voltaire was the inspiration of the eighteenth century. As an intellectual colossus he filled not only France but all Europe with his thought. In an Olympus of gods, he was the presiding divinity. Men have come and men have gone, but Voltaire lives on for ever. He has given to the brain new powers, to the heart purer passions.

In the fifteenth century, Martin Luther sounded the tocsin of alarm, and summoned Europe to arms against the Papacy. But Voltaire declared that a Protestant Papacy was every bit as objectionable, and called upon the world to take up a stand against all supernatural religions. "He who says 'God has spoken to me, and bids me rule over you' is a wolf in sheep's clothing; beware!"

But deeds speak louder than words. There was living in those days, in the city of Toulouse, in France, a merchant, John Calas, who was a Protestant. One day, his second son, Lewis, informed him that he had joined the Catholic Church. This was a severe shock to John Calas and his wife, nevertheless, they continued to treat him with their accustomed parental affection. The eldest son, Anthony, was a lawyer, but, being a Protestant in a Catholic community, he had scarcely any practice. This was very distressing in its effects upon the young man, and he became taciturn and morose. One day, when John Calas walked downstairs to his workshop, he was horrified at the sight of his eldest son hanging from a bar with a rope round his neck. Immediately it was noised about that Calas had strangled his son to prevent him from joining the Catholic Church, as his younger brother had done, and a priest was found who swore that Anthony had applied for membership in the Catholic Church, and that the next day he was to have been admitted and confirmed. The whole town was now at white heat, whetting its appetite against the Protestant father who, they said, had murdered his son to cheat the Church of a convert. The Catholics appropriated the body of the suicide and gave him a pompous burial. A monument was raised over Anthony's remains by popular subscription, on which was exhibited a skeleton holding in one hand a paper bearing the words "Abjuration of Heresy," and in the other a palm branch as an emblem of martyrdom.

Of course, Calas, who was frenzied with grief and shame, was arrested and tried. But what a trial! Witnesses were produced to prove that it was the general practice among Protestants to kill such of their children as wished to accept the Catholic religion. They forgot that the younger son of Calas had openly allied himself with the Catholic Church, and, far from being molested by his parents, he had only lately been given a larger share in the business of his father. But what availeth reason against witnesses who swore that they heard, on that evening, the cries of the murdered son. Moreover, the judge said that, independent of the evidence, it would be well to make an example of Calas. A judge!

Then what?

John Calas, white with years and bowed with grief, was put to the torture in order to force a confession of guilt from him. The spectacle of an innocent father, seventy years old, delivered up to the executioner, to have his bones broken on the wheel—and all this in the eighteenth century—gives us an idea of the monstrous stupidity against which philosophers have always protested. Is it any wonder that Voltaire raged and fumed against a system which produced such results.

On March 18, 1762, John Calas was led to a public place and stripped naked, after which he was stretched on the rack with his hands tied and his

head suspended. Observe him! Beside him is an officer of the law to superintend the execution, a priest with a crucifix, and the executioner holding a huge iron bar in his hand, with which he strikes the old man eight blows, crushing his chest and reducing him to a mangled mass of blood and bones. Each one of the eight blows is preceded by the presentation of the crucifix for the victim to kiss, and by medicated salts, in order to revive him for the force of the next blow. After two hours of this orthodox treatment, John Calas expired. Good heavens! was it for such a fate that he was created and permitted to become a father? Why was he not born a savage in Africa—a pagan, a heathen in some distant land, where even the name "Christian" had never been heard?

And who was it that moved heaven and earth to reopen the case?—that by personal appeals and heroic efforts compelled the infamous judges of Calas to rescind their verdict, to restore the property of Calas to his family, to exonerate the old father from so odious a charge, and to prosecute the bigots who had perjured themselves for the glory of the Church? Who was it that hung the picture of the martyred father over his bed, that every morning it might remind him, as he rose out of bed, of the atrocious crime committed in the name of religion? Who was it that made the civilised world ring with his cry of horror?

It was Voltaire.

That cry of horror from his heart is to-day the world's anthem of liberty. For that cry of horror may the name of Voltaire be blessed for ever.

Voltaire did more than speak; he worked.

In 1765, when Voltaire was nearly sixty years old, in one of the Catholic towns a wooden cross, marking the entrance to a bridge, was found torn from its place and lying in the dust. Who had committed this sacrilege? There had been a furious storm during the night; but the winds could never have been guilty of such a crime. The impious wretch must be found. The Bishop of Amiens threatens with fire of hell all those who know the guilty party and refuse to divulge his name, and offers heavenly reward to anyone who will deliver him up to the Church. The Bishop's letter is printed and given a wide circulation. It does its work well. Anxious to secure the rewards and to escape the penalties contained in the priestly manifesto, informers trample upon each other in their haste to be the first to reach the ear of the Bishop. A young man, La Barre, was seen crossing the bridge late at night, and singing a love song. He is promptly arrested. He denies the charges, and appeals to the Parliament in Paris. He is condemned and carried back to Abbeville, the scene of the supposed crime. On June 5, 1766, they conduct La Barre to the public square in Abbeville. The faggots are ready and the stake awaits its victim. They first cut off his hands, then, with hot iron pincers, they pluck out his tongue, then, mercifully, they chop off his head, after which they throw everything into the fire. How old was La Barre at the time? Only nineteen! What was his crime? He was accused of crossing the bridge and singing a song. And all this happened less than a hundred and fifty years ago and in a civilised country. What was the cause? A religion that had in it a hell! And now, who was it that haunted the murderers of La Barre and caused them to be punished? It was Voltaire! He struck, besides, at that monstrous religion which was doing its best to reproduce in this world the hell which it looked forward to in the next. Voltaire won the battle. That frightful thing can no longer kill or burn—it can only threaten.

Deeds speak loudest!

On a little farm in Carries, in France, lived the family of Sirvens—a farmer, his wife, and three daughters—one of whom was about to become a mother. But they were Protestants and must be converted. One of the girls was seized by force and shut up in a convent. The parents objected. That, the Catholics argued, proved these heretics would

rather murder their children than see them in a convent. The girl was subjected to such persecution that it drove her insane. One day her body was found at the bottom of a well. The Sirvens, remembering what had happened to Calas, left all their belongings, and fled by night. It was in the dead of winter—deep snow on the ground, no food, and a daughter in the throes of child-birth. What was it they were running away from? Not hungry wolves, not fierce famine, or deadly disease, but something ten thousand times worse—religion-crazed men!

Oh, the height and depth of human folly! Dear birds, singing merrily on a thousand branches! and you pretty butterflies swimming in the sunlight! and you busy, busy ants, toiling peaceably day and night!—I envy you! I wish I were a bird, a bee, a butterfly fluttering over the bosom of every flower, and sucking their sweetness. When I read the history of human folly and cruelty, I feel ashamed that I am a man! How much purer even is the green grass nodding in the wind, the coy violet, the hyacinth so full of grace, and the tulip suffused with color! Take away your human institutions, the theologies, the creeds, the churches—your heaven—your hell—and give me the religion of nature. From teachers who will burn and kill to save a creed, let us turn to the generous clouds, the winds that sweep over land and sea—the rainbow, the sunbeam, the fountain, the zephyr kissing all it meets, and the forests waving with beauty and glory! Which of the poets was it that sang:—

"A robin redbreast in a cage  
Puts all heaven in a rage;  
A dove-house full of doves and pigeons,  
Shudders hell through all its regions;  
A skylark wounded on the wing  
Doth make a cherub cease to sing."  
—William Blake.

Which of us would not rather have the religion of the skylark, of the cooing doves and the robin-redbreast, than that of the people of Toulouse or Carries?

When it was found that the Protestants had escaped, the orthodox Carries people burned the Sirvens family in effigy, and consoled themselves by confiscating their property. The starving fugitives, hiding by day and travelling by night, at last came to a place where a stranger took pity upon them, opened his purse to clothe, feed, house, and nurse them, and having listened to their sorrowful tale, took down his mighty bow, "winged with wit and barbed with truth," and went forth to avenge the great shame and the great Sham—to punish the wrong and to recover the stolen property. Who was this stranger?

It was Voltaire! And for these unforgettable deeds he is in *Hades*, with Socrates and the Immortals!

Is it any wonder that when France at last awoke from her bondage she fairly went wild with joy at the mention of that immortal name?

Voltaire deserves the tributes of humanity. He was sane in mind and sound in heart. He was the most level-headed man of his day. His thoughts were like refreshing streams flowing mellifluously through a land laid desolate by superstition. His pen was tipped with fire. The fertility of his mind, the vigor of his intellect, the sweep of his fancy, the brilliance of his wit, the terror of his passions, the tenderness of his heart, the eloquence of his periods, his iron will and the force of his reasoning, combined to make him the intellectual monarch of the eighteenth century.

Yet Voltaire was not without his faults. Indeed, he had many. But even as a great chimney consumes its own smoke, a great man—a Goethe, a Voltaire—converts his own defects into fuel for his genius.

Genius is intensity in seeing, feeling, and doing. The Genius is ourselves—on a larger scale. He has our virtues and vices—but so much more of them. He thinks, speaks, and acts with a thrill. The blood boils in his veins. "Daily, his own heart he eats." Ah, let us understand before we criticise. Is it

strange that a vessel which has taken the ocean aboard should have battered decks and broken masts?

Voltaire has been bitterly denounced for being bitter. But did Jesus mince his words when he attacked the enemies of the people? Could he restrain his anger against the Pharisees whom he flayed with words as hot and hard as any that fell from the lips of Voltaire? Who was it that invoked the fire of hell over the heads of the human vipers?

But Voltaire *jested* with holy things! Now, was not that wicked? He laughed at the Bastille, the Inquisition, the Index Expurgatorius—at the pious frauds and forgeries, the decayed bones and manufactured relics, the fast and hard dogmas—papal infallibility, excommunication, torture for heresy—false priests, false Bibles, false gods. Should he have recommended them? Should he have left them alone? For pity's sake! Did he ever breathe a word against the humanities, the charities, the sweet fellowships, the lasting fraternities which heal and bless mankind? Did he ridicule true religion, which is the mother of all the virtues and the solace and joy of life? Can we mention one single thing that is really holy which Voltaire scorned or jeered at?

To say that Voltaire was a destroyer of truth and goodness is to read him *backwards*.

To form an adequate conception of the exceeding popularity of Voltaire toward the end of his life, we have only to refer to his triumphant entry into Paris after an absence of many years. James Parton, who writes from a sympathetic point of view, has given us a splendid description of the glorious events in the closing life of the patriarch, Voltaire. All Paris rushed into the streets and crowded the housetops and climbed on the lamp-posts to welcome him and to shout "*Vive Monsieur de Voltaire*." When he appeared in the theatre where his own play, which he had written at the age of eighty-three, was to be presented, the entire audience rose and cheered him with loud acclamations. Suddenly someone in the house cried, "The crown! The crown!" Thereupon an actor entered the box occupied by Voltaire, bearing a laurel crown, which he placed upon the poet's head, the audience applauding with wild and boundless enthusiasm.

"Ah, *dieu!* You wish, then, to make me die of glory?" whispered Voltaire, in a voice hoarse with deep feeling. He pushed the crown away from him, but the people would not be refused. The crown was fastened upon his brow. The crowd was upon its feet. The aisles, passages, lobbies, and ante-rooms were all crowded to suffocation, and even the actors, dressed to begin the play, came out to join in the glorious tumult and delirium, which lasted more than twenty minutes. When the curtain arose it disclosed a pedestal in the middle of the stage holding the bust of the poet-philosopher. Around it, in a semi-circle, the actors and actresses were ranged, each holding a garland of flowers and palm; and for once, as it has been said, envy and hate, fanaticism and intolerance, dared not murmur, except in secret, and for the first time in France public opinion was unanimous.

When the curtain fell the people poured out into the street shouting the name of Voltaire. "Ah, you wish to stifle me in roses," said Voltaire. And so it was. Overcome by these demonstrations, within a short time his great heart stopped beating.

Thirteen years after his death, while the Revolution was in full swing, the ashes of Voltaire were transferred from their humble resting-place to the Pantheon. As the cortège advanced from village to village and town to town, the mayors, officers, and functionaries joined the throng of citizens and soldiers, carrying branches of the trees on their muskets, following the immortal dead. It was something like the public demonstration at the funeral of Victor Hugo. Men and women were seen shedding tears of grateful homage. Little children were lifted up in their mothers' arms that they might see the procession. The sick touched the sarcophagus, hoping thereby to be healed of their diseases.

When the sun set, and night came on, torches were lit to guide the procession. The streets were hung with all the colors of the rainbow, and triumphal arches decked with garlands of flowers were to be seen everywhere. The remains of the poet were drawn by four horses caparisoned in velvet, and almost hid from sight by a profusion of flowers. A stranger would have imagined that all France had sprung to her feet to exalt the name and memory of Voltaire to the highest heavens. The country rang with the praises of his labors in the interest of human progress. Men called him the "Messiah," the "Savior," "the Light of the World." Quotations from his writings were to be seen everywhere:—

"If man is created free, he ought to govern himself."

"If man has tyrants, he ought to dethrone them."

When the procession halted near the ancient site of the Bastille, it was greeted with these inscriptions flying in the breeze:—

"Upon this spot, where Despotism chained thee, Voltaire, receive the homage of a free people." and "Who serves well his country needs no ancestors."

The march from here to the Pantheon was with such *éclat* that words can hardly do it justice. All Paris followed his distinguished remains to the temple of glory, repeating all the time some great saying of the dead hero:—

"I have done a little good; it is my best work."

"They have troubled the earth, and I have consoled it."

"Mortals are equal. It is not birth, it is virtue alone which makes the difference."

"He defended Calas, La Barre, and Sirvens."

"He was poet, philosopher, and historian."

"He gave great impetus to the human mind, and prepared us to become free."

"He inspired toleration."

"He claimed the rights of man against serfdom and feudalism."

"He helped us to break our chains."

I forgot to say that when we reached the door of the hall in *Hades*, a neatly gotten-up leaflet was placed in our hands by the ushers, which contained a brief sketch of Voltaire, the lecturer for the day, and was written in a style that resembled somewhat the English of King James's version of the Bible. Herewith I submit a copy of the inside page of this circular:—

"Now in those days there lived in the land of the French a certain young man, whose name was Voltaire.

"And he was at the age of 24 when the great monarch, Louis, was succeeded by his son, Louis XV.

"And it came to pass that, by divers signs and works, Voltaire led the people to expect great things of his pen.

"In those days there were two masters in the land of the French, the one a king, the other a priest; and the former was a native of the land, but the latter was an alien from beyond the mountains.

"And it happened that both these masters oppressed the people of the land heavily, and taxed them to their last farthing.

"Now all these iniquities made Voltaire exceedingly wroth, and he vowed in the bitterness of his heart that he would deliver his fellows from both these tyrants.

"And when the king and the priest heard of Voltaire, and his interest in the down-trodden people, they determined to destroy him.

"And having sent for him, they commanded him to keep still, and to be as all the rest in the land—submissive to the State and the Church.

"And they opened a big book in his presence, which was covered with gold and precious stones, and held together by huge clasps.

"And they read to him, in a deep, solemn voice and with a long face, certain words from this book, which they said were the very words of God.

"And the words said: 'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves' [Heb. xiii. 17]. 'The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God: And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation' [Rom. xiii. 1, 2].

"And it came to pass that when Voltaire heard these words, and saw the strange gestures and the long faces

of the people who read them to him, he could not refrain from smiling.

"Which put both the king and the priest, together with their ministers, in a great rage against him.

"And they seized him instantly, and threw him into a terrible dungeon which was called the Bastille.

"Now the Bastille was designed after the Place of Torment, which they declared existed somewhere beyond the grave.

"And in the days of Louis XV. few men who were cast into this dungeon ever came out alive.

"And it happened that one night while Voltaire was tossing restlessly upon the hard floor of his cell, he was haunted by great fears, so that he could not sleep.

"Then he mused in his own mind of his sad state, saying:—

"My enemies are powerful, and there is no end to their resources. If I defy them openly they will tear me in pieces. I must, therefore, conceal my purpose. I must strike secretly to break their evil power and free the people."

"And it came to pass that the friends of the young prisoner took pity upon him and helped him to escape from his prison.

"And they led him to the shores of the sea and bid him go into a foreign country.

"And he came to the land of the English, where he studied and acquired great strength of purpose.

"Now Voltaire loved his people, and after many years he returned to them.

"But when he entered his own country, he was re-arrested and committed once more to the Bastille. Again he escaped.

"And it came to pass that, after many hardships and persecutions, the influence of Voltaire increased in the land, and he had many friends.

"Then he armed himself for the great battle against the tyrant rulers of the land, whom he vanquished and drove out, not only of his own country, but also of many others.

"And the only soldiers he had were his books.

"And his pen was his sword.

"And on his banner was inscribed the word *Light*.

"And it came to pass that his soldiers went everywhere, and his banner floated in the breeze over all Europe.

"And Voltaire wrote letters to all the philosophers to urge them to help him overthrow 'the Monster,' saying—

"I want you to crush the Monster. It is the greatest service that can be rendered to the human race.....Attack, brothers, skilfully, all of you, the Monster.....Engage all my brethren to pursue the Monster, with pen and voice, without giving it a moment's pause.....My brethren, combat the Monster, even to your last breath.....We will crush it; we will crush it.....Crush the Monster in the morning, crush the Monster in the evening.....What interests me is the propagation of the faith of truth, the progress of philosophy, and the abasement of the Monster.

"Oh, the lovely musical chimes that should end with 'Crush the Monster!'"

## Two Sonnets.

### I.

How in man's life are good and evil blent  
So that none may of bliss unmingled boast:

Small good, much evil, is the lot of most,  
And all must mourn o'er time unwisely spent.  
Should fate allot some hours of keen delight,

Be sure you must fresh evils undergo,  
Since lasting bliss it never can bestow,  
Being but the Will to Live's sad satellite.

What remedy? Why none, save to endure  
Our evils with what fortitude we may,  
Nor fail a firm resistance to display  
To all that threatens our manhood's forfeiture:  
Never provoke yet never shrink from strife;  
Fear death less than dishonorable life.

### II.

O how the soul is cabined and confined  
Within the narrow limits of our earth,  
Where naught exists to satisfy the mind,  
And everywhere reigns discontent and dearth:

How is the spirit fretted with sordid care;  
How hard we toil for mere subsistence' sake;  
How little better than the brutes we fare

In the fierce fight for life we needs must make!  
How do our thoughts, though they the heavens ascend,  
Sink downward to our petty realm again:  
Vehemently we strive—to what good end?

Death is the only goal that we attain:  
Shut in from every influence divine,  
Earth is our prison, where we needs must pine.

B. D.

## Where's Heaven?

In the credulous season of childhood,  
Before I could well understand,  
They told me a marvellous story,  
Of Heaven, the Wonderful Land.  
The Kingdom of God the Almighty,  
They called it with mystical air,  
And, raising a hand towards the rafters,  
They told me That Land was up there.

One Sunday, a year or two later,  
I entered a Sabbath-school door  
To listen to news of the Kingdom  
My parents had mentioned before;  
But why they should think I was jesting,  
And correction accordingly give,  
When I questioned them where was this Heaven,  
Will perplex me as long as I live.

When schooldays had hastened behind me,  
And Sunday-school only remained  
To fill me with bad education,  
The problem was still unexplained;  
So I asked once again where was Heaven?  
Was anyone sure of the way?  
But horror-struck faces looked at me,—  
Companions had led me astray.

With the coming of manhood in earnest  
(And solit'ry hairs to my face)  
The fables of childhood were fading,  
And doubt, as a weed, grew apace.  
They thought it a season of madness,  
This searching of mine for the truth,  
That manhood would scatter the doubtings  
And fancies of misguided youth;  
But manhood brings no retrocession  
To the thoughts of my petticoat days:  
No time was I farther from wishing  
To carol the Almighty's praise;  
And now when I ask them the question  
Whose answer my doubts might dispel,  
They sigh, shake their heads, and assure me  
That soon I'll be roasting in Hell.

JAMES L. RAYMOND.

George Meredith's *Letters* in two volumes at 21s. net has just been published by Messrs. Constable & Co. We have purchased a copy—the *Freethinker* not being important enough for a review-copy to be sent to it, though Meredith valued it himself—but we have not had time to look into it during the few hours it has been in our possession. But there is no hurry; the book will keep. We shall read it as we read few books, and we hope to introduce it to our readers' attention next week. Meanwhile we may say that Mr. Edward Clodd, who reviews it for the *Daily Chronicle*, is honest and courageous enough to refer to Meredith's encouragement of Mr. Footo as editor of the *Freethinker* and his tribute to George Jacob Holyoake. The dear *Daily News* sustained its traditional character. It represented Meredith, in its judicious review of the *Letters*, as a sort of Sunday-school model character.

The selection of Meredith letters published in *Scribner's* for August, September, and October, ended with one from Meredith to Watts-Dunton on the death of Ewinburne. "This," an editorial note said, "was George Meredith's last letter." But this was not true. That letter was dated April 13, 1909. Meredith wrote us a letter on April 23—and we supplied Mr. Meredith junior with a copy of that as well as of the other letters we received from his father. We have reasons for thinking that this letter to us was the last letter that ever came from Meredith's pen.

Mr. Simpson was reading the newspaper:  
"Here's a man got into a drunken brawl and was stabbed to death," he said aloud.

His wife glanced up from her knitting and commented:  
"In some low drinking den, I suppose?"  
"No; th' paper says he got stabbed in th' thoracic cavity."

"Same thing; you'd think th' police 'd close such a place up."

## 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, "The Pulpit and the Stage on Sunday."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Mr. Neary's, 94 Lordship-road, Church-street, Stoke Newington): Business Meeting—Honorary, and Resignation of Hon. Secretary, etc.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workmen's Hall, Romford-road, Stratford, E.): 7.30, Miss K. B. Kough, "Why Do We Pray?"

#### OUTDOOR.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road, High-street): 11.30, A. B. Moss, "Bradlaugh the Iconoclast."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7, Mr. Rosetti, "The Sabbath."

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (King's Hall, Corporation-street): E. Clifford Williams, "Agnosticism and the Argument from Design."

#### OUTDOOR.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE: Thos. A. Jackson—Bolton (Town Hall Square): October 13, at 11, "Science and the Bible"; at 3, "The Bible and Beer"; at 6.30, "The Salvation Army." Leigh (Town Centre): 14, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer"; 15, at 7.30, "The Salvation Army." Farnworth (Market Ground): 16, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer"; 17, at 7.30, "The Salvation Army." Bolton (Town Hall Square): 18, at 7.30, "Why I Reject Christianity"; 19, at 7.30, "The Faith of an Infidel."

LEIGH, LANCs (Market Square): Joseph A. E. Bates—Oct. 11, at 7.30, "Twilight of the Gods"; 13, at 3, "Royal Parasites"; at 7.30, "Christ: Man, Messiah, or Myth?" 14, at 7.45, "Bjornstjerne Bjornson's *In Gods Way*"; 15, at 7.45, "The Frauds of Christian History"; 16, at 7.45, "Religion, Science, and the End of the World"; 17, at 7.45, "Professor Schafer and the 'Origin of Life.'"

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.

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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.

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