

# THE Freethinker

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PRICE TWOPENCE

*For I think that all right use of life, and the one secret of life, is to pave ways for the firmer footing of those who succeed us.—GEORGE MEREDITH.*

## A Great Book on Religion.

AS a seat of learning Oxford has had an exceedingly interesting though somewhat chequered history. The leaders of the Methodist revival were nearly all Oxford men, as were also the authors of the famous *Essays and Reviews*. About the middle of the nineteenth century, the university became enamored of Mill's philosophy, and a kind of phenomenal Idealism has reigned there ever since. When M. Taine visited Oxford, on the occasion of the meeting of the British Association there in 1860, he met a young Englishman of genius, whom he questioned as to the philosophy of his country. After listening to the scientific papers, and examining the museums, the great French writer said to the Englishman, "You have no philosophers; you have savants, but not thinkers." The young gentleman, thrown upon his defence, named, as the original thinkers of England, Benjamin Jowett and John Stuart Mill. Jowett was a great teacher, but not a great philosopher. Theologically he was looked upon as a dangerous heresiarch. It was with him that the idea of the *Essays and Reviews* originated; and he shared to the full the cruel persecution to which the authors were subjected for many years. His *Epistles of St. Paul* created a tremendous sensation in the theological world. Mark Pattison was another theological heretic, whose works were for a time of immense influence. Oxonian heretics have been by no means rare. Only six years ago a Fellow and Tutor at Merton College, Mr. H. W. Garrod, published a heretical book, entitled *The Religion of All Good Men*, which fell like a bomb upon the theological camp. But Jowett and Pattison, though heterodox, were Christians, and championed their own versions of Christianity. At last, however, an Oxford Professor has just issued a volume in which he sets out to say all the good he can about Paganism. The author is the brilliant Greek scholar, Professor Gilbert Murray, to whom we were already indebted for most charming translations of some of the plays of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. The present work, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, is one of the boldest books ever published from a Christian university. Professor Murray believes in religion, but admits that there can be no such thing as religious knowledge. He says:—

"In the first place, religion essentially deals with the uncharted region of human experience. A large part of human life has been thoroughly surveyed and explored; we understand the causes at work; and we are not bewildered by the problems. That is the domain of positive knowledge. But all around us on every side is an uncharted region, just fragments of the fringe of it explored, and those imperfectly; it is with this that religion deals. And secondly we may note that religion deals with its own province not tentatively, by the normal methods of patient intellectual research, but directly, and by methods of emotion, or sub-conscious apprehension" (p. 18).

To what extent any religious system is regarded by him as being anything but mere superstition, it is

difficult to tell; but it is unquestionable that he would not hesitate to pronounce all theological dogmas false. "Superstition," he says, "is the name given to a low or bad religion, to the kind of religion we disapprove." The four stages of Greek religion are so described as to lead one to infer that in the Professor's opinion no religion can be wholly true at any stage in its development. The first stage he calls an "Age of Ignorance." Dr. Preuss uses stronger words still, namely "Primal Stupidity." This "Age of Ignorance," this "Primal Stupidity" is regarded as "the normal beginning of all religion, or almost as the normal raw material out of which religion is made." Then comes the Olympian or classical stage, the stage immortalised in the Homeric poems. In the first stage there were no gods, but only qualities which Homer converted into man-like personalities. The Olympian gods were super-men and super-women. They were not supposed to have created the world, but simply to have conquered it. Professor Murray pokes fun at them thus:—

"When they have conquered their kingdoms, what do they do? Do they attend to the government? Do they promote agriculture? Do they practise trades and industries? Not a bit of it. Why should they do any honest work? They find it easier to live on the revenues and blast with thunderbolts the people who do not pay. They are conquering chieftains, royal buccaneers. They fight, and feast, and play, and make music; they drink deep, and roar with laughter at the lame smith who waits on them. They are never afraid, except of their own king. They never tell lies, except in love and war" (p. 65).

Now, if "Primal Stupidity" be "the normal raw material out of which religion is made," one would naturally infer that at no stage in its history can religion be true, though at some stages it may embody certain elements of truth. In its second stage, as well as in its first, Greek religion was false; and it was a failure in both. The Professor says:—

"The Olympian Religion did not merely fail: it did worse. To make the elements of a nature-religion human is inevitably to make them vicious. There is no great moral harm in worshipping a thunderstorm, even though the lightning strikes the good and evil quite recklessly. There is no need to pretend that the lightning is exercising a wise and righteous choice. But when once you worship an imaginary quasi-human being who throws the lightning, you are in a dilemma. Either you have to admit that you are worshipping and flattering a being with no moral sense, because he happens to be dangerous, or else you have to invent reasons for his wrath against the people who happen to be struck. And they are pretty sure to be bad reasons. The god, if personal, becomes capricious and cruel" (p. 88).

Dr. Murray bestows praise upon the Olympian system, not for its truth, but for its beauty. It was so highly artistic. "Truth, no doubt, is greater than beauty; but in many matters beauty can be attained and truth cannot" (p. 93). The Professor admires Olympianism also, not because it was a religious faith, but because "it was at least a vital force in the shaping of cities and societies which remain after two thousand years a type to the world of beauty and freedom and high endeavor" (p. 94).

The third stage of Greek religion reaches roughly from Plato to Paul, "a period based on the consciousness of manifold failure, and consequently touched



both with morbidness and with that spiritual exaltation which is so often the companion of morbidness." The propaganda of Hellenism was a heroic attempt to redeem the world from its corruption and barbarism; but it failed, with the result that people lost self-confidence and hope, and learned to depreciate the present transitory and imperfect life, and to fix their minds upon an imaginary world in which all their desires would be abundantly satisfied. The fourth stage was only an accentuation of the third, "when the old religion in the time of Julian roused itself for a last spiritual protest against the all-conquering 'Atheism' of the Christians" (p. 18). Christianity conquered and Paganism was crushed. The controversy, the conflict between the two was not of long duration, and Professor Murray characterises it thus:—

"As in other wars, each side had its wise men and its foolish, its good men and its evil. Like other conquerors, these conquerors were often treacherous and brutal; like other vanquished, these vanquished have been tried at the bar of history without benefit of counsel, have been condemned in their absence and died with their lips sealed. The polemic literature of Christianity is loud and triumphant, the books of the Pagans have been destroyed" (p. 180).

In all its stages alike, Greek religion was a failure, and the inevitable inference is that it failed simply because it was not true. But has not Christianity been equally a failure? The asceticism that crept into Greek religion during the Hellenistic period was taken bodily over by the Christians. Contempt for this world and retirement from it came to be considered as highest virtues. As Professor Murray says, "the Emperor Julian was probably as proud of his fireless cell and the crowding lice in his beard and cassock as an average Egyptian monk. The ascetic movement grew, as we all know, to be measureless and insane. It seemed to be almost another form of lust and to have the same affinities with cruelty" (p. 181). Our author is marvellously fair and moderate; but in spite of his eagerness to speak ill of no religion, and of his desire to praise Christianity, he cannot be blind to "its comparative indifference to the virtues which are specially incumbent on a governing class, such as statesmanship, moderation, truthfulness, active courage, learning, culture, and public spirit" (p. 179).

This is truly a great book, and may prove epoch-making. The author is clearly religiously inclined, but what his religion is, if he has one, we are not told. He disbelieves in all personal deities. To state that religion deals with an uncharted region is to admit that its truth or falsehood cannot be established. It is an affair of the emotions purely; but it cannot be an affair of the emotions unless it consists of certain beliefs concerning the uncharted regions, and it is practically impossible to distinguish between beliefs and dogmas. Indeed, they are really identical. Even in the New Testament faith is treated as if it were the same thing as supernatural knowledge (John xvii. 8, 25, 26). On this point Professor Murray is perfectly sound:—

"I confess it seems strange to me as I write here, to reflect that at this moment many of my friends and most of my fellow creatures are, as far as one can judge, quite confident that they possess supernatural knowledge. As a rule, each individual belongs to some body which has received in writing the results of a Divine revelation. I cannot share in any such feeling" (p. 152).

How unutterably foolish are they who allow themselves to be carried away by emotions artificially roused by supernatural beliefs which are completely outside the realm of knowledge. Professor Murray affirms that the religious region is uncharted; but is not the very existence of such a region a mere dream of the fancy? The Professor declares that "as far as knowledge and conscious reason will go, we should follow resolutely their austere guidance"; but is it expedient even to imagine that we can go any farther?

J. T. LLOYD.

## The Primitive Mind and the Beginnings of Religion.

ONE of the outstanding contributions of Herbert Spencer to the science of sociology was his description of social life and social institutions in terms of psychology. Whereas other writers had emphasised the initiatory power of physical conditions, Spencer, in his *Principles of Sociology*, placed chief stress upon the emotional and intellectual state of primitive man. Since Spencer wrote, this conception has been steadily gaining ground, with the result that most of the leading European and American writers on sociology recognise, or are well on the way towards recognition of, the important truth that the essence of social life lies, not in a common need for food, shelter, and protection, but in a community of emotional and intellectual life. The need for food and protection is common to all life; it is the additional factor that gives us true social phenomena. The form of this cementing mental life may be, in turn, determined by physical conditions; but once it exists, it reacts on the physical environment and rapidly becomes the controlling factor.

Now, there is no question that the most powerful force of which primitive peoples are conscious is that which goes under the name of religion. Frazer has very properly pointed out that "the continuity of human development has been such that most, if not all, of the great institutions which still form the framework of a civilised community have their roots in savagery," and has, with equal propriety, dismissed those theorists who fail to reckon "with the influence of superstition, which pervades the life of the savage, and has contributed to build up the social organism to an incalculable extent." The recognition of this does not involve the admission that social life could not have existed in the absence of religion, it only means that the essential forms of social existence are in primitive times expressed in a religious guise. It is part of the truth that man is always under the dominion of his emotional and intellectual life, whether that life be rich or poor, expansive or contracted.

This being taken for granted, the immediate inquiry is: How comes it that man should express his social life in terms of religion? To answer this question one must bear in mind a further truth, which is that while man is largely at the mercy of his ideas and his beliefs, these in turn are determined by the stock of knowledge available in the society to which he belongs. Thus, if one were to ask an educated man to-day the meaning of some striking occurrence in the physical world, the reply would be in terms that implied a considerable development of scientific knowledge. He would have at his command the labors of generations of scientific workers, the products of which had become part of his environment and of his social heritage. But with primitive man this knowledge was yet to be, the heritage had to be created. The social environment that determined his ideas was vastly different to that which surrounds us to-day. Like the modern, he explained things in terms of the forces known to him. His reasoning was determined by his knowledge. If his inferences were faulty, it is not because his mind worked differently, but simply because of a difference of data. Given the premises of the savage, and the savage conclusion follows. The savage is quite as logical as the modern; the knowledge of the modern is more accurate. Hence the vital difference in their conclusions. Hence, too, the dominance of religious ideas in primitive life.

A half-century of work by anthropologists has made one thing clear. This is that while the modern scientific mind explains man by the world, working from without inward, primitive man explains the world by himself, working from within outward. There is substantial agreement among those able to express an authoritative opinion—an agreement supported by evidence that simply had



nothing against it—that the world of primitive man is overpoweringly animistic. In the absence of that mass of knowledge, which the modern accepts as part of his social heritage, humanity commences its intellectual career by endowing the world with the same conscious personality that is possessed by itself. The only forces conceived are living ones. They are to be dreaded exactly as human beings are dreaded, and appeased as human beings are appeased. And the problem before the savage is a very real one. He is not concerned with the elaboration of theories, or with the desire to gratify some vague "spiritual yearning." His difficulty is how to control, or placate, those personal powers upon which everything is believed to depend. He would willingly ignore them if he could, and would cheerfully dispense with their presence if he believed things would not be affected by their absence. But there they are, inescapable facts that have to be reckoned with.

Miss Mary Kingsley, in her *West African Studies*, well describes the general outlook of the primitive mind in the following passage:—

"To the African the Universe is made up of matter permeated by spirit. Everything happens by the direct action of spirit. The thing he does himself is done by the spirit within him acting on his body.....everything that is done by other things is done by their spirit associated with their particular mass of matter.....The native will point out to you a lightning-stricken tree and tell you that its spirit has been killed. He will tell you, when the earthen cooking pot is broken, it has lost its spirit. If his weapon fails him, it is because someone has stolen its spirit or made it weak by means of his influence on spirits of the same class.....In every action of his life he shows you how he lives with a great spirit world around him. You see him before he starts out to fight rubbing stuff into his weapon to strengthen the spirit that is in it; telling it the while what care he has taken of it.....You see him leaning over the face of the water talking to its spirit with proper incantations, asking it when it meets an enemy of his to upset his canoe and destroy him.....If a man is knocked on the head with a club, or shot by an arrow or a bullet, the cause of death is clearly the malignity of persons using these weapons; and so it is easy to think that a man killed by the falling of a tree, or by the upsetting of a canoe in the surf, or in a whirlpool in the river is also a victim of some being using these things as weapons. For a man holding this view, it seems both natural and easy to regard disease as a manifestation of the wrath of some invisible being, and to construct that intricate system which we find among the Africans, and agree to call Witchcraft, Fetish, or Juju."

Miss Kingsley is dealing specifically with West Africa, but hers is a description that applies, in general terms, to the whole of the primitive world. For the savage philosophy of things is simple, comprehensive, and given the data, logical. He does not divide the world into natural and supernatural; it is all one. The supernatural only appears as a distinct category when a definite knowledge of the natural has arisen to which it can be opposed. He has no such distinctions as that of the material and immaterial; even death itself has a different appearance to that which it subsequently wears. To the modern mind, death puts a sharp termination to life. To the primitive intelligence, there is no such ending. Death is no more a break than is sleep; the "dead" man simply goes on living. He is still there; he may be incarnated in a tree, or a stone, or an animal; or he may remain one of the innumerable company of tribal ghosts. But he remains, a force to be reckoned with, and the need for dealing with these ghostly personages lies at the root of most, if not all, fundamental religious ceremonies.

Once this initial blunder has been committed, daily experience seems to give it the strongest confirmation. The only thing that could correct this blunder is knowledge, and that is not merely a plant of very slow growth, there is a positive danger in its application to religious beliefs. Above all, there is the proof conveyed to the savage mind by the presence of disease, mental and physical. I do not, at present, want to labor this point; it is enough to say that all over the uncivilised or semi-civilised

world there is one prevailing theory of disease, which is, that it is due to the malignant activity of ghostly beings. Almost any decent work dealing with savage life will furnish proof of this statement, and readers of the Old and New Testament hardly need to be told that this is the Biblical theory of disease. We see it also in full activity in the Christian Church. One of the great fathers of the Church, Origen, laid it down that, "It is demons which produce famine, unfruitfulness, corruption, and pestilences." Saint Augustine also said that "All diseases of Christians can be ascribed to demons." On this topic the leaders of the Christian Church, and the New Testament Jesus, were upon precisely the level of Miss Kingsley's West African. The Church of England still contains in its Articles an authorisation to its clergy to cast out demons, while the theory of demoniacal possession held its place in Christian teaching until at least a century ago.

It is not, then, difficult to conceive the kind of environment in which religion is born and to which religious ideas are adapted. Situated in a world where everything has yet to be learned, man's earliest attempts at understanding are of necessity blundering and tentative. He sees himself, his own passions, strength, and weaknesses reflected in the world around him. This is the outstanding, governing fact in primitive life. Leave out this consideration and primitive life becomes an insoluble enigma. It is in this mental atmosphere that religion is born. It is not something that can be considered apart from the rest of primitive social life, since it permeates it and colors all conscious action. The mistake once made is perpetuated. This is brought about partly because of the conservatism that attaches to all established ideas, partly because of vested interests that it subserves, partly because of the deliberate cultivation of abnormal nervous states and the misinterpretation of normal ones. From this point of view both the phenomena of sexuality and of disease have played no small part in confirming, strengthening, and so perpetuating religious beliefs. How much this has been the case has never yet, I believe, been fully realised. But to me it is tolerably certain that had there not been offered to people evidence in the shape of visions, ecstatic states, etc., with an erroneous interpretation of activities that are purely social and secular in origin and application, religion would now be a negligible force in all civilised societies. Religion has not been without its "evidences," or it could not have continued in existence. And the hopelessness of the religious outlook is most clearly seen by our taking all the facts of the religious life and proving them susceptible to a non-religious explanation.

C. COHEN.

### Curiosities of Religious Bigotry in Spain.

THE Madrid telegrams have just lately announced that the King of Spain has pardoned Pablo Garcia, the soldier who was sentenced to imprisonment for refusing to kneel down before the Host. Garcia was that *rara avis*, a Spanish Protestant, and when present with his company at church he refused to obey the military regulations which require that soldiers attending church shall obey the officers' commands to prostrate themselves before the consecrated elements which, by the magical incantations of the priest, are converted into the body and blood, the bones and tissue, and the full anatomical parts and parcels that belonged to our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For this heinous offence Pablo Garcia was sentenced, on appeal from an inferior court which had acquitted him, to six months' imprisonment. If he had been rushing about in a motor-car, and had killed a few small boys and a stray apple-woman, it is most likely that he would have purged his offence by paying a slight fine, or by receiving a pompous lecture from the magisterial bench. But, of course, there is a differential tariff



of punishments for offences against Our Father which art in heaven and those against our brother who is a mere man in the street.

The release of the imprisoned soldier is naturally a matter of rejoicing to every lover of liberty of thought and speech. The sentence upon the brave Protestant soldier raised a great commotion in Spain, and gave rise to much discussion in the Cortes. The Radical, Socialist, Republican, and Freethinking organs of public opinion were the chief vehicles of indignation against this monstrous conviction, and but for their protests and the changed aspect which, through their action, Spanish politics have assumed since the virtual political suicide, a few weeks ago, of Maura, Pablo Garcia would now be eating his heart out in a fetid Spanish prison, for want of other nourishment. When the laws of a country set up a God and compel the reluctant outsider to prostrate himself before the symbol or altar erected in his honor or for his exploitation, the natural result is to turn every honest man into an adversary of a religion which upholds its supremacy by the terrors of prison.

All this has happened in twentieth-century Spain, although Article 11 of the Constitution declares that no Spanish citizen shall be molested on account of his religious beliefs. The establishment of that charter of liberty cost the Spanish people oceans of blood in cruel strife of a singularly prolonged and atrocious character, and it is an ignominious reminder of the fragile character of mere paper parliamentary guarantees of freedom that three generations after the battle had been "won," an arbitrary, albeit meritorious, exercise of the royal prerogative becomes necessary in order to pardon an offence that had apparently ceased to be a crime. No wonder Shakespeare called the law an ass.

The ordinary penal law as to religious offences in Spain is antiquated and full of perils for the free exercise of private judgment and for liberty of thought and conscience. A few examples may suffice. There is in the Penal Code an article, number 240, which punishes with imprisonment and a fine of 250 to 2,500 pesetas (a peseta is equal to a franc) any person who publicly brings into contempt any of the dogmas of any of the religions having proselytes in Spain. In practice, the interpretation of this law has degenerated into a species of gag upon the free expression of ideas in Spain. The terminology of this and of other legal dispositions of an analogous character suffers from the usual legal vice of vagueness to such an extent that diverse and conflicting interpretations have been made of the general provisions of the law according to whether the judges administering the same happened to be believers or unbelievers, Catholics, Freethinkers, or indifferentists in matters of religion. According to a well-known Spanish deputy and journalist, Alvaro de Albornoz, the Supreme Tribunal has adjudicated in various cases that have come before it to the effect that the denial of Christian dogmas does not constitute a crime, although the denial has been expressed in an excessive form, it being held that what the law chastises is the gross and insulting expression of contempt. At other times, the Supreme Tribunal has considered punishable the expressions of opinion that were merely lacking in respect. Certain other tribunals have inflicted penalties for the mere denial of Christian dogmas; for indulging either in scientific criticism of Christianity, or in Rationalist criticism of religion.

A fine example of the vagueness of terminology, which thus leaves the interpretation of Spanish law at the mercy of the judges, is offered to us by the application of Article 586 of the Penal Code, which punishes as an offence the omission to uncover one's head at the passing of the Viaticum or before a religious procession or at an interment. In certain judgments under this Article, the test of crime is whether the actions complained of shall have been committed with intention to wound the sentiments of religion, and whether they did or did not, in reality, signify mere carelessness or simply indiffer-

ence. Other judgments have been given in which it has been declared that no offence has been committed when the refusal to salute the Viaticum has been motivated by the fear of compromising one's health. In another judgment, the constitutional principle has been openly declared that no man shall be molested for his religious opinions, and this has been followed by the legal dictum that he who *abstains* from honoring the Host, or *refuses* to take off his hat to a passing God, commits no offence if his action springs from an anxiety "not to allow his conscience to be violated, and because he believes that the law of God prohibits the doing of the act." On other occasions the law has taken into account the greater or lesser degree of solemnity attending the religious act; thus, it has been declared that the refusal to salute the Viaticum is not punishable when you come across it in a public road, the priest at the time not being in his robes and unaccompanied by acolytes. On the other hand, certain judges have laid it down that neither the principle of religious toleration nor that of liberty of religious profession absolves one from the respect and external marks of consideration due to the collective manifestations of religious sentiments, and have constituted it an offence against religion to remain uncovered at the passage of a religious procession, of a funeral party, or of the Viaticum. In accordance with that dictum, a professor at the secular school at Orense was recently condemned to two months' imprisonment for having refused, at the instance of the priest and of the Municipal Guard, to salute the Holy Viaticum. The case, which happened on March 27 last, was carried to the Supreme Court of Justice at Madrid, and, although the Court recognised that the offender, Don Luengo, was only casually passing along the street when he met God being taken out for a walk, the appeal was rejected, with costs, and the sentence of the inferior court was upheld. The result of this decision is that in Spain no unbeliever can venture into the public streets without a feeling of insecurity.

It comes to this, then, that at the present time, in Spain, a man can be prosecuted for blasphemy and receive much more copious correction than our recent Leeds blasphemers, without venturing upon speaking unpalatable things in the street about religion in crude language easily understood of the common people, but merely for refusing to conform with ceremonial deference to the religious symbols or acts of the priest. The offender of this sort is prosecuted in Spain as for the crime of "mocking at religion." It often happens that the priest, on noting some "mockers" who keep their hats on in the presence of the Host, etc., rushes out of the ranks of the procession, threatens him, and even strikes him—all this without prejudice to the holy man's legal right to obtain the instant arrest of the offender. In such cases the prosecution and imprisonment, not of the insolent priest, but of his unfortunate victim, always happen. Things have now come to such a pass that peaceful people in Spain who are not anxious to be punched first and imprisoned afterwards actually flee into the back streets when they notice that a religious procession is passing along their way. In Spain, at the present time, there are several thousand victims of these vexatious prosecutions. These Spanish criminals, like the police-made criminals recently created at Leeds and elsewhere in England, committed their blasphemy in the public streets; they offended public order; their act or inaction constitutes legally a mockery of religion. The bigots in England might ponder the analogy and begin to blush.

The case of Pablo Garcia, the Spanish marine of Ferrol, although a very grave case of religious persecution, is only the last to date of an interminable line of Spanish martyrs in modern times immolated upon the altars of religious persecution. A worse case of flagrant injustice, perhaps, is the sentence pronounced nearly a year ago against the well-known Freethinker and ex-Catholic priest, José Ferrandiz, better known by friends and foes as El Padre



Ferrandiz. What was his atrocious crime? It was this: that in an article in *El Progreso*, about two years ago, he stated that the young priests looked up to the Church with veneration; those who were a more advanced in years looked her face to face in a critical spirit; and those of mature age looked down upon her with disdain and hatred, having been skinned alive by her injustice.

This was not a very savage affront to Christianity, and the treatment dealt out to Ferrandiz for his epigrammatic language deserves to be recorded for the benefit of certain people who affect to believe that Christian judges in the twentieth century are not to be tempted by appeals to their religious sentiment to sully the fair annals of judicial moderation in the administration of the law as affecting Freethinkers. The judgment delivered last March in this preposterous case was a sentence of four years, six months, and I forget how many days of imprisonment; the payment of costs; and a fine of 250 pesetas. The sentence of death was not pronounced, but no doubt there was the savage desire to inflict that penalty, for no twentieth-century judge, without being a Torquemada at heart, could bring his lips to utter so fearful a sentence without a secret longing to destroy the life of his unhappy victim. José Ferrandiz is not an illiterate nobody. He is one of the chief ornaments of the Radical and Freethought press in Spain. He has made two notable contributions to Spanish Freethought literature by his translation of Strauss' *New Life of Jesus* and his translation of that masterly work of Lanfrey's, the *Political History of the Popes*,\* which he has enriched with a Prologue and by some additional chapters, carries Lanfrey's story down to the pontificate of the ineffable Sarto. Unless this savage sentence is quashed on appeal, this distinguished ex-priest, who sought the arduous life of a journalist and man of letters in exchange for the pious sloth of a monastic career, and whose able articles on religion have for some years been a notable feature in Spanish Radical papers, will be swallowed up in a loathsome Spanish prison for the better part of five years for stating in cold print what he knows to be the opinion of the Church entertained by many of the liveried and consecrated servants of the Lord.

Whilst these odious principles of intolerance are thus consecrated by law and usage in Spain, the new Franco-Spanish Treaty as to Morocco establishes, in Article 8, the principle of absolute toleration for the new Moslem subjects of Spain in the Rif. This concession, absolutely opposed to the Catholic traditions of Spain in its historic relations with the Moors, is virtually the official recognition by the Spanish Government of to-day of the criminal policy of religious persecution which tore the Spanish race into three sections (the Iberian, the Arab, and the Jewish), and decimated and impoverished the country. To-day, in the Rif, the Synagogue, the Moeque, and the Church are to enjoy equal liberty; and Spain gives an absolute guarantee to France, in a diplomatic document invested with the sanctity of international law, that the religious liberty and the external practice of all existing religions in Morocco shall be respected. On African soil Spain plants the banner of religious toleration and places the criticism of Christian dogma under the protection of her flag. No wonder that the proud Spaniard, who cannot call his soul his own for fear he may meet in the streets an arrogant and ignorant priest "conducting the Sacred Form" (to quote the Judgment in the case of Don Laengo), envies the fuller religious liberty of the semi-savages of the Rif.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

## Free Speech at Edinburgh.

LORD SKERRINGTON, in the Court of Session to-day, gave judgment in the action by John M'Ara, 3 Guthrie-street, Edinburgh, against the Magistrates of Edinburgh and others. Pursuer sought declarator that the magistrates had no authority to issue a proclamation prohibiting the citizens from holding meetings at the Mound, Princes-street, unless permits were obtained from the defenders, and interdict was sought against the defenders issuing such a proclamation, and granting such permits. Pursuer also sued for £250 damages in respect of alleged wrongous arrest for a breach of the proclamation. His lordship found that the magistrates were not empowered by common law or by any statute to issue the proclamation, and that the pursuer was not bound to obey it. His lordship found it unnecessary to pronounce any declaration or grant interdict. He dismissed the conclusion for damages so far as against the Corporation, but as regards the magistrates allowed the pursuer to lodge an issue without pronouncing any decision as to the competency or relevancy of his claim of damages. No expenses were found due to or by either party as between pursuer and the Town Council.

### TITLE TO SUE.

In the course of his opinion his lordship, referring to defenders' plea of no title to sue, said the magistrates of Edinburgh had issued a proclamation threatening their fellow-citizens with penalties, but they now wished to avoid a judgment as to its legality. His lordship did not understand that policy on their part, or why the pursuer should not have a title to challenge the legality of a proclamation which attempted to stop a practice which he had pursued for years without objection upon the part of the civic authorities. The defenders' counsel argued that the only remedy open to a citizen who objected to the proclamation was to disobey it and to plead the illegality in defence to a prosecution. That argument seemed to his lordship contrary to good sense and good order. He did not see why, in order to obtain a judgment upon a purely legal question, a citizen must expose himself to arrest and imprisonment or why the magistrates must be exposed to claims of damages. His lordship dissented from the view that the public had only a bare right of passage over a country highway or over the streets of a burgh.

### THE ACT OF 1606.

The magistrates maintained that their proclamation was justified by the Act of 1606. The question whether that Act was still in force depended primarily upon the construction which ought to be given to the decision of the High Court of Justiciary in the case of Deakin v. Milne, 1882. That case might be quoted as an authority for the proposition that the Act was not in desuetude, or alternatively for the proposition that the magistrates of a burgh had power at common law to issue a proclamation prohibiting a meeting, with the result that any person who disobeyed was guilty of a substantive offence. His lordship had come to the conclusion that the judges in that case did not intend to affirm either of these propositions. His lordship read the opinions as meaning that in the special circumstances the magistrates had power to prohibit a procession which was likely to cause a breach of the peace, but he did not think the judges intended to affirm that disobedience to the proclamation was a substantive offence apart from breach of the peace. It was, his lordship thought, certain that both at the present day and as far back as the memory of man could carry the offence prohibited by the 1606 Act was not only practised without being checked, but was no longer considered or dealt with in this country as an offence against the law.

### NO POWER TO LICENSE.

Apart from the Act of 1606, the magistrates had no power to institute a licensing system in order to prevent annoyance, disorder, and obstruction, or even breach of the peace, consequent upon the holding of meetings upon the Mound. A person convicted of causing an obstruction, or of conduct which, if continued, would produce reasonable apprehension of "the breaking up of the social peace," might be fined or ordered to find security for his future good behavior. The proclamation, if effectual, would dispense with the necessity of both trial and conviction, and would subject a citizen to disabilities merely because the magistrates, in their private room, had come to the conclusion that his conduct was calculated to produce obstruction or breach of the peace. His lordship could figure nothing more arbitrary or unconstitutional. For the purpose of preserving the public peace the magistrates of Edinburgh had, in addition to the powers pertaining to magistrates, the powers of Justices of the Peace and of Sheriffs. His lordship assumed that if they thought it necessary they might lawfully issue a proclamation prohibiting the holding of any

The son of a clergyman was asked if his father would accept a call that had come to him with the offer of increased salary. The boy replied that the old man was praying for light and his mother was packing up.—George Macdonald.

\* Both works are published by Sempere y Cia, Valencia.



meetings which, in their opinion, were likely to lead to a breach of the peace, and they might warn the citizens that persons who disobeyed would be liable to prosecution for obstruction and breach of the peace, but they could not lawfully threaten the citizens with penalties for contravening their proclamation.

#### A USURPATION OF PUBLIC RIGHT.

The proclamation was a usurpation by the magistrates of the right which belonged to the citizens as represented by the Corporation to regulate the use of the streets so as to benefit so far as possible the community as a whole. It would be a fitting question for the consideration of the Town Council whether those citizens who derived edification, instruction, or amusement from street preachers ought to be allowed to gratify this taste on the Mound although other members of the community might object to the inevitable noise and crowd and to occasional coarse language. Even if the judgment of the Town Council were adverse, the pursuer would be entitled to be heard by his counsel or agent before the Sheriff allowed any bye-law prohibiting meetings on the Mound. The proclamation rode roughshod over those rights and liberties.—*Edinburgh Evening News* (Jan. 28).

### Acid Drops.

Now that the war is breaking out again, and the Bulgarians promise to give the world "a new surprise," we pity the poor Mohammedans who come in their way. We refer to the civil and not the military population. The latter will give a good account of themselves.

What a curious boast of the Bulgarians that was about the surrender of Adrianople. Seven weeks ago it was bound to surrender in a few days. It appears to be still as far off surrendering. Turkish soldiers are not so easily beaten when they have food for their stomachs and ammunition for their guns and rifles. The "great Bulgarian victories" at the beginning of the war were due to the Turkish armies being caught in a helpless condition.

Very late in the day, and now that the matter can no longer be ignored, one of the religious weeklies has broken silence concerning the massacre of Mohammedans by Christians in the Balkan struggle. The *Guardian*, in its issue for January 31, without any special words of condemnation, chides the Turks for overstating "as recklessly as they do the number of peaceable Moslems butchered in Macedonia by so-called Christians." It quotes the *Times* correspondent's estimate that 20,000 have been massacred in Macedonia, but has no words of condemnation for the butchers. There is a half-hearted attempt at justification even in the remark that the massacre of Christians when the Crescent was in the ascendant was hardly less terrible. Its final comment is, "What can be done to put a stop to this state of things it is difficult to say." We hardly know which is the more contemptible—the silence of the religious press concerning the massacres by the soldiers of the Cross, or the attempt at condoning the evil now that it can no longer be hidden.

The Rev. R. F. Horton is visiting India, and having spent two or three weeks there, feels able to express an authoritative opinion on the condition and needs of the Indian people. We do not observe that Dr. Horton has discovered the development in India—in connection with the cotton industry particularly—of one of the worst features of the old English Factory System, but that is what one would expect. The main thing with Dr. Horton is whether the people are properly religious or not. If they are, nothing else is of any great consequence. If they are not, then all is wrong. Now, curiously enough, Dr. Horton has discovered, what a good many people in London could have told him, that the people of India have "far more of genuine and inward religion" than we have. He says that, "looking at our own godless and irreligious people at home, who never worship, and have no vital creed, or even religious interest, I am very ready to admit that India is more religious than England." But the point is that this religion, even though "genuine and inward," is not the right kind of religion. "What is wanted is not religion, but a good religion, a religion which builds character, and makes a strong and progressive state possible. In these all-important respects the irreligion of England is better than the religion of India."

Now, here is a very curious situation. A large proportion of our people at home are "godless and irreligious," and in

developing character and a progressive state this irreligion is better than some people's religion. Yet Dr. Horton wants to see India Christian! But, unless he at the same time imports this godless and irreligious element, there is no security that India will become progressive and develop character. Of course, Dr. Horton has a saving clause. "Our worst people at home," he says, "are personalities; centuries of Christian tradition have given them the sense of freewill and responsibility." So that it apparently comes to this: Our strong progressive characters at home are the products of Christian tradition (it must be assumed that there are no strong characters without a Christian tradition, Japan for instance), but this development in turn leads to a personality that becomes "godless and irreligious," without ceasing to make a strong and progressive state possible. We owe our strength of character to Christianity; our strength of character ends in our rejection of Christianity. It really looks as though Dr. Horton is in a bit of a muddle.

Here is another specimen of Dr. Horton's wisdom. The Moslem countries, he tells us, are all going by the board. "They cannot find the foundation of a stable society or of a just administration. The reason lies in the Koran itself. That inspired book is the limitation of the Moslem mind, and it does not contain the principles on which an enlightened and progressive community can be formed." Now, it is about as reasonable to judge a Mohammedan people by the Koran as it is to judge a Christian people by the Bible. Christians do not stone heretics to death, they do not burn witches, they do not practise non-resistance, they do not carry out a hundred-and-one other ridiculous and criminal things that are taught in the Bible. And they will say in defence that the Bible must be interpreted in the light of the present age. Yet they take the Koran, and quietly ignore the fact that Mohammedan teachers adopt quite the same principle in relation to the Koran. An having said this, we beg to say very definitely that the Koran is the superior of the New Testament in so far as presenting teachings on which a State may be built are concerned. The one precept in the Koran, "A ruler who appoints any man to an office, when there is in his dominion another man better qualified for it, sins against God and the State," is superior to any counsel on the subject in the New Testament. There the attitude towards the State is negative or passively submissive. Had Christians been tied down to the New Testament, which practically ignores both the family and the State, society would have ceased to exist. The salvation of Christians has been that the very extravagance of New Testament teaching compelled modification. A piece of advice that is impossible in practice is really less dangerous than bad counsel that can be carried into action.

Two poor Jesusites are in the latest list of Wills. Rev. William Hart-Smith, of Launceston, left £7,453. Rev. John Thomas Pearse, of Chiddingstone, Kent, left £2,508. These are small fortunes in comparison with many that we chronicle, but they would have appeared colossal to Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Here is a bigger clerical fortune—though by no means the biggest. Rev. Alfred Turner, of Hillersdon-avenue, Barnes, S.W., left £26,331. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth."

Churchmen pray, in the language of the Prayer Book, against "battle, murder, and sudden death," but they are no more preserved from these things than other people are. Canon Edward Townsend, vicar of St. Peter's, Fulham, died on the last Sunday evening in January at Lezant, near Launceston. Soon after supper he fell forward in his chair and died. "One thing befalleth them; yea, they have all one breath."

Mr. Harold Begbie is always "gassing" about something or other. It is the way he gets his living. His latest subject is "the soul of the convict"—as though it were a speciality in "spirits." What the convict really wants, according to Mr. Begbie, is religion, more religion, and still more religion. Well, there ought not to be much difficulty about that; Mr. Begbie himself has religion enough, apparently, to supply "the blooming lot." Unfortunately, however, his prescription is not as satisfactory as he fancies. Mr. Thomas Holmes, who knows a thousand times more about prison life and prisoners than Mr. Begbie does, plainly tells him so. "If Mr. Begbie will make himself acquainted with the mental and physical condition of the bulk of the prisoners he will see that a great deal is wanted in addition to spiritual regeneration, the fact being that no one can find social and industrial positions for a great number of the prisoners because of their disabilities. About 1,000 convicts



are discharged from prison every year, many of them certified as feeble-minded; others suffer from epilepsy, or other kinds of fits, or from physical afflictions, and still more are very aged, and their day of useful labor is past. These people can only do a very small amount of work when under control, at liberty their industrial value is nil." But all this is below the notice of Mr. Harold Begbie.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer seems to think that the world would come to an end if it lost the privilege of listening to his evangelical voice. He talks on every subject under the sun, and always conveys the impression that his one business in life is to set the Church and the world right on every conceivable point. According to the *North Mail* for January 29, he informed the Novocastrians that "there was something in the air." Everywhere, among all sorts of people, civilised and savage, in the East as well as in the West, "there was something in the air"; and this something, of course, was the spirit of Christ. There is something in the air, it is true, but not the spirit of Christ, which has red-dened Christendom from end to end with innocent blood. It is the spirit of humanity that is in the air; and this spirit is working its way to the throne by gradually casting out the spirit of Christ.

Another foolish utterance that fell from Mr. Meyer at Newcastle was this: "There is going to be a great revival in England. I know it is coming before many months are gone, and our nets will be so full of fish that they will burst." This prophecy is an old acquaintance. We have been personally familiar with it for forty years, and know there is nothing in it but wind. For the last forty years, instead of reviving, the Church has been steadily dying. Mr. Meyer himself knows this; and conscious of it, he has joined the Bishop of London in imploring the *Daily News* and *Leader* not to take their contemplated census of church and chapel attendance in the metropolis.

Sir John Benn, the leader of the Progressives on the London County Council, has issued an appeal to the Churches in connection with the forthcoming elections. The only passage we are concerned with here is one dealing with Sunday entertainments. Sir John Benn says:—

"Recent experiences in connection with picture palaces show that on this pressing question the Churches must at least insist that those entertainments shall not be run for private gain or by way of trade."

Except as an electioneering "dodge," we cannot congratulate Sir John Benn on his deliverance. We can appreciate a straightforward objection to any kind of entertainments on Sunday. We can also appreciate an advocacy of any entertainment so long as it is "wholesome and properly conducted." But anything in between seems clearly to involve stupidity or hypocrisy. A body such as the L.C.C. has an obvious right and duty to see that licensed places are properly conducted. But what justification has it for saying that, although an entertainment is quite unobjectionable—even on Sunday—those whose business it is to run such places shall make no profit whatever from them? Charity or no charity, the work involved is the same. If these entertainments are objectionable, can one conceive a more contemptible position than that of "We will consent to what we believe to be wrong providing you save our conscience by paying a few pounds into some charity"? And if they are unobjectionable, it is an act of sheer bigotry and tyranny to impose what is virtually a fine upon the owners of these picture shows. Sir John Benn does not take up the position of a straightforward bigot or of a clear-sighted public reformer. His appeal strikes one as a mere electioneering attempt to enlist the services of the most bigoted and ignorant section of Christians. We think it is about time that those responsible for Sunday entertainments plainly resisted this attempt to treat them as a kind of criminal class, subject to a weekly fine for appearing before the public.

Mr. Meyer is on the warpath against Sunday picture shows again. He sees that all is lost unless churches and chapels "stand together" as he puts it in defence of their trade monopoly. Not that he uses such a bald and sordid word as "trade," but that is what he really means. Meanwhile the Sunday picture shows are multiplying in London, and churches and chapels are getting emptier and emptier. And what will be the end thereof who knoweth?

Canon Christopher, who is ninety-three years of age, shows much activity in view of his chronology. He is also very optimistic. He invited a meeting at the Oxford Town Hall to listen to the eloquence of Prebendary H. E. Fox, secretary of the Church Missionary Society. This gentleman

had just returned from a visit to Japan, and he was bursting with the happy news that the Japanese were getting ready to adopt Christianity. The reason he gave was rather peculiar:—

"The Japanese Government has got alarmed at the decadence of a great deal of the national character by its touch with the Western world. The Japanese were distinctly a religious people, and were ready for Christianity."

Surely the Japanese were not such fools as that! Contact with Christians has corrupted them, so they are going to adopt the religion of their corrupters in order to set themselves right again! This is worthy of Bedlam.

We have heard that Japan was going to adopt Christianity any time for the last forty years. But she never does it—and she never will. The Japanese are a sensible people. They quite understand the Christian missionary business.

"No man," said the Rev. J. D. Jones, at Liverpool, the other day, "should be a minister who could be anything else." Mr. Jones may make his mind easy; there are few men who do become a minister who can be anything else. And of those who do, a portion find out their mistake and forsake the "sacred calling."

More consolation for the microcephalic pietist! The Bible Society publishes the following from Sir Sven Hedin:—

"With a strong and absolute belief in God and in His almighty protection I should not have been able to live alone in Asia's wildest regions for twelve years."

To make this more impressive, the letter is reproduced in facsimile. Readers, therefore, can see the actual calligraphy of the explorer, and that will, of course, carry still greater conviction. For a personal testimony in print is nothing like so strong as in a man's own handwriting. Personally, we were inclined to give Sir Sven Hedin all the credit for his travels and discoveries. Travellers like Nansen, Burton, and Winwood Reade managed to get through their work without the help of God, and it is strange that in the person of Sir Sven Hedin the race of explorers has so far degenerated. And in common justice, as God did part of the work, it is only fair that he should receive half the profits. Therefore, we hope that Sir Sven Hedin devotes fifty per cent. of his income from lectures, articles, and books to Church work. It would be depressing to find that God had not only helped Sir Sven Hedin to do his work, but was now being further exploited by way of advertisement.

Dr. Woodrow Wilson, the incoming Democratic President of the United States, is likely to raise the Philippines question. There is already a Bill before Congress proposing Home Rule for 8,000,000 Filipinos in eight years. This proposal has alarmed President Taft; indeed, all the "Imperialists," including Roosevelt, are against it. Taft denounces doing for the Filipinos what has already been done for the Cubans as a policy that is sure to end "in confusion, humiliation, and defeat." Like the wily fat gentleman he is, Taft appeals to religious prejudice in favor of the opposite policy. Listen to this from a recent speech of his at a Washington banquet:—

"Mr. Taft appealed to the Democratic leaders to ask not American officials nor American business men interested in Philippine trade, but missionaries of every denomination who are giving up their lives teaching religion and virtue in the tropics. They would agree that the Filipinos were not yet ready for self-government, and that if autonomy were forced upon them, no influence more discouraging to the march of Christian progress in those islands, whose guardianship providence had thrust upon the American people, could well be imagined."

Taft knows what the missionaries are really working for. That their object is to "teach religion" is a proposition that Taft himself must laugh at under the rose. As to their teaching "virtue," Taft must know that if they are able to do that their services are far more needed in the United States than in the Philippine Islands. The missionaries are looking, as far as possible, to the interests of the good Americans who send them out and pay them to "save the heathen"—who, by the way, are mostly Roman Catholics. They are prepared to take their solemn affidavits that the Filipinos are too bad a lot to be trusted to walk without U.S.A. crutches. The Filipinos require moral crutches, and the United States supplies them. The arrangement benefits both sides, and if the Filipinos don't see it they must be made to.

Dr. Boyd Carpenter, Dean of Westminster, goes to Boston and talks about tobacco, and his wonderful words are telegraphed across the Atlantic for the edification of the people



in England. One would hardly think a Christian preacher's opinions on such a subject were worth so much trouble and expense. It appears that Dr. Boyd Carpenter doesn't see why women shouldn't smoke as well as men. At present he talks only of cigarettes; perhaps he will go on to cigars and pipes, and even short clays. We have seen many an old Irishwoman in Lancashire smoking a "dudeen"—without asking the Dean of Westminster's permission. While he was at home in England nobody troubled about his views on smoking; when he went to America his opinions became important enough to communicate them to his native land. Anyhow, it seems odd that God Almighty—as they say Christ was—should establish a special religion on earth in order that, two thousand years afterwards, its ministers should deliver oracles on 'baccy.

The Winchester Board of Guardians differed from one of its members, Mr. Stephen Bull, who knelt down and asked God to give them his guidance. This led to a suspension of the sitting, whereupon Mr. Stephen Bull called his fellow members "heathen dogs" and then fell upon his knees again, addressing the Almighty on their behalf once more. There they left him. We have not heard that the "One Above" has interfered with the natural course of events. Had he done so Mr. Stephen Bull would be the absolute master of the Winchester Board of Guardians; and that, to say the least of it, would be very awkward for the town.

The following is from the New York *Truthseeker*:

"Elbert Hubbard, publisher of the *Philistine*, was brought before Judge Hazen in the United States District Court at Buffalo, N. Y., January 11, charged with circulating through the mails a publication containing 'certain prints of an obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, and indecent character.' It was hoped by the defenders of free mails that Hubbard would put up a good fight, but he disappointed them, pleading guilty to mailing the aforesaid obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, and indecent matter, promising to do so no more, and submitting to a fine of \$100."

What a rare thing is courage! The whole American press is controlled by Anthony Comstock, the professional secretary of the Society for the Suppression of Vice—the English original of which William Cobbett used to call the Vice Society. Whatever old Comstock chooses to call "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, and indecent" is knocked out of the mails by the Post Office authorities, and the responsible persons are lucky when they are not prosecuted and imprisoned. Yet the Americans put up with this intolerable tyranny with the greatest complaisance. Even a writer like Elbert Hubbard shows no fight when he is attacked. The case seems almost hopeless.

The *Church Times* rejoices that the date of the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race has been changed from the Wednesday in Holy Week to Thursday, March 13. It is very undesirable, we learn, that a race should be run while people are dwelling upon the "Passion of Our Lord." We should have thought that anyone who wanted to dwell upon the "Passion" could easily have got far enough from the Thames to do so undisturbed. Naturally, if one starts dwelling upon "the Passion of Our Lord" in the middle of a boat race, one may be disturbed. But that is quite one's own fault. We also note that the joy of the *Church Times* is diminished by the fact that the King is going to Portsmouth on Ash Wednesday to inspect the *New Zealand*. This is evidently wrong, as he ought to have been at home, also dwelling on the "Passion." Some comfort is derived from the visit being a private one, for which, we are told, the inhabitants of Portsmouth will be thankful. We suppose it is hoped that, there be no public ceremonial, the Lord will not observe a private visit by the King. It is unflattering to George the Fifth, but pleasing to the religious mind. And we call ourselves a civilised people!

Wednesday, February 12, is fixed as the day of intercession on behalf of the Church of England's work at home, and against the threatened disestablishment of the Church in Wales. The latter is a very hopeful supplication. Mr. Lloyd George is a Nonconformist, Mr. Asquith is a Churchman; and we can picture both of them smiling at the Archbishops' simplicity.

Father Pinnamonti's *Hell Open to Christians* and Father Farniss's *Sight of Hell* are still published by Duffy & Co., with the authority of the Holy Catholic Church. These publications are intended for the special edification of young people and children. They are among the most disgusting things ever issued to frighten such readers out of their natural senses and drive them into the arms of priestcraft. Father Pinnamonti's volume is "ornamented" with pictures—one for every day in the week, showing the physical tor-

tures of the "souls" in hell. The writers of these things must have known that the contents were all imaginary. They were therefore scoundrels to terrify children in this way. It is a scandal that such impostures should be permitted in a civilised country.

"Dr. Lancelot Blackburne, the eighteenth-century Archbishop of York, who is the earliest recorded smoker among Anglican Bishops, would hardly have furnished a desirable precedent for the Bishop of Peterborough. For he was a retired pirate. According to Oxford tradition, he was 'sent down' from Christ Church for stealing a violin, and joined the buccaneers in the West Indies. His fellow-criminals were eventually captured and hanged, but Blackburne returned home, attached himself to Bishop Trelawney—and of the Cornish song—and received rapid promotion. Horace Walpole writes about 'the jolly old Archbishop of York, who had all the manners of a man of quality, though he had been a buccaneer, and was a clergyman; but he retained nothing of his first profession, except his seraglio.' He was made Archbishop of York for reading the marriage service over George I. and his mistress the Duchess of Munster. Those were 'the good old times.'"—*Daily Chronicle* (Jan. 27).

Rev. James W. A. Mackenzie, vicar of Whitwick, Leicester, has been committed for trial at Douglas, Isle of Man, on a charge of attempting to utter a forged promissory note. Bail was fixed at £400. There is no moral. There would have been one if the defendant had been an Athiest.

We have no fault to find with the jury's verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind." This was the result of the inquest over the dead body of the Rev. G. H. Lamb, curate of Southwick-on-the-Weir, who jumped through the window of a train on the Great Northern Railway. It was said that he suffered from a nervous breakdown following on influenza. Quite so. But the same might have been said of an Atheist in the same circumstances. Where did the "safeguards of religion" come in?

A Sydney paper called the *Sun*—which, we see, boasts of the largest circulation in Australia—prints the following in its issue of December 8:—

"San Francisco, Saturday.

"Five Seattle men are planning to go one better than Noah. They are going to build an ark bigger than that into which the animals went two by two.

"Noah's cockleshell was very small potatoes, they say, and the new craft is to be fitted with every convenience.

"When it is finished a pair of every known type of living creature is to be put on board, together with a first-class troupe of circus performers, and then the ark will sail round the world, stopping at every big port to give a performance.

"The articles of incorporation of the Noah's Ark Company were filed yesterday, the capital being £300,000."

All they want now is a Flood.

Perhaps the Leeds Police fancy that their prosecutions for "blasphemy" and "profanity" do a great deal towards keeping the city orthodox. Poor creatures, dressed in a little brief authority, they are vastly mistaken! There must be a lot of "infidelity" knocking about the district when the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (Jan. 27) can publish leaderettes like the following:—

"THE HEATHEN."

"The meetings which are being held in Leeds this week in celebration of the completion of a hundred years' work for the Church Missionary Society may induce the Man in the Street to spend a little time in considering a subject which is a favorite topic for his cheap sarcasm. In his lordly way he is as fond of telling people that foreign missions are a mere fad, that they represent a great waste of money, inasmuch as the 'heathen' don't need the missions, and the missions themselves are a failure. Now, to put it vulgarly, when the Man in the Street talks like that, he is 'talking through his hat'; and, if he can so far forget his belief in his own omniscience as to seek information at first hand, he will find that he is wrong in both particulars. He would probably be a good deal surprised if he were told that many of the so-called 'heathen' know a good deal more about religion than he does, and practise what they know in a way he never dreams of doing. At the same time, the very men who know that best, and most readily admit it, are precisely those who are most convinced of the need for missionary effort."

The clergy can hardly be dull enough to appreciate these sarcastic compliments.

"I want a nice book for an invalid," the lady said. "Something religious, madam?" asked the shopkeeper. "Er—no," replied the lady, "he's convalescent."



**Mr. Foote's Engagements**

Sunday, February 9, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, Regent-street, London, W., at 7.30, "Blood on the Balkan Cross."

February 16 and 23, Queen's (Minor) Hall, London.

**To Correspondents.**

- FIGHTING FUND.—S. H. Adams (Transvaal), 5s.; J. H. Gartrell, 10s.
- CASTREL —See paragraph. Thanks.
- T. HODGSON.—Provincial aspirants would not be barred in any way from obtaining "diplomas."
- W. P. BALL.—Many thanks for cuttings.
- R. MARLAND.—We hope to give more attention to literature generally, and to new books especially, in future.
- E. B.—We suppose you know that Mark Twain's *What is Man?* is not obtainable now. It is another case of the family of a distinguished man trying to suppress the best fruit of his brain. Mark should have published the book during his lifetime. He admits that he had not the courage to do so.
- M. ROGERS.—The little books are not new, though they may be new to you. They have been referred to in our columns from time to time during the last thirty years.
- H. BERESFORD.—Order passed on to shop manager. We send the *Freethinker* post free to any part of the world at our advertised rate. We do send to most parts of the world. Few papers are so widely distributed.
- S. H. ADAMS.—With regard to wish that our shadow may never grow less, we may be allowed to take a prosaic view of that orientalism and state that we have kept nearly the same weight for the last twenty-five years.
- W. P. HEDLEY.—We cannot answer your questions about Determinism in this column. We should need a lot of space. A question of a few words in length often fills pages in reply; especially when the question is controversial. Your first question, however, answers itself. "Is man a machine?" This is a confusion of language. Man is a living being; and living beings are not machines, and machines are not living beings. Biology and mechanics are different sciences.
- E. RAGGETT.—Mr. Foote's articles on "The Real Robert Burns" appeared some seventeen or eighteen years ago. Numbers so far back are not in stock now.
- J. B.—Glad you enjoyed our article on the new Bradlaugh fable so much. But it won't stop the lie. Christian lies, when they once get started, last as long as they are profitable. You deserve credit for your share in the matter.
- S. LIDGOTT.—We were never fond of political badges, and we have certainly never worn one since we became President of the N. S. S. That was twenty-three years ago. During that long period we have neither been for nor against Socialism. We have worked with Socialists, as we have with other parties, for objects held in common. We are devoted first of all, and above all, to Freethought, which we regard as the most important work of all, and which has fewer friends than most others.
- W. CALLAGHAN.—Pleased to know that your two friends, to whom six consecutive copies were sent, have become regular readers and admirers of the *Freethinker*. Lea's great *History of the Inquisition* is the best, but it is expensive. You might find it in your Free Library.
- SOME correspondence unavoidably stands over till next week.
- THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.
- THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.
- WHEN the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the secretary, Miss E. M. Vance.
- LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.
- LECTURE NOTICES must reach 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.
- 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.
- FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.
- THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

**The President's Honorarium Fund.**

To the Freethinkers of Great Britain.

January, 1913.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We the undersigned renew our appeal on behalf of the above Fund.

Its object is to relieve Mr. G. W. Foote—President of the National Secular Society, Chairman of the Secular Society, Ltd., and Editor of the *Freethinker*—from financial worries that would prevent his devoting himself entirely to his work as leader of the militant Freethought movement in this country.

During previous years Mr. Foote has actually had to pay money out of his own pocket to sustain the *Freethinker*, besides doing all his own work on the paper without any remuneration whatever. We are happy to have his assurance that this state of things has improved. He has no longer to make up a deficit, but the slight profit from the increased circulation of the *Freethinker* is only sufficient as yet to treat the contributors a little more liberally.

This is the sixth year of the President's Honorarium Fund. We suggested that £800 might be raised in this way annually. During the first two years it was nearly raised, the third year it was fully raised, the fourth year it was exceeded, owing to a special donation of £50 from Mr. John Helm, of Canada, since deceased. Death has, indeed, been busy with the larger subscribers during the last year or two—such as Major Harris, Mrs. Donaldson, Mr. George Payne, Mr. F. Smallman, and Mr. Horace W. Parsons. Nevertheless, the Fund for 1912 only lacked some £20 of the total, which has been made up by a generous American supporter. It is evident, therefore, that Mr. Foote must have gained new friends to balance the (financial) loss of old ones.

All subscriptions received have been acknowledged week by week in the *Freethinker*, and will continue to be acknowledged in that way.

Subscriptions for 1913 can be forwarded to the undersigned. Those who prefer to do so can send, as before, direct to Mr. Foote himself at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

Subscribers who do not wish their names to appear in print should state how they wish their subscriptions to be acknowledged.

It would be pleasant if the bulk of the £800 could be raised in the first few months and the balance before the close of the summer.

Yours faithfully,

J. W. DE CAUX, J.P.,  
92 St. Peter's-road Gt. Yarmouth.

R. T. NICHOLS, M.D.,  
28 Park-road, Ilford,

A. J. FINCKEN,  
66 Mount Grove-road, Highbury,  
London, N.

**First List of Subscriptions.**

- R. T. Nichols, £5 5s.; J. M. Gimson, £2 2s.; A. Hurcum, £1 1s.; J. Green, 10s. 6d.; T. Stringer, 2s. 4d.; Harriet Blake, 5s.; T. Sutcliffe, 5s.; N. S. Mundy, 10s.; J. B., £2 2s.; A Friend (per Miss Vance), £2; T. M. (Ficksburg), 10s. 6d.; W. Dodd, 10s.; E. G. (Paris), 10s.; Mde. Augusta Forrer, £1; Col. B. L. Reilly, £1 1s.; Dr. and Mrs. Laing, £2 2s.; W. P. Kennedy, £1 1s.; H. Silverstein, 10s.; L. Gjævre, £2; Thomas Young, 10s. 6d.; Andrew Harvey, 10s. 6d.; Elizabeth Lechmere, 9s. 6d.; E. Truelove, 5s.; J. T. G., £1; Col. H. H. Hart, £1 1s.; G. F. H. McCluskey, £1 1s.; Harry Tucker, £1 1s.; H. T., 5s.; J. H. Gartrell, £1,

**Sugar Plums.**

"Woman's Worst Enemy," the subject of Mr. Foote's lecture on Sunday evening, drew a number of ladies to Queen's Hall. They not only listened with great attention but several of them asked pertinent questions when the



lecture was over. Mr. Foote's answers seemed to give general satisfaction.

Mr. Foote's lecture at Queen's Hall this evening (Feb. 9) should attract a large audience. "Blood on the Balkan Cross" is its title. Mr. Foote will show what the Christian Powers are really seeking. Their real object is systematically concealed by the Christian press.

Mr. Cohen had a crowded audience on Sunday evening at Liverpool. We regret that his visit was not announced in our last issue, but the fault was not ours—and all's well that ends well.

Mr. Robert Blatchford wrote three columns in last week's *Clarion* on the Leeds prosecutions for "blasphemy" and "profanity"—and incidentally he makes a curious reference to "Mr. Foote." Mr. Blatchford's position, at least, makes what he has to say on this matter of some importance, and we shall give it our attention next week.

Mr. Maurice Young, the ex-clergyman who made such a favorable impression at the London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner on January 14, lectures twice (afternoon and evening) for the Manchester Branch to-day (Feb. 9), at the Secular Hall in Rusholme-road. We trust he will have good audiences and a hearty reception.

The Rationalist Peace Society holds its Annual Meeting next Thursday evening (Feb. 13) at 8 o'clock in Room 167 St. Stephen's House, Westminster—near the Houses of Parliament, facing the Embankment. Members should try to attend. Mr. Foote expects to be present.

The Committee for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws is organising a public demonstration, which will probably be held early in March at South Place Institute. Several well-known speakers have promised to join in the oratory. Further particulars will appear in our next issue.

The Annual Meeting of the Secular Education League will be held at Room 18, Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Tuesday evening, March 11, at 7.30. Members are specially urged to attend. A public meeting will follow at 8.15, with Mr. Halley Stewart in the chair. The list of speakers includes Mr. George Greenwood, M.P., Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., Mr. G. W. Foote, Rev. Walter Walsh, D.D.

The General Committee dealing with the matter of the London County Council's policy with respect to meetings and collections in the Parks met again on Tuesday (our press day) and decided to make a final effort in a peaceable way before drawing the sword and flinging away the scabbard. The N. S. S. does not wish to break away from its associates on this question. Hence a further unavoidable delay.

We reproduce on another page a report of a very important law case from the columns of the *Edinburgh Evening News*. The Court of Sessions has taught the Edinburgh magistrates their proper place and warned them against straying outside it. These municipal busybodies have learnt that they have no power whatever to decide who shall deliver open-air addresses and what opinions shall be expressed at public meetings. Lord Skerrington has made that perfectly clear, and his judgment will encourage us up in London to resist the arbitrary action of the London County Council. Thanks are due to plaintiff in the Edinburgh case and to the committee that supported him in his resistance to despotism.

Some time ago a correspondent asked us whether the contents of the two volumes of the *Flowers of Freethought* represented our present views on all the subjects treated in them. This was a question that could only be answered in general terms. Our correspondent then did the right thing; he wished to make the volumes a present to a friend, so he bought them and read them himself, with a view to forming his own judgment. And this is the result. "I have now read these two volumes," he writes us, "and without offering any extravagant praise I must say that they are *splendid*; in fact, no Freethinker's library is complete without them. It would be a hard task to choose the best half-dozen 'Flowers,' as they one and all come in very useful in arguments and debates in which I frequently indulge."

## The Agency of Insects in the Dissemination of Disease.—II.

(Concluded from p. 70.)

THESE spores now proceed to attack other blood-cells, and all succeeding generations of these parasitic intruders repeat the process above described. As a result, in a few days hundreds of thousands of human blood-cells are destroyed, and the blood-stream is poisoned with parasitic waste products, leaving the patient pale and exhausted.

As we have seen, these parasites reproduce themselves by the simple process of nuclear division; their spores or young result from the splitting up of the parent parasite body, which occurs while the parasite is destroying the blood-cell in which it has taken up its temporary abode. Now, it is well known that this method of asexual reproduction cannot be carried on indefinitely, and the difficulty was to discover in what manner the sexual generation was consummated.

This seemed an insurmountable problem; but, thanks to the untiring labors of a band of medical men, its solution has been found. But the two investigators to whom the palm must, above all others, be given, are Patrick Manson and Ronald Ross.

Dr. Smith, while investigating the life-history of the germ which produces the Texas cattle fever, noted that some of the germs did not reproduce themselves like the others.

"When these individuals were drawn from the circulation and placed on a slide for study, it was found that they would swell up and free themselves from the inclosing corpuscle, and some of them would emit long filaments, which would dart away among the corpuscles."

Now, it became obvious that certain of these parasites fail to develop unless they are removed from the blood in which they dwell. The question to be decided was, the conditions that were required to enable them to leave the blood of their victim so that their processes of reproduction could be carried out. It was necessary to determine this before the greater problem as to the means whereby the parasite is transmitted from one human being to another could be successfully attacked. Manson, after pondering over the difficulty, reached the conclusion that suctorial insects were the agencies he was in search of. His reasonings led him to the belief that, when insects removed germ-infected blood from their victims' veins into their own stomachs, they in this way provided the parasites with the conditions essential to their reproduction. This daring theory of Manson's greatly impressed Ross, who began a long and laborious investigation with the object of determining its truth. The parasite which he strove to discover is just visible under the most powerful microscope. Ross, who was at the time in India, selected the mosquito as the most likely insect for his purpose. In the course of nearly three years he made a thorough examination of thousands of mosquitoes without discovering the slightest trace of the parasite. But at last a friend sent him a mosquito of the *Culex* species; and, when this was placed under the microscope, Ross observed certain nodules on the walls of the insect's stomach. Closer observations disclosed the presence of granules of the coal-black melanin of malarial fever. Further experiments led to the epoch-making discovery that these special cells were always to be found on the walls of the stomach of this species of mosquito a few days after it had sucked the blood of a malarial patient. Ross's subsequent researches have since made clear the complete life-history of the parasite. All independent investigations made by other medical men have done nothing except establish his conclusions as absolutely beyond dispute.

The above results may be summarised thus: The malarial parasites carry on their life-processes in the human blood-stream, but after a time the develop-



ment of a certain percentage of these parasites is arrested. When these particular parasites are introduced into the bodies of most mosquitoes, they are digested like ordinary food. But when they find their way into the stomach of a mosquito of the genus anopheles, or other nearly related genera, they are not assimilated, but continue their development, and conjugate with other parasitic cells. As a consequence of this fertilisation, more elongated parasitical forms make their appearance, proceed to pierce their way through the linings of the mosquito's stomach, and evolve into the tiny nodules which Ross detected on the insects he studied. These parasites then divide and develop within their enclosing sheath, until at last the nodule bursts, and thousands of rod-shaped sporozoites enter the body-cavity of the mosquito. These sporozoites now make their way towards the large vacuolated cells of the salivary glands, where they cluster together. Thus it happens that when the mosquito bites a man or other animal, these rejuvenated parasites re-enter the human or animal blood, and are in this way enabled to reproduce themselves at the expense of their victim's health or life. A vivid idea of the danger arising in this way may be formed when we learn that the "nodules or cysts on the walls of the stomach of the mosquito may contain as many as ten thousand sporozoites, and as many as five hundred cysts may occur in a single stomach."

Another disease with which the mosquito is closely associated is yellow fever. This scourge manifests itself mainly in seaport cities, and the United States has suffered more from its ravages than any other country. The West Coast of Africa, Havana, Rio de Janeiro, and other places were long considered as permanent endemic spots, from which it travelled to other port towns with which they were in communication. The American territories in the neighborhood of the Mexican Gulf have been among the keenest sufferers. But, when given a sufficiently high temperature, yellow fever has been known to spread to Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia.

An appalling outbreak of yellow fever took place in New Orleans in 1905. Eight thousand people were smitten with the disease, and nearly one thousand perished. Instead of humiliation and prayer, the methods of science were put into operation. The result was that the scourge was stayed at the very time when, according to all precedent, its ravages should have been most severe. The older remedies of isolation and quarantine were abandoned, and a direct attack was made upon the mosquitoes which were the disseminators of the disease.

The history of the scientific studies which enabled New Orleans to cope with this serious outbreak is extremely instructive. Owing to the prevalence of yellow fever in Cuba, the American authorities, in 1900, appointed a board of medical officers for service in Havana, for the purpose of investigating the malady on the spot. This board, afterwards known as the Yellow Fever Commission, was made up of some of the greatest American doctors. Their first duty was to ascertain whether any of the germs which were suspected to be the cause of the disease were really responsible for its existence. Bacillus icteroides was by some authorities regarded as the culprit, but after a thorough inquiry this bacillus was shown to play but a secondary part in the matter. Various other theories were put to the test, and some very remarkable experiments were made upon those who volunteered as subjects. Dr. Carroll, a leading member of the Commission, thus describes the experiments:—

"Two separate lines of work were now presented: one, the study of the bacterial flora of the intestine and anaerobic cultures from the blood and various organs; the other, the theory of the transmission of the disease by the mosquito, which had been advanced by Dr. Carlos Finlay in 1881. After due consideration it was decided to investigate the latter first. Then arose the tremendous responsibility involved in the use of human beings for experimental purposes. It was concluded that the results themselves, if positive, would be sufficient justification of the undertaking.....On the

afternoon of July 27, 1900, I submitted myself to the bite of a mosquito applied by Dr. Lazear. The insect had been reared and hatched in the laboratory, had been caused to feed upon four cases of yellow fever—two of them severe and two mild. The first patient, a severe case, was bitten twelve hours before; the second, third, and fourth patients had been bitten six, four, and two days previously, and were in character mild, severe, and mild respectively.....After having slight premonitory symptoms for two days.....I was carried to the yellow fever camp. My life was in the balance three days.....On the day I was taken sick, August 31, 1900, Dr. Lazear applied the same mosquito, with three others, to another individual who suffered with a comparatively mild attack and was well before I left my bed. It so happened that I was the first person to whom the mosquito was proved to convey the disease.

"On September 18, five days after I was permitted to leave my bed, Dr. Lazear was stricken, and died in convulsions just one week later, after several days of delirium with black vomit. Such is yellow fever."

A large number of similar experiments have since been conducted, and all of them prove that the stegomyia mosquito will transmit the disease under certain conditions. It has also been demonstrated that mosquitoes are alone chargeable with the dissemination of the fever.

Camp Lazear was established, and in it was erected a mosquito-proof structure, which was divided by a wire screen from floor to ceiling. In one of these chambers several mosquitoes, which were known to have bitten yellow-fever patients, were liberated. A non-immune then entered this chamber, and was bitten by one of these insects. He was twice afterwards bitten by these mosquitoes, and after the usual five days' interval he betrayed the symptoms of yellow fever.

While the foregoing experiment was being conducted, two other non-immunes placed themselves in the other compartment, where they slept for eighteen nights. The wire screen prevented the entrance of the mosquitoes, and the two men never showed the least signs of the fever. Another experiment proved that two soldiers and a surgeon, all non-immunes, could live in a mosquito-proof house in perfect security for three weeks while surrounded by all the instruments of contagion. They were supplied with unwashed clothing and bedding direct from the yellow-fever hospital in the town:—

"These articles had been soiled by the urine, fecal matter, and black vomit obtained from fatal and other cases of yellow fever. These articles were handled and shaken daily, but no disease developed among the men, and at the end of twenty-one days two other non-immunes relieved them and handled a new supply of clothing in the same way, sleeping between the same sheets that had been used by a patient dying of yellow fever, and exposing themselves in every possible way to the soiled clothing."

But the disease did not appear. As soon as these men were inoculated, they developed the fever. Further test experiments by independent investigators, as well as French and English Commissions, completely substantiated these findings.

The results above described were put to practical use in Havana in 1901 and 1902, and the fever was completely stamped out. Another splendid opportunity for demonstrating the triumph and methods of science occurred with the terrible outbreak of yellow fever at New Orleans in 1905. Cautioned by the panic which prevailed in the city during the epidemic of 1897, the authorities at first endeavored to conceal from the public the nature of the disease which was raging. But it spread with such awful rapidity that it was soon realised that it was necessary to unite the entire community in a warfare with the accursed mosquito. The all too abundant breeding places of the mosquitoes were drained, salted, and cleansed. Well-organised medical services fought the mosquito until the disease died down, so that long before wintry weather arrived, the pest had been overcome.

When the French were attempting to build the Panama Canal, yellow fever held undisputed sway over the entire region. The death-rate among the



laborers, engineers, doctors, and nurses was appalling. But, thanks to science, yellow fever is now practically unknown throughout the Panama zone. And in every fever area at present known, it is only necessary to successfully combat the mosquito in order to banish the terrible disease.

Plague has always been justly regarded with horror. And when we remember the misery and death it has occasioned in the past, its commitment to the control of science may be reckoned as one of the supreme triumphs of medical research. Quite recently San Francisco has been visited by an outbreak of plague, which in earlier and more religious times would have swept from the Pacific to the Atlantic. But medical and sanitary science not merely held it in check, but succeeded in stamping it out, with the loss of little human life. In this instance the authorities declared war upon the rats. Thousands of men were engaged in rat-catching in all parts of the city, and about a million of these rodents were slaughtered. Their breeding quarters were burnt or made rat-proof, and the refuse of the city was stored so that the rats could not infest it.

When, in 1896, a serious outbreak of plague occurred in India, the Indian Plague Commission carried out a most exhaustive inquiry into the causes of the disease, and also into the manner in which it is communicated. The evidence clearly indicated that the chief mode of infection both for man and rats was through some kind of abrasion in the skin. And it was ultimately established "that the flea is the most common agent in transferring the disease from rat to rat or from rat to man." And the highly valuable experiments made a few years ago by Dr. Verbitski carry these conclusions still further. He has shown among other things that:—

"All fleas and bugs (bedbugs) which have sucked the blood of animals dying from plague contain plague microbes.

"Human fleas and fleas found on cats and dogs can live on rats as casual parasites, and therefore can under certain conditions play a part in the transmission of plague from rats to human beings, and *vice versa*."

Insects in all parts of the earth are indirectly responsible for almost all deadly diseases. The common house fly is one of the most dangerous of these. Not only is it an important agent in spreading typhoid fever, but it has been found guilty of transmitting several other very serious maladies. That the fly may carry and disseminate the cholera-germ has been demonstrated. And that it is capable of spreading leprosy, consumption, anthrax, and small-pox is much more than a mere medical suspicion. Flea-bites and fly-stings are therefore not the mere innocent and unimportant insect antics that some of us were taught to believe them to be.

T. F. PALMER.

## The Black Army.—II.

THE clerical profession, like every other, has its prizes, and they are so graduated as to inspire hope in the least capable and sanguine. No doubt it is true that in the Church of England, particularly, a minister may wait long, or all his life, for preferment, unless he has influential friends or relatives. But this is a disadvantage which is common in every branch of industry. While, however, there are doctors with no patients, and barristers with no briefs, there are comparatively few ministers without occupation and salary. However small their income may be they begin with *something*, which is solid and secure; whereas a doctor has often to spend years in seeking patients enough to keep him in bread and cheese, and a barrister to wait years for his first solicitor's cheque.

A complaint was made at one of the Church Congresses that many incumbents were deplorably poor, and it was proposed that a gigantic national fund should be raised in order to level up the poorest to £300 a year. Now, I ask any man of candor and

intelligence, who has seen anything of the average "poor" incumbent, to say whether he is really the equal, in energy and general ability, of the average man who occupies a post worth £300 in the commercial or professional world.

Probably the clergy would resent their ability being canvassed in this profane manner, but when they complain of their poverty they invite such treatment; in fact, it is inevitable.

Much as it may hurt their feelings, I will even go farther. I have already said that we have a right to expect from Christian ministers, as from all other men, a decent conformity to their own teachings. Now, if there is any teaching in the New Testament which is clear, explicit, and unmistakable, it is that wealth is a danger and poverty a blessing. According to the Sermon on the Mount, the "poor" are the first to inherit the kingdom of heaven; and according to the epistles of Saint Paul, every Christian should content himself with little, and only minister to the bare necessities of his "carnal" part during his early pilgrimage. I do not accept this teaching myself. I believe that man is a risen animal, not a fallen angel; and that our sensuous nature should have its rational gratification. But I am *not* a Christian, while the clergy *are*—at least by profession. They are bound to follow Jesus and Paul, or to confess themselves hypocrites. And if the teaching of Jesus and Paul should be followed by every ordinary Christian, how much more should it be followed by those who assume to exhort and reprove their brethren.

Apart altogether from the express teaching of the New Testament, there is something incongruous in the action of *spiritual* teachers, who would wean us from the *material* world, and who at the same time demand a fair share at least of all the good things of this life. It reminds one of the Cornish minister, whose sermon was interrupted by the news that a ship had run ashore. The wrecking instinct was strong in that congregation, and every man started for the door. They were arrested, however, by the stentorian voice of their pastor, who bade them take their seats before God; and then, casting off his ministerial robe, he exclaimed: "Let us start fair."

Considering the *spiritual* pretensions of the clergy, I smile when they complain that they are poor. That is precisely what they ought to be. It is their only honest condition. Every penny they expend on themselves, or their families, beyond what is necessary to support life, is a confession that their *doctrines* are absurd and impracticable, and that *they* are subsisting on false pretences. I am not at all sure that they are entitled to take *any* care of their bodies. If they had a proper supply of the *faith*, which they recommend to *us*, they might trust to God for a supply of their bodily wants, as Elijah did in the desert and the Jews in the wilderness.

Let us turn our attention now to the missionaries. It is popularly believed that these gentlemen are all animated by a burning zeal to spend and be spent in the cause of Christ; that they court hardship and danger in the spirit of martyrdom. But what is the real truth? It is beyond doubt, to anyone who has investigated the matter, that the great majority of missionaries have positions of ease and emolument. They are generally within reach of protection, and their salaries, though sometimes moderate if expended in England, are always sufficient to provide them with every comfort in the land of their labor, and generally to provide them with a retinue of servants which they could never hope to have in their native country. I have no hesitation in saying that the lot of the average missionary is an enviable one. If the statement be disputed, I will furnish conclusive evidence from the writings of travellers, and even from the reports of Missionary Societies.

It is of course undeniable that there have been missionaries who held their lives cheap, and faced hardship, peril, and death itself with unflinching devotion. I honor such men, though I do not share their faith. Courage and conviction are always admirable, and a martyr's grave is holy ground. But



every cause has had its heroes. A doctor in a hospital has been known to suck the poison of diphtheria from the throat of a strange child, and imperil his own life in the attempt to save another's. Large bodies of men will always yield a percentage of such noble spirits; and we may reverence the martyr missionary without throwing a false halo round the heads of all his profession.

Missionary Societies, in practice, are chiefly agents for relieving the congestion of the clerical labor market. It is better to send the superfluous men of God abroad than to let them stay at home, competing with their brethren and reducing the general rate of wages. Emigration is an advantage to those who go and to those who remain. And when this is understood by the British public, the missionary business will be seen in its true light. A few go converting the heathen for Christ, some from Christ and themselves, and more for themselves and Christ.

Of a piece with the chief motive of this missionary enterprise are the arts employed in raising its expenses. School children are cheated of buns and toffee to fill the mission-box with halfpence. Shameless begging goes on from door to door. False pictures are drawn of missionary heroism, and falsified pictures of the moral darkness of the "heathen." It is perfectly certain that in many cases, whatever may be said of the "civilisation" of the heathen, and their scanty costume in hot climates, they are essentially more moral than the majority of the missionary's countrymen; more truthful, more honest, more sober, more tender to their children, and more respectful to their elders and parents.

It is a common reply, on the part of its apologists, that the Black Army is too much judged by exceptional cases. In the Church of England, for instance, there are only two Archbishops, and less than three dozen Bishops; and what are these among the many thousand ministers of the Establishment? But what is the real value of this objection? Are not the plums few in every profession? How many physicians, how many King's Counsel, how many writers make their thousands a year? The number is just sufficient to keep the fire of hope alive in the breasts of the less fortunate; so that, after all, we find the same commercial law operating in the clerical profession, which operates in other departments of human activity.

The critic to whom I referred in my opening paragraph asserted, as though it were a fact of his own knowledge, that the Archbishop of Canterbury does not spend a penny of his £15,000 a year upon himself; that it is all expended upon his diocese, his own wants being supplied by his private income. I do not believe this: but if it be true, it proves nothing. One swallow does not make a summer, and an argument cannot be based on a glaring exception. It cannot be usual for Church dignitaries to subsist on private fortunes. Nor is my critic's suggestion in any way reconcilable with the fact that such immense sums of money have been left by so many Bishops during the present century. I take it that their estates, as disclosed by probate, were partially, if not wholly, built up by savings out of their episcopal revenues; and I say that their conduct in this respect is scandalous, when we consider that Bishops are constantly pleading to laymen on behalf of "the poor clergy," and that Jesus Christ told them to feed, and not to fleece, the flock committed to their charge.

Another objection of the Black Army's apologists is that the Church of England does not comprise the whole Christianity of the country, and that the Nonconformist ministers must be taken into account. None of these, it is said—not even the highest—is paid five thousand a year. I daresay not, but I think it probable that they take all they can get. Some of the luckiest Dissenting ministers in America have salaries running into four figures. Dr. Hall, of New York, was reported to be in enjoyment of £8,000 a year. Dr. Talmage took a very large salary at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, with freedom to make as much more as he could by writing and lecturing. When

he visited England, and discoursed for Christian bodies, he never opened his mouth for less than £50 a night. Surely it is difficult to see anything but commercialism in such conditions of advocacy. The late Mr. Spurgeon was paid £1,200 a year, in addition to the revenue accruing from the extensive sale of his publications. Dr. Joseph Parker lived in a fine house and kept his carriage. Even the salary of a provincial minister, like the Rev. A. J. Berry, of Wolverhampton, was far from despicable. This gentleman publicly called me "a professional infidel." I replied that his salary exceeded the earnings of all the "infidel" lecturers in this country put together. Of course there are plenty of Nonconformist ministers with very small stipends, but are there not plenty of ill-paid doctors and barristers, and still more of journalists? The law of supply and demand operates in all professions. The clericals may not get as much as they *desire*, and indeed they were never heard to say they had *enough*; but they obtain all that is possible in the existing state of the market.

(To be concluded.) G. W. FOOTE.

The baby boy kept crying while the sermon was on, and at last his mother got up to take him out. But the preacher begged her not to do so. "He doesn't disturb *me*," he assured her. "Perhaps not," she said, "but you're disturbing *him*."

We should hardly fancy that Mr. Jay Franklin, of Burlington, Vermont, is the most popular man in his State, if he frequently talks in the following manner. "You often hear the religious churchgoer," he says, "shout with delight that his creed is the oldest, and he apparently thinks age is a great asset. Did you ever hear a grocery man shout with joy because he had the oldest eggs in stock?"

The Salvationists have had a "three-day whirlwind campaign" in Toronto to collect £20,000 towards the Booth memorial. With the help of the newspapers (of course!) they succeeded in extracting that sum from the public on behalf of the greatest religious imposture of modern times. Let us pray!

### Obituary.

I regret in one way, though not in another, to hear of the death of my old friend Mr. B. L. Coleman, of Sandwich. He had a good head and a sound heart; always ready to express his Freethought, which raised the ire of the bigots—and always ready to do a kind deed, though it seldom brought him gratitude. He experienced how hard and painful it is to pull against the stream of prejudice and superstition, but he was not built to go along with the thoughtless and the cowards that constitute the great majority. Secretly he was admired and respected by many who dared not say so. "Ben Coleman" was a familiar name to all the town. But nature is no respecter of persons, in any sense of the words; he had far more than one man's share of misfortunes—peculiarly painful misfortunes—which broke him down and wore him out. His housekeeper informs me however, that he awaited death with perfect serenity. He often spoke of me, but when she asked if she should write and tell me of his condition, he replied that he would not have me troubled (which was a mistake, after all). His housekeeper says: "If all Freethinkers were as good as he I wish there were more about." Unfortunately those who had legal control paid no respect to his well-known wishes; they gave him a Christian funeral, the one thing he hated to think of; and a Church clergyman lent himself to the ignoble farce.—G. W. FOOTE.

North London Freethinkers will hear with regret of the death of Mr. Benjamin Stanniforth, who died on Jan. 23, aged sixty-nine. Although unattached to any Society, Mr. Stanniforth was a zealous propagandist. Widely read, especially on the subject of Egyptology, his researches in the British Museum, where he spent the greater portion of every week, were always at the disposal of young lecturers. He was a regular attendant at the Parliament Hill meetings, and a constant thorn in the side of our Christian opponents. During his brief illness attempts were made by the local Christians to offer him assistance, which, being unsought, was most indignantly declined by this sturdy and independent old Atheist. He was interred at Finchley Cemetery on January 30, but, unfortunately, owing to the secrecy preserved by his family, only a few of his Secularist friends were able to be present.—A. STANLEY.



## 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, "Blood on the Balkan Cross."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workmen's Hall, Romford-road, Stratford, E.): 7.30, W. Heaford, "War, Religion, and Humanity."

#### COUNTRY.

FAIRSWORTH (Secular School, Pole-lane): Joseph A. E. Bates, afternoon, "Evolution of the Devil Myth"; evening, "The Philosophic Necessity of Materialism."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, E. Egerton Stafford, "The Riddle of the Universe."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): E. Morris Young (ex-Anglican Clergyman), 3, "Reason versus Theology"; 6.30, "The Penalty of Honest Heresy." Tea at 5.

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