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Children are travellers newly arrived in a strange country: we should therefore make conscience not to deceive them.—JOHN LOCKE.

Brockwell Park Theology.

UNDER the heading of "Park Theology," a Brixton paper devotes a column to the report of a lecture in Brockwell Park by the Rev. A. J. Waldron. The ostensible subject was the Resurrection, but Mr. Waldron is not a logical speaker, and he appears to have talked a great deal at random. He seems to have made a number of old-fashioned statements, which show that he has not got beyond the Paleyan criticism of the New Testament, and a number of foolish observations which show that nature has fairly well fitted him for his present occupation. We say this quite advisedly,—for it has been held that to call a parson a fool is not libellous as it is no detriment to him in his profession. It would be impossible, we imagine, to improve Mr. Waldron's brains at his time of life, but it should still be possible to improve his knowledge; and we suggest that his friends—or perhaps his congregation—should buy him a few pounds' worth of up-to-date Biblical literature, beginning with (say) the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*,—if that is not too dry and wearisome for Mr. Waldron's intellectuals; which is a point on which, perhaps, the donors might consult him beforehand.

Mr. Waldron has just been reading *Quo Vadis?* He appears to have got to know of it through a picture show advertisement. He speaks of it as though it were not a novel but a work of great historical importance. There was a passage in it which hit what passes as Mr. Waldron's mind right in the bull's-eye. A converted Roman said he believed that Christ rose from the dead because people who knew him said so, and these people spoke the truth, and he must believe them. Mr. Waldron does not see any logical hiatus between "they said so" and "they speak the truth," whereas the two propositions may be as far asunder as the poles. Nor does Mr. Waldron see that *Quo Vadis?* is founded on the New Testament, and that the New Testament cannot be quoted in support of itself. But even if we waived that canon of criticism, what would become of the argument in question? People who knew Jesus believed that he rose from the dead; yes, and more people who knew him disbelieved that he rose from the dead. It is a curious thing that all the early Christian documents, including the Gospels, were written in Greek, and none of them belong to the first century. They were written, also, in all parts of the eastern Roman Empire. It was not at Jerusalem, where it was said to have happened, that the resurrection of Jesus found any great number of believers. The descendants of the Jews of that day deny the Resurrection still; it is affirmed by the descendants of people who lived hundreds and thousands of miles from the spot. Which, by the way, is the common law of supernatural stories. Inquire about a ghost at the house which it is said to haunt, and the people turn up their noses at you; inquire in the next street, and

people shake their heads,—with all that is in them; inquire a mile off, and people know all about old Jack-in-the-Box, and are nearly ready to secure you an appointment with him. We may, indeed, end this paragraph by reminding Mr. Waldron—though it is probably not reminding but informing him—that much greater Christian apologists than he is, both by nature and attainments, have remarked on the curious dispensation of providence that Christianity was rejected in the land of its birth, and was only embraced in distant countries. We refer, in particular, to Cardinal Newman and Mr. W. E. Gladstone.

"The Jews," Mr. Waldron says, "are the cleverest people in the world." But it does not follow that they were so in the time of Jesus. Their financial aptitude in our age is largely the result of centuries of Christian persecution. The Jews used to be confined to their own districts in Christian cities, they were compelled to wear a special garb, they were prohibited from engaging in "lawful" occupations,—but, as being damned already, and incapable of further damnation, they were allowed to lend money on interest, which the Catholic Church regarded as a deadly sin,—as indeed it is, according to the Bible. Natural selection, therefore, under the animus of Christian persecution, bred a race of "business" men. The result is that in "business" countries you find no Jew farmers but plenty of Jew financiers. In any case, it would not follow that even if the Jew were the cleverest man on earth in money matters he would be the cleverest man on earth at everything or anything else. He might be a poor historian and a bad judge of evidence. But suppose we unreservedly grant that the Jews are the cleverest people in the world. What then? Mr. Waldron doesn't see that he has dugged a pit for himself. We have simply to pitch him into it. The cleverest people in the world have, for eighteen hundred years, rejected Christianity. They reject it still. They show not the slightest inclination to accept it. It costs about seven thousand pounds to convert one of them, and the character of the convert nearly always justifies the taunt that a bad Jew is turned into a worse Christian.

Turning from Mr. Waldron's silliest of silly arguments relating to the Jews, we note his statement that "the greatest of German historians said a man who had any reputation to lose could not doubt the history of the New Testament." What is the name of this greatest of German historians? And while Mr. Waldron is getting it ready we leave him to settle the rest of the sentence with (say) the Rev. R. J. Campbell.

"Let us," Mr. Waldron said, "take the four books of St. Paul. No one challenged that Paul lived, and they all admitted that these books were written within twenty-eight years of the death of Christ." Now if this were true it would not prove the Resurrection. Paul did not witness it himself. All that he wrote was hearsay. He says that he *saw* Jesus, but it was in a vision, several years afterwards. He expressly says that the vision was quite enough for him—as it ought to have been for everybody else. He did not commune with flesh and blood about the matter; that is, he attached more importance to his own subjective experience than to the objective testimony of actual witnesses; which shows an utterly

hopeless state of mind as to the nature and value of evidence. But let all that pass for the sake of argument, what of the rest of Mr. Waldron's statement? He speaks of *four* epistles of Paul. There were *fourteen* when Paley wrote. What has become of the other *ten*? They have been rejected: ten out of fourteen in a hundred years! And it is not true that the four are not challenged. There is a large literature on the subject. Neither is Paul himself unchallenged. His very existence is called in question. The Acts of the Apostles is widely considered as an early Christian romance, and may be called the *Pauliad*. But we have neither time nor space to attend any further to Mr. Waldron's neglected education. We refer him to an accessible book already mentioned, the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. We dare say he will find it in some local Free Library; if not, there is the British Museum, or even that friendly presentation we have already suggested.

Mr. Waldron has not the remotest idea of the sceptics' real position. "The Secularists," he says, "ask you to believe that the first Christians preached the biggest lie in the world. They say Christ lent himself to the biggest fraud on the human race." They ask, and they say, nothing of the kind. Their position is that the Christ story is a product of the early Christian mind through several generations. It is a work of imagination; it is not history, but romance; it is not true, yet it is not a lie, any more than the *Morte Darthur* or *Don Quixote*, or *Hamlet*, or *Robinson Crusoe* is a lie. Whatever lying—that is, conscious falsehood—there was in the matter, was *about* Christ and not *by* him,—by his followers (if he ever lived at all) and not by himself.

We will not waste space, at this time of day, in dealing with Mr. Waldron's pitiful nonsense about the "Romans" not producing the corpse of Jesus, when, according even to the story, it was handed over to one of his disciples. The Romans never saw it afterwards, and were naturally as indifferent to its fate as to that of any other executed malefactor. Mr. Waldron's final argument for the historicity of the Resurrection is that he communes with Christ, like all "the best people in London." That modest argument is powerful enough to dispose of every sceptical objection to the story of the risen Christ. A man so great and so good as Mr. Waldron could hardly exist if the Resurrection were not a fact. He is really inexplicable without it. And it is out of such rich hearts and brilliant brains that music comes. There is no poetry and no music, Mr. Waldron says, in scepticism. We don't quite see what this has to do with the Resurrection. But we do see that Mr. Waldron's impudence is a good match for his ignorance. He overlooks Shelley and Swinburne, and Beethoven and Wagner, to begin with—and a further list is unnecessary.

G. W. FOOTE.

Dr. Hollander on Atheism.

It is a safe game to misrepresent Atheism. Comparatively speaking, it has few friends, and it is blessed with a large number of active enemies. Hardly one in a hundred of its enemies are scrupulous in finding out what Atheism really is, and the remaining ninety-nine are only too anxious to discover occasions for misrepresentations. And these misrepresentations are not easy to correct. There is seldom opportunity given to correct them in the places where they occur; a paper such as the *Freethinker* is the only channel of correction open, and this reaches but few of those who read the original misrepresentation. It is, thus, a safe game. It is also a cowardly game. To misstate an opinion that enjoys popular favor is wrong; but the wrong is soon righted, and one runs the risk of exposure. But there is no risk in misstating Atheism. You may deny it every decent quality, endow it with the capacity for producing every conceivable vice, and make it as mentally stupid as it is made morally obnoxious. The overwhelming majority of those

who read will either agree with it as a statement of fact, or feel that Atheism deserves all that has been said. That is why it is a cowardly game. A sense of chivalry might lead one to refrain from throwing a brick at an unpopular opinion. A nice sense of honor would insist upon careful examination before attack.

This is not an appeal *ad misericordiam*. I am not asking that people should not attack Atheism, or suggesting that it cannot survive misrepresentation. Atheism has always been subject to both, and has survived. It has more than survived; it has grown. Its position to-day is not reminiscent of past greatness; it is pregnant with the possibilities of assured growth. I have written the above in consequence of a passage in Dr. Hollander's recently issued work on *The First Signs of Insanity*. To the higher sentiments belong, says Dr. Hollander—

"The feelings of wonder and awe aroused by the sublime and vast in nature, the feeling of veneration and reverence awakened by the recognition of the exalted influence of authority, faith and belief aroused by appearances for which the intellect can find no natural causes, and the *spiritual feeling* arising from appearances which suggest another life existing besides that known to us.....In some men these, which may be termed religious feelings are all-powerful. Such are given to contemplating the spiritual state, and seldom turn their attention to gross matters and mere animal pleasures. Men in whom these feelings are lacking tend to be sceptical. They have faith only in their own experience, and think more of an animal existence than of spiritual life. However much the modern intellect trained in strictly scientific pursuits may try to curb the spiritual inclinations, there can be no doubt that the religious sentiment through long generations has become an element of our nature. Even the Atheist, as a rule, experiences its emotions when circumstances arise which appeal to his feelings rather than to his intellect—that is, when he allows his nature free play."

Here in a few sentences are all the time-honored, vulgar misconceptions, or misstatements, connected with Atheism. We have the religious man endowed with qualities of mind or nature that is denied the Atheist. The former seldom bothers with "gross matters and mere animal pleasures"; the latter, because of the assumed deficiency of nature, "tends to be sceptical." "The religious sentiment" has become an "element" of our nature; and finally the unhappy Atheist, when he is off his guard and gives vent to his nature, experiences religious feelings "allegre samee Clistian." A larger number of demonstrable fallacies has never been crammed into a smaller compass in a presumably scientific work. The religious professor who could discern "on the untrodden paths of the past the footprints of an unseen hand" was an amateur at the side of Dr. Hollander.

Let us examine them very briefly. First, "There can be no doubt that the religious sentiment.....has become an element of our nature." I deny it absolutely. I deny it, for the simple and sufficient reason that there is no such element in our nature. Wonder and awe and veneration and faith and belief are not religious qualities, they never were religious qualities, and they can never become so. They may be exercised in connection with religion, but so may love and hatred and cruelty and kindness and cleverness and stupidity. Human qualities are human qualities, and their nature is quite unaffected by the object in connection with which they find expression. A sunrise on the Alps, or a storm at sea, may awaken all the veneration and awe that a mystically drunken godite feels at the contemplation of the character of his incomprehensible deity. Religion does not initiate a single feeling, it does not absolutely control a single feeling. It only utilises feelings developed apart altogether from religion.

There is no religious sentiment, there is only a religious idea. And even that has not become an "element of our nature." Dr. Hollander ought really to know better than talk in this loose, unscientific manner. There is a religious idea because, as he says, "Surrounded by the forces of nature which he could neither comprehend nor control," natural

forces "became for uncritical man superior animate beings whom he endowed with qualities like his own, whose favor was to be courted and whose wrath appeased." It is this idea, born of primitive ignorance, that is perpetuated by primitive fear and subsequent cunning. It has persisted through the ages, but even as an idea it has not become an element of our nature—ideas never do become that. What has happened is that it has become, a permanent factor—up to the present—in the social environment. It is there when each newcomer arrives, and each newcomer is taught to express his feelings in a form consonant with the religious idea. The perpetuation of religion is a phenomenon of social heredity. So is the phenomenon of loyalty to a king. And Dr. Hollander might, with just as much scientific warranty, when he sees a crowd cheering the passage of the king, say that loyalty to the king has become an element of nature, and that cosmic evolution had as one of its supreme objects the creation of a feeling of devotion to George the Fifth. It is the social environment that perpetuates the religious idea, and it is the gradual weakening of the religious idea that is steadily bringing about such a modification of the environment as makes Atheism practically inevitable.

Dr. Hollander's remark that the Atheist experiences emotions usually characterised as religious, when he lets himself go, is very ingenuous. It reminds one of Artemus Ward's description of the English innkeeper's surprise on finding that an American could be trusted with a knife and fork. If my assurance is worth anything to Dr. Hollander, I may comfort him by saying that all the Atheists of my acquaintance are quite normal. They get pleased or angry, they laugh or cry, they have faith—of a sensible kind—belief, reverence for greatness in human nature, and a feeling of awe in face of natural phenomena. The Atheist differs from the Theist in no quality of mind or body; the difference lies in the way in which the nature of each is expressed. Belief is not a consequence of inability of the intellect to find natural causes, it is rather a degree of knowledge that falls short of absolute certitude. And it is common to both Theist and Atheist. The difference, again, lies in the object of belief. The Theist posits a God as the cause of natural happenings. The Atheist declines to use such a synonym for ignorance, and prefers to believe that, as natural causes have explained all the phenomena, the conditions of which we know, the same will be found true of phenomena whose conditions are unknown.

Of course, it is flattering to the vanity of the believer in God to assume that the Atheist is one whose finer qualities and perceptions are either undeveloped or atrophied. It enables any Bible-banging, microcephalous local preacher to feel exalted without undergoing the toil and discipline to become genuinely so. In moments of compassion they will pity the poor Atheist, and, when specially sympathetic, will condole with him on his spiritual blindness. But there is really nothing in it. The Atheist laughs at both the pity and the condolence. It is not worth while being angry. He knows that the belief in God is not a frame of mind that people grow toward, it is a frame of mind they outgrow. The Atheist knows this, because he has been there. He sees in every believer a picture of himself in an earlier and less complete state of development. The sympathy of the believer with the Atheist is that of the blind man for the one who is put to the trouble of wearing spectacles. The Atheist has lost nothing of his human qualities in growing out of them. He has merely learned to look at things with a clearer and truer gaze, and face facts with a courage born of undimmed vision.

Lastly, there is Dr. Hollander's antithesis of the sceptical character which is concerned with "gross matters and mere animal pleasures." If Dr. Hollander meant here by "spiritual" supernatural, and by animal existence, natural existence, the statement might pass. But he clearly does not mean this. The words carry, and I fancy are intended to carry,

an ethical implication. And this implication is altogether false. If I may use the word without being misunderstood, the Atheist is more concerned with spiritual matters than the Theist. To begin with, his whole life is devoted to an idea. He cannot hope to gain the material for "animal pleasures" by professing Atheism. If he thought that, he would be too stupid to ever leave church or chapel. He is daily made aware of paying some price for the rejection of religion, and his only consolation is found in the enjoyment of a feeling of mental integrity that is as far as possible removed from close attention to "gross matters." If Atheism were of no other value to the world than this, the possession of a body of men who yield devotion to an idea, without any possibility of material gain, is a social asset of the greatest possible value. And what Dr. Hollander means by "spiritual" matters—that is, supernatural matters—has always tended to the encouragement of a decided, ethical Materialism. It has taught men to estimate the value of truth in terms of material loss and gain. If the personal gain was not here, it was hereafter. And when, as was inevitable, faith in the hereafter began to waver, the same standard was applied to the life here. This is one reason why the most "materialistic" people in the civilised world are Christian. That is one reason why we in this country are so given to measure our greatness in terms of fighting strength or trading aptitude. A nation is great because it sells or slaughters, or sells *and* slaughters, not because it thinks and lives. That is why the millionaire is idealised and the thinker ignored; the dead plutocrat loaded with columns of an admiring obituary, and the dead philosopher dismissed with a contemptuous sneer. It is also why Dr. Hollander, a man with no very definite or strong religious beliefs himself, is so affected by the prevailing religious cant as to write disparagingly of a frame of mind that Samuel Taylor Coleridge said not one man in ten thousand had either the strength of mind or goodness of heart to possess.

C. COHEN.

The Morality of Jesus.

ONE is astounded beyond measure to find it deliberately stated in cold print, at this time of day, that "the ascendant morality in our land has been the morality of Jesus," and that "indeed, it has been regarded as the only morality." No one can make such a statement unless he is the victim of "a kind of ethical lunacy," which, of course, disqualifies him both intellectually and morally from setting himself up as a teacher of morals. The guilty party, on the present occasion, is the Rev. Dr. Newton Marshall, a Baptist minister, who is just now publishing a series of sermons on "Christ in the New Times" in the *Christian World Pulpit*. This reverend gentleman quotes from a certain magistrate to the effect that "the law of England bases itself upon the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ." Whether made by a magistrate or by a clergyman, the statement is totally erroneous. The morality of Jesus is a figment of the Christian imagination, and what is popularly known as Christian morality, or the morality which is supposed to be binding upon Christians, does by no means emanate from the Gospel Jesus. Dr. Marshall contends that much of our law "has been built up in the conscious effort to embody the will of Christ in legal enactments." It is reasonable to assume that the will of Christ is expressed in the alleged words of Jesus. Well, Jesus pronounced a beatitude upon the meek, promising them the inheritance of the earth. Will anybody aver that our law "has been built up in the conscious effort to embody" that beatitude in a legal enactment? Jesus prohibits the laying up of treasures upon the earth—is this prohibition embodied in any legal enactment of Great Britain? Jesus enjoins non-resistance to evil or the evil one—does the law

of England endorse that commandment in a single legal enactment? Jesus forbids his disciples to go to law, to swear by anything whatsoever, to bear the sword, to kill or even get angry with one another, and recommends indiscriminate giving and lending to all that ask—has British “law been built up in the conscious effort to embody” his will in regard to all such things “in legal enactments”?

Dr. Marshall is extremely irrelevant in his examples, which number only two, the one being Sunday observance and the other marriage. We have never come across anything more inept than the following extract from his discourse reported in the *Christian World Pulpit* for June 25:—

“Sunday is an institution which we owe wholly to Christ; not that he actually imposed it. He himself accepted the Jewish Sabbath, but he changed the Jewish Sabbath by his teaching and conduct. But the Spirit of Christ led his followers to adopt the first day of the week, the day of our Lord’s resurrection, as the Christian Sabbath. The result was that in due course Sunday became, as the Lord’s day, a legal holiday in England.”

As a matter of fact we owe Sunday, neither wholly nor yet in part, to Jesus of Nazareth. He did not accept the Jewish Sabbath, but publicly broke it. There is nothing in the Four Gospels to indicate that Jesus contemplated, however remotely, the setting apart of a day to commemorate his own resurrection, and that this day should be adopted as a substitute for the Jewish Sabbath. It is a remarkable fact, which Dr. Marshall discreetly ignores, that Paul, who made so much of Christ’s resurrection and claimed to be in possession of his mind, was on principle a vigorous opponent of Sabbath and Sunday observance. To him all days were alike. Equally irrelevant is the reverend gentleman’s allusion to marriage. We know that under Jewish law the wife was owned by her husband, who enjoyed certain cruel rights over her person and property. The ancient Roman law was similar, the main difference being that under this the husband’s rights over his wife were conferred on him, not as husband, but as father. She was his daughter, and all her property became absolutely his. But during Rome’s period of greatest splendor the position of woman vastly improved. Whether married or single, her state was one of great personal and proprietary independence. But, as Sir Henry Maine points out (*Ancient Law*, p. 129), “Christianity tended somewhat from the very first to narrow this remarkable liberty”; and we know that under Christian rule the condition of woman, whether as wife or spinster, worsened rather than improved, and was superior in Egypt, Greece, and Rome, in pre-Christian times, to what it is under Christianity even to-day. Touching marriage, Dr. Marshall takes sides with those who signed the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on Divorce, forgetting that such a view on the marital tie is directly responsible for an infinite amount of unnecessary suffering in Christendom.

Now, on the assumption that Jesus did institute the puritanical Sunday, and utter the words attributed to him about divorce, we maintain that the attack now being made upon both is justifiable on the highest moral grounds, and that, if successful, as it is bound to be, it will inevitably result in a decided betterment of social conditions. If these were fair samples of the morality of Jesus we would have no hesitation in declaring that such a morality, so far from being the way of life, is “inevitably the way of loss and death.” The Bishop of Oxford admits that the indissolubility of marriage, as he believes it to have been taught by Christ, “may press hard on individuals in exceptional cases”; but, he adds, “press it hard or softly, the words of our Lord are quite unmistakable.” But these two unfortunate samples apart, we assert that the so-called morality of Jesus does not exist. The Sermon on the Mount might as well have never been delivered so far as its effect on Christendom is concerned. It is a back number, and as dead as Queen Anne. Its commandments are embodied neither in the law of the land

nor in the life and character of the people. It is highly amusing, however, to note how Dr. Marshall takes war as “one instance in which Christ is habitually and arrogantly disobeyed.” He says that “no one will deny,” while we do positively deny, “that the rule of Christ would mean the adoption of a policy of international peace.” Look at the past, we reply, and see what the rule of Christ has ever meant. The Gospel Jesus is many-sided, and so we are not surprised to see the following barbarous utterances ascribed to him:—

“I came to cast fire upon the earth, and what will it if it is already kindled?.....Think ye that I come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division; for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law” (Luke xii. 49-53).

From such a passage, and there are others like it, the sentiment of the popular hymn is a natural deduction:—

“The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar!
Who follows in his train?”

Surely, then, there was nothing unchristian about the Balkan war. So far were the Christian allies from wantonly disobeying Christ that they were literally fulfilling his own prophecy. It was the Cross against the Crescent, and the Cross has won because it was more efficiently equipped. You remember the story of Constantine’s conversion? He was on the march, approaching Rome for the first time. Being a devout Pagan, he was in prayer, when, “about noon, as the day was declining,” a fiery cross appeared in the sky with the words, “In this Conquer,” and the following night the figure of Christ appeared to him in a dream bearing a standard. No wonder, then, that he and his successors were such fierce fighters, and won such countless recruits to the army of the Cross at the edge of the sword. Such has been the so-called morality of Jesus in active operation in the history of the West.

What is the ideal of Christian morality? Sanctity; and of saintliness the world has had enough and to spare. The saintliest century was the wickedest. Saintliness has often developed into a dangerous form of insanity, especially in women like Madame de Guyon. The tenderness of it is beautiful, but through the tenderness there usually runs a strong vein of sensuality, a half modest and half unconscious longing for a *unio mystica et physica*.

“In many cases it appears, curiously enough, as the disguise of a girl’s or youth’s puberty, here and there even as the hysteria of an old maid, also, as her last ambition. The Church has frequently canonised the woman in such a case” (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 70).

Over against this pretty sentiment and useless ideal of the Church, and in vigorous opposition thereto, is set the modern, scientific, or as some prefer to call it, Hellenistic ideal, intelligence, prudence, sagacity, or wisdom, the well-known Greek for which is *phronima*. In the Dark Ages you had saintliness in great profusion, but the Hellenistic *phronima* was conspicuous by its absence. You had faith luxuriating like a green baytree under summer sun and rain, but the sane and cheerful outlook on life of “fugitive and exiled Greece” was lacking. “Fugitive and exiled Greece” had not where to lay down its foot until, in the fifteenth century, “it found a refuge beyond the Alps,” where Hellenism and Teutonism joined hands, and gradually delivered Europe from the cruel clutch of priestly rule. Well, it is Western intelligence, Hellenism revitalised by the Teutonic spirit, or born again in modern science and philosophy, that is working all the “havoc,” of which Dr. Marshall so sorrowfully, if not angrily, complains. He wants the Sunday all to himself, free from pleasure, free from theatres, restaurants, hairdressers, and every form of trade, and he wants

the three toll-bars—birth, marriage, and death—kept under the thumb of the all-grasping Church; but the whole lot is slipping from him, and the tide of *phronima* is flowing too strongly to be stemmed by any human power, while the supernatural supply of power can no longer be drawn upon. J. T. LLOYD.

Christianity and the Chinese.—VIII.

(Continued from p. 406.)

"Seeing that the only *bona-fide* convert to Protestantism, certainly made, devastated thirteen out of the eighteen provinces in his endeavors to Christianise his fellow-countrymen a little more rapidly than the missionaries were doing, the Chinese may deem it fortunate that not more enthusiastic converts are made. 'Hung-shui-shuen,' the Taiping king, accepted the example and teachings of the old Jewish captains, in all their literal ghastriness, and slew the idolators without mercy. Sixteen years of desperate fighting (1848-64) passed away before his bandit hordes were broken up, and his capital, Nanking, given to the flames, in which he and all his household perished."—ARCHIBALD LITTLE, *Through the Yang-tse Gorges* (1883), pp. 303-9.

"From the sociological point of view, the whole missionary system, irrespective of sect and creed, represents the skirmishing-force of Western civilisation in its general attack upon all civilisations of the ancient type,—the first line in the forward movement of the strongest and most highly evolved societies upon the weaker and less evolved. The conscious work of these fighters is that of preachers and teachers; their unconscious work is that of sappers and destroyers. The subjugations of weak races has been aided by their work to a degree little imagined; and by no other conceivable means could it have been accomplished so quickly and so surely. For destruction they labor unknowingly, like a force of nature. Yet Christianity does not appreciably expand."—LAFRADIO HEARN, *Japan*, p. 519-20.

THE fact which arises from a consideration of the authorities we have cited on the opium question is, that what the Chinese objected to was not so much the injurious character of the opium—for, as we have seen, they cultivated vast quantities of it themselves—but the officials feared the competition of the foreign opium with the home produce; while the Government feared the depletion of the silver currency in payment for the imported article.

Another reason why the Chinese singled out opium for attack was because opium was the main staple of the foreign trade. For when Commissioner Lin—acting under orders from the Chinese Government—required "every particle of opium" to be surrendered, he adduced the loss of silver by exportation as the ground of his 'commands,'* and not because it was a noxious drug. But when Captain Elliot, the representative of the Queen, ordered the British merchants to surrender their opium, and over 20,000 chests—valued at two million pounds—were delivered over to the Chinese, and the merchants had pledged themselves to deal no further in opium, it was found, to their pained surprise, "that the suppression of the opium trade was but a fraction of Lin's policy: he aimed at the total expulsion of Europeans from China and the closing of foreign trade."† And when, in attempting to carry out these orders, twenty-nine war-junks were sunk by two British men-of-war, the Chinese declared all trade at an end, and called upon every British subject to leave the country. War was declared on December 6, 1839, says Lane-Poole, "not because England insisted on 'forcing' opium upon the innocent natives, but because China resolved to rid herself for ever, 'bag and baggage,' of the hated barbarian."‡

Mr. Lane-Poole, who shows no sympathy for the Chinese, observes that the only alternative to a declaration of war by the British "was to accept our dismissal humbly and leave China alone for all time." Such a policy, he adds, "has been seriously argued," and he admits that there is no reason in the abstract order of things why a nation should not so isolate itself, but, he objects,—

"put in practice, such isolation is never permitted, and it would be bad for the world at large if it were. Had

it been attempted, the needs both of the Chinese and of the English would have soon broken the artificial barrier, and an unauthorised trade would have surely led to international difficulties" (p. 12).

In reply to this, it may be observed that none of these Oriental nations have been permitted to isolate themselves, simply because they have not possessed the military power with which to assert their independence. As a matter of fact, Japan—after a terrible experience of the evil wrought by Jesuit missionaries—expelled all foreigners from Japan and remained a closed country for two hundred years; no Japanese was allowed to leave, no foreigner to land; any person attempting to do so were either put to death or imprisoned. Fundamentally—as Mr. Michie, the historian of *The Englishman in China*, has observed—the international problem was identical in Japan and China, for Japan was forced to sign a treaty of commerce under the guns of the American fleet; it was a conflict between aggression and resistance:—

"Rational dread of, and natural repulsion to foreigners, inspired alike the policies of both countries. Where they differed was in the manner of meeting the invasion. Japan braced herself nervously to the effort, and, distinguishing between what was feasible and what was not, organised a counter-invasion unsuspected by foreign nations, whom she subdued by her own strength. China, on the other hand, opposed a fatalistic and unreasoning resistance, making no intelligent counter-stroke and showing no true anticipation of the issues of the struggle."*

If China had possessed the arms and fighting capacity of modern Japan, along with her own enormous population, Britain would have thought twice before declaring war, even to please her merchant princes. And as for Mr. Lane-Poole's contention that the needs of the Chinese and the English would have made the carrying out of the isolation impracticable, the Chinese had no need to go outside their own country for anything. As Sir Robert Hart, the famous Inspector-General of Chinese Customs, has remarked:—

"Many regard China as a far-distant land, with an immense population, but so wanting in all that others possess as to be ready to purchase, in unlimited quantities, whatever is offered for sale; whereas, what is true is this: China needs neither import nor export, and can do without foreign intercourse."

And although trade with China has grown, yet "The sanguine expectations which were expressed when treaties first regulated intercourse, a cycle back, have never been realised." The truth is that the Chinese did not require our trade. As Sir Robert Hart further remarks:—

"Chinese have the best food in the world, rice; the best drink, tea; and the best clothing, cotton, silk, and fur. Possessing these staples, and their innumerable native adjuncts, they do not need to buy a penny's worth elsewhere; whilst their Empire is in itself so great, and they themselves so numerous, that sales to each other make up an enormous and sufficient trade, and export to foreign countries is unnecessary. This explains why sixty years of treaty trade have failed to reach the point the first treaty framers prophesied for it."†

The fact is we forced our trade upon China at the mouth of the cannon; the only need recognised being the need for our merchants to make money. If China had been allowed, or had been strong enough, to sever all connection with the outer world, many millions of Chinese lives and untold treasure would have been saved, as we shall see.

War being declared—by the British Government—troops were landed, Chusan captured, several cities stormed, finally Nanking being threatened, a treaty was signed there, by which five ports, Canton, Amoy, Fouchou, Niag-po, and Shanghai, were opened to British trade.

Before this—in 1808—Dr. Morrison, the missionary—not the Dr. Morrison who supplied such a

* A. Michie, *The Englishman in China During the Victorian Era* (1900), vol. ii., p. 131.

† Sir Robert Hart, *These from the Land of Sinim* (1901), 60-61.

* Lane-Poole, *Life of Sir Harry Parkes*, vol. i., p. 10.

† *Life of Sir Harry Parkes*, p. 13.

powerful antidote to missionary enthusiasm in his book, *An Australian in China*—had founded the first Protestant mission in China, and gathered a small band of assistants around him, some of whom made journeys along the coast attempting mission work at various places east of Canton, where they always found themselves received with disfavor, and often with active opposition. Says Mr. Eames, the historian of the English in China:—

"Now that Five Ports had been thrown open to trade, the supporters of missions in England expected that a much wider field would be available for missionary operations, and that an entrance would soon be gained in the interior itself. Their joy was unbounded and unconcealed. One school of philanthropists showed what can only be described as unseemly delight, that any cause, even one so intimately connected with the opium trade as the warlike operations of 1841 and 1842, should have given them an opportunity to send out a larger number of mission workers. At a meeting held at Exeter Hall in 1843 by the London Missionary Society, one of the largest of its kind that had ever assembled, Dr. Liefchild moved a resolution 'expressive of thanksgiving to God for the war between China and Great Britain, and for the greatly enlarged facilities secured by the treaty of peace for the introduction of Christianity into that empire.' This resolution was seconded by the Rev. Dr. Adler, and carried unanimously."*

The history of Christianity shows that war has always been sanctified by the Church when it has had for its object the advancement of the Christian faith.

Lord Curzon, in his *Problems of the Far East*, tells us that a friend of his, an eminent divine in the English Church, speaking at Exeter Hall in answer to some observations of his upon Christian Missions, thus stated the case from the Church's point of view:—

"The gain or loss to civilisation from Christianity is not the question for the missionary. He is subject to a Master higher than any statesman or diplomatist of this world. It is not the missionary who has to reckon with the diplomatist, but the diplomatist with the missionary."

Lord Curzon remarks upon this:—

"That governments should fight, or that international relations should be imperilled over his [the missionary's] wrecked house or insulted person, would strike him as but a feather's weight in the scale compared with the great final issue at stake—viz., the spiritual regeneration of a vast country and a mighty population plunged in heathenism and sin."†

Yes, as Lord Curzon's eminent divine stated, the ultimate object of Christian missions to the heathen is not civilisation, but conversion; and, if a few millions are swept off the face of the earth by fire and sword, what does it matter, provided the remainder are brought into the fold? Civilisation, the welfare of the body, is nothing compared with the soul in the eyes of these fanatics. W. MANN.

(To be continued)

If instead of the "glad tidings" that there exists a being in whom all the excellences which the highest human mind can conceive exist in a degree inconceivable to us, I am informed that the world is ruled by a being whose attributes are infinite, but what they are we cannot learn, nor what are the principles of his government, except that "the highest human morality which we are capable of conceiving" does not sanction them, convince me of it, and I will bear my fate as I may. But when I am told that I must believe this, and at the same time call this being by the names which express and affirm the highest human morality, I say, in plain terms, that I will not. Whatever power such a being may have over me, there is one thing which he shall not do—he shall not compel me to worship him. I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go.—J. S. Mill.

* J. B. Eames, *The English in China*, p. 550.

† Lord Curzon, *Problems of the Far East*, pp. 284-5.

Acid Drops.

You never know what the Bishop of London will say, except that it will be something foolish. Speaking the other day at the Mansion House, on behalf of the British Columbia Church Aid Society, and rambling about as usual, his lordship (according to the *Daily Mail*) came to what Carlyle used to call "the condition of England question," and stated that "the great cure for our ills at home was a properly arranged and properly assisted scheme of emigration." This is presumably the other side of his lordship's policy of stimulating the birth-rate. "Get plenty of babies" is the Bishop's motto. When they grow to maturity his motto is "export them." We shouldn't object to the exportation if it began with the episcopal superfluities, and then went on to the clerical parasites generally. It would be a great relief to England. But we are afraid it would be a great calamity to the dumping grounds.

"The popular idea," the Bishop of London says, "is that you have only to put threepence in the slot—or, rather, in the offertory—and you get a handsome vicar, two good-looking curates, and a peal of bells." Carlyle said that the people of England were mostly fools, but are they fools enough for that? Handsome vicars and good-looking curates are not so plentiful. And who wants any more church bells? Heaven save the mark!

"As I live in the West End I am suspicious of everybody," said the Rev. W. H. Gibbons, senior curate of St. Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, in an action at the West London County Court. We presume he includes the clergy.

The Rev. T. Rhondda Williams, Mr. Campbell's successor at Brighton, is at his old game again. In the *Christian World* for June 26, he repeats once more what he has been persistently asserting for the last fifteen years or more, namely, that "in the world of culture to-day the Agnostic attitude is giving way." In the past, when asked for his authorities for such a statement, he used to name Lord Kelvin, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Dr. Russel Wallace. His present appeal is to Professors Eucken and Bergson, who seem to have strong leanings towards the religious position, though neither of them can be claimed as a Christian, even of Mr. Williams's ambiguous type. But there have always been writers of that nebulous, metaphysical order, who weave their strange illusions out of their own brains, and they were much more numerous yesterday than they are to-day; but two or three swallows don't make a summer. Mr. Williams pretends to speak for "the world of culture," and gives us only two names as his authority. Eucken and Bergson represent, not the world of culture, but merely a comparatively small coterie of metaphysical Idealists. The biologists are almost to a man against them, and so are the great bulk of psychologists, while among physicists it would be difficult to mention anyone in the front rank, besides Sir Oliver Lodge, who supports them. If the world of culture signifies the scientific world, it is a black lie to say that its Agnostic attitude is giving way. The truth is that Agnosticism is more general and more pronounced now than it ever was, as was abundantly shown at the last meeting of the British Association. Why does Mr. Williams persist in rehashing his hoary-headed old lie? Surely, he doesn't do it for the glory of his God?

The most interesting fact in this connection is that Professor Eucken, for one, does not agree with Mr. Williams. According to the President of the Free Church Council, the Rev. Mr. Connel, Professor Eucken "deserves well of all the Christian Churches for his gallant effort to recall the modern mind to a spiritual interpretation of life"; but the distinguished *savant* assures us, in his *Main Currents of Modern Thought*, that, "from the beginning of the seventeenth century, forces have been at work creating a new type of life which is fundamentally different from the Christian type, a type according to which the direction and control of individual and social life are in the hands of man alone." Dr. Russel Wallace testified to the same effect in an interview granted a few years ago to the editor of the *Christian Commonwealth*. In reply to a question he stated, with deep regret, that the overwhelming majority of scientists were strongly opposed to a spiritual interpretation of the Universe. Clearly, then, by "the world of culture" Mr. Williams must mean the circle in which he happens to turn, which, in relation to the subject under consideration, was never other than it is now, and which certainly does not constitute "the world of culture" in any intelligent sense of the terms.

The Rev. Rhondda Williams says that the religion needed "is a religion that will establish practical righteousness in

life." The only possible inference from such a statement is that Christianity is not the religion that is needed, because, though it has been in existence for nineteen hundred years, "practical righteousness in life" is yet to be secured. Indeed, no religion has ever succeeded in bringing about so desirable a consummation; and whatever approximation to such a state of things has been made in recent years is solely due to the spread of scientific knowledge.

We cannot confess to feeling a very keen interest in the proposed Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. On principle we are against the State subsidising or patronising religion in any form, and so far the Bill has our best wishes. But the Bill really disestablishes a Church only, and still leaves religion where it was. It is really a Bill to place Nonconformists and Episcopalians on an equality, and is, therefore, more or less of a domestic controversy. But religious ceremonies will still continue in connection with State and municipal functions in Wales, and none would howl louder than Nonconformists were it proposed to abolish them. When Nonconformists say, "We object to the State patronage of religion," what they really have in mind is the State patronage of one sect to the detriment or disparagement of other sects. Which is, we repeat, a question in which we are not keenly interested. We want to see the State leave all sects severely alone. And not only leave the sects alone, but their opinions likewise. A favor conferred upon all sects equally is as much an infringement of the principle of genuine Disestablishment as is a favor conferred only upon one.

Will those who are clamoring for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales advocate, or even agree to, the abolition of religious ceremonies in State functions and municipal affairs? Far from being in agreement with this, they clamor for recognition, and complain if they do not get it. But instead of resenting non-recognition by the State, they ought, if consistent, to reject its offer as an insult to their principles. Wherein lies the distinction between using the prestige and money of the State in aid of the opinions of a sect, and using the same in aid of a number of sects? The distinction is one that affects sectarian prejudice alone, and leaves those who put the rights of rational citizenship above the interests of a sect quite unaffected. That is why (we are really replying to a query put by a correspondent) we have shown so little interest in the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. To disestablish one Church in order to establish all, seems to us to be progress of a very doubtful kind.

As reported in the *Catholic Herald*—

"Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., told a capital story at the Scottish Liberal Club, Edinburgh. He said: 'Mrs. M'Gerraghty, of Belfast, was asked recently why her son had emigrated, and she said—Poor Hughie worked on the Island, and when he was going to his work one day he met one of them Papists, and he knocked him down, and then he kicked him, and after that a big policeman came along and arrested poor Hughie, and he was sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment, and when he came out he said he was d—d if he would live in a country where he had to suffer for his religion.'"

Comment, even by Shakospeare himself, would spoil that.

Mr. Harry Lauder says that the training of the Sunday-school is invaluable. He says he is sure of this because he went to Sunday-school himself. Would it be unkind to suggest that this evidence may be taken by some to fall a little short of a complete demonstration?

We are not surprised to learn from the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* that "Christian Science" is now one of the most influential religious bodies in America. Mark Twain prophesied that this would be so in his book on Christian Science, although those who could see nothing in Twain but a mere humorist failed to take him seriously. Christian Science has seized—accidentally, we believe—on just that amount of sense sufficient to float a colossal absurdity. No small proportion of our complaints are nervous in origin, and all are more or less affected by our mental condition. Consequently, all are benefited by a discipline that teaches them to preserve a serene disposition not to take their ailments too seriously, and when they are ill to keep cheerful and hope for the best. However this discipline is enforced, the results are almost certain to be beneficial. But between this and what is called the philosophy of Christian Science there is a wide difference. The first is sound sense, admitted by all who think about the subject, and ignored by Christian Scientists. The second is sheer absurdity, and the one topic on which Christian Scientists love to dwell.

At present, however, there appears to be a split in the ranks of the Christian Scientists. A Mrs. Augusta Stetson claims to be the spiritual successor of Mrs. Eddy, and from the *Telegraph* account it appears that she pretends to be a reincarnation of Mrs. Eddy. Mrs. Stetson asserts that the people who have gained control of the finances and machinery of the movement have grown terribly heterodox, and have made one concession after another to Rationalist criticism, until at present Christian Science is hardly distinguishable from a belief in mental healing. One thing seems plain; which is, that although Christian Science has a firm disbelief in the non-existence of evil, it has a firm faith in the intense reality of hard cash.

One consequence of the Balkan War was the conversion of the Monastery of Mount Athos into an independent republic—the smallest republic in the world. As the monks cannot very well go to war with any other community, they have started a little war amongst themselves. Some of its members have been proclaiming views which the Synod declares to be heretical. The heresy consists in some fantastic idiocy about the "name of God," not worth the trouble of explaining. The consequence is that one half the republic is keeping the other half in a state of siege, and seeking to bring it to submission by famine. Christian brotherhood is a hardy plant, and thrives under the most unfavorable circumstances.

A Hull chemist has just invented a new gun to be loaded with a chemical substance that is warranted to set fire to whatever it strikes, nor can the flames be extinguished with water. We suggest that a fitting reward would be take the inventor, his plans, and chemical formulæ, and drown the lot. The inventor would probably plead in extenuation that inventive genius applied to weapons of destruction is more certain of reward than if applied in other directions. We believe this is to a large extent true, and it is a grim satire upon our Christian civilisation that it should be so. The Government showed little concern over aeroplanes until it was seen that they might be useful in warfare. And the Christian Governments of Europe make military charges the first call on the pockets of the people. And meanwhile we have dinned into our ears the teaching that Christianity and peace and brotherhood go hand in hand.

Lord Roberts, whom we saw described the other day as a type of the Christian soldier, is still busily pursuing his campaign in favor of conscription. The position is a curious one. On the one hand, we are told we must keep a colossal Navy in order to prevent an enemy landing on these shores. On the other hand, Lord Roberts assures us we must have a huge Army ready to destroy the invading armies that our battleships have prevented landing. The position is one of sheer insanity, and is again an illustration of how sane and humane Christianity makes men.

Here is one more instance of the value of Christianity as a civilising factor. Mr. Seebohm Rowntree, in his book, just published, on *How the Laborer Lives*, says, as the result of personal observation, that a large proportion of our agricultural laborers are receiving "not much more than three-fourths of the nourishment necessary for the maintenance of physical health." And the same may be said of too large a proportion of the population of our towns and cities. One might well question whether any nation has the right to call itself civilised so long as such a condition of things exists. But when that country parades its Christianity as the cause of its progress and humanity, we simply have the snuff of hypocritical piety added to the tragedy of social injustice.

Even theologians confess that they are sick and tired of sermons. Professor Peake, who is a trainer of candidates for the pulpit, admits, in the *Christian Commonwealth* for June 18, that he scarcely ever reads them, and rarely hears them except in the church he attends. The fact is that sermons are simply relics of the times of ignorance and superstition, upon which the more intelligent folk of the present day are rapidly turning their backs. A popular preacher sorrowfully acknowledged quite lately that the pulpit of to-day has to address itself to deaf ears; but he would have been nearer the truth had he stated that preachers are humiliated in having, every year, to confront a growing number of empty pews.

Professor Peake makes the further depressing confession that even church and chapel-goers are now woefully ignorant of the very text of Scripture. It appears that the only people who really know the Bible are those who reject

it as a revelation from God, and treat it simply as an interesting mythological document.

Mr. Harold Shepherd says, in a valuable paper on "The Higher Criticisms," that "the preacher must be honest in all that he says"; but where will you find an honest preacher? Is not preaching the art of lying to the glory of God? Having read an official sermon which had been delivered before the Synod, a friend said to the preacher, "Surely, you don't believe all this awful stuff?" "No, I don't," he answered; "but, you know, the Synod is composed of extremely narrow-minded men, and I could not afford to displease them." As they are always talking about things concerning which they have no knowledge, it is almost impossible for preachers to be honest even with themselves, not to mention their hearers.

Canon Hartley Carnegie solemnly announced, in a recent sermon, that "1900 years ago God himself came down and lived as a man among men"; but if he "lived as a man among men," how did anybody find out that he was God? The Canon forgets that, if the Four Gospels are true, Jesus did not so live. He lived as one who was in possession of all power in heaven and on earth. No man ever lived as he is reported to have lived. If he was not a God-man, nobody can ever tell what he was, or whether he was at all or not. In other words, if the Four Gospels, in the form in which we know them, are not historically true, it inevitably follows that, historically considered, they are of all documents the most unreliable. In any case, the Canon's idea of God coming down and living as a man among men strikes us as extremely irrational and ludicrous.

The British Museum authorities have just published a translation of a *Book of the Resurrection*, the authorship of which is attributed to the Apostle Bartholomew. The book gives a detailed account of the descent of Jesus into hell, his conflict with Satan, his enthronement in heaven, etc., etc. The work, says the *Christian World*, illustrates the extraordinary activity of the imagination of the early Christians. Quite so. And at this kind of imaginative work Christian writers have always been adepts. They have always been good at constructing imaginary narratives to suit theories, from the days of the apostles down to the Christian Evidence Society. Only in later days people of such riotous imaginative capacity have been called by a very disagreeable name. Not but that there exists a world of difference between the constructive imagination of the true artist and the wild, half-crazy, superstition-saturated mind of the early Christian writers.

Father H. Day, S. J., Holy Name, Manchester, has been preaching a series of sermons at Bolton on the subject of "The New Morality," and in the second in the course he alluded to Freethought, and characterised it as "neither free nor thought at all." Of course, if it is not thought at all it can be neither bound nor free—what doesn't exist can have no qualities or attributes. But the curious thing is that Father Day made not the slightest attempt to justify his definition. As reported in the *Catholic Herald* for June 21, he declared that the essence of Freethought is the repudiation of authority, whereas, in reality, Freethought only means the substitution of *true* authority for *false*; the substitution, that is, of the authority of reason for that of tradition; of common sense for that of superstition; of facts for that of assumptions; of man for that of the priest. What really annoys this Father-in-God is, however, not that the people are discarding authority, but that they recognise as authoritative teachers, writers, and speakers who are not in subjection to the Church. The truth is that authority, in Father Day's sense, is departing never to return; that the deathknell of priestcraft has already been sounded; and that the emancipation of the human intellect is steadily progressing.

Mr. R. J. Campbell has at last discovered that there is no hell-fire for anybody beyond the tomb. Jesus says there is, but he didn't mean it. He adopts the apocalyptic language of his day, but throws into it a new signification of his own. He doesn't say so, but Mr. Campbell can read it between the lines. It has lain there all through the centuries until now, but from this day forth the whole world shall see and read it, and recognise it as the special discovery of the great oracle of the City Temple.

The *Glasgow Observer* is evidently a Roman Catholic paper, since it complains of the late Lord Archibald Camp-

bell's will penalising his widow and son by stipulating that if they "ever profess the Roman Catholic religion they shall forfeit every interest in his estate." Freethought papers *always* protest against such bigotry. But Protestant papers don't protest if the victims are Roman Catholics, and Roman Catholics don't protest if the victims are Protestants. So we put the *Glasgow Observer* down as an Irish Catholic organ. We are not surprised to see that it answers questions—even theological and Biblical questions. One of these, in the issue dated June 28, relates to that venerable question about Cain's wife. Who was she? "She was a daughter," our contemporary says, "of Adam and Cain's own sister, God dispensing with such marriages in the beginning of the world, as man could not otherwise be propagated." We suppose that settles it—though this explanation is dirtier than the old one. It used to be said that Cain married his sister, but it now appears that Adam married her, and Cain married the result. "An ounce of civet, good apothecary!"

There is a Bible recipe for consolation in misery which runs thus:—

"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more" (Proverbs xxxi. 6-7).

Here is a recipe from the Greek poet Hesiod, who flourished hundreds of years before the Christian era:—

"For if to one whose grief is fresh, as he sits silent with sorrow-stricken heart, a minstrel, the henchmen of the Muses, celebrates the men of old and the gods who possess Olympus; straightway he forgets his melancholy, and remembers not at all his grief, beguiled by the blessed gift of the goddess of song."

Which is the finer poetry? Which is the nobler morality?

That irrepressible "Brixton vicar" has been enlightening the world on Spiritualism through the columns of the *London Budget*. His opinions on this subject are not of any particular importance, and his English is susceptible of great improvement. He is fond of winding up with a poetical tag. We once heard him (it was many years ago, when his west-country accent was "all very fine and large") quote some lines from Browning, which we ventured to think were the only lines of that poet he was acquainted with. "I shall arrive," Browning said; and Mr. Waldron brought it out as "Oi shall arrive." Which, by the way, has turned out to be true—in a sense. Well, the poetical tag on this occasion is as follows:—

"To God again the enfranchised soul must tend,
He is her home, her Author is her end;
No death is hers: when earthly eyes grow dim,
Starlike she soars and Godlike melts in Him."

When the reverend gentleman "melts in Him" the Brixton district may lose one of its "great thinkers," but the rational people in the world at large will hardly put on mourning. Nor, perhaps, will the reverend gentleman need such appreciation. He will be in the starlight soaring business. We never saw a star soar, and don't know what it is like; but the "Brixton vicar" vouches for the astral phenomenon, and as old Omar Khayyam says "he knows—he knows."

According to the verdict of the coroner's jury, Hugh Davies, of the Bungalow, Southborne, near Emsworth, murdered his wife and committed suicide while insane. He attributed the "sad affair" to the "continuous nagging" of his wife. "May God have mercy on us both" he said. We hope so, if there be a God, and mercy be necessary. But it would have been a better mercy to stop the woman's nagging and let husband and wife live in greater happiness.

"God have mercy on me," wrote Ernest Winckler, a Greenwich chemist, before going out to poison himself in Borstal Woods, Plumstead. This sort of thing is getting too common. This "God" seems to play a very sorry part in the human tragi-comedy.

"Providence" has been showing the Balkan people that all the destruction in that part of the world is not to be left to them. An earthquake in the middle of Bulgaria has just wiped out two towns and hundreds of lives. "Providence" may follow up this performance with something still bigger, to take the cheek out of the Christian Brigands over there.

Mr. Foote's Engagements

(Lectures suspended till the Autumn.)

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1913.—Previously acknowledged, £155 2s. 11d. Received since:—H. Good, 10s.; F. Whatcott, 1s. 6d.; A Friend (per G. L. Alward), £1; H. Organ, 2s. 6d.

T. SHORE.—It is impossible to avoid forcing a highly composite language like English, if one wishes to avoid a finicking accuracy which loses more than it gains. Shakespeare had to say "too too" in Hamlet's first great soliloquy, and the "most unkindest" in Mark Antony's oration over the murdered Caesar. The emphasis and intensity thus produced could not be achieved in any other way. Let anybody try for a week and see if he can succeed. Generally speaking, language has to give way to meaning, and the question is, What is permissible? We all say "sleep well"—therefore, to "sleep badly" cannot be kept out. Moreover, audacities of expression are more allowable in private correspondence than in writing intended for publication; just as greater audacities still are allowable in conversation.

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

F. WHATCOTT.—Pleased to read your letter. We share your wish with regard to Miss Vance "that she may be with us many years yet."

H. MORTON REID.—It delights us to see that the Christians in London attach so much importance to the utterances of the Rev. A. J. Waldron. It is one of the most promising signs of Christian decadence.

E. B.—Thanks for all your trouble.

MISS VANCE acknowledges:—Benevolent Fund: Bethnal Green Branch, 5s. General Fund: Tunbridge Wells, 2s.

F. NIBLETT.—The reason you have not heard anything of Dr. Aveling for many years is because he is dead.

H. ROBERTS.—Pleased to see the letter in the New Zealand paper. It is, as you say, a sign of the spread of our views. We hope you are right in thinking that Mr. W. W. Collins, after nearly thirty years' hard work, now "sees a tangible result."

G. L. ALWARD.—Mr. Foote is really getting more and more his old self. Not only strength, but, the best symptom of all, serenity.

S. H. ALISON.—We have put the unfortunate man on our free list for the present. You can advise us again later on.

VICTOR B. NEWBURG.—The Paine verses are capital, and shall appear in our next. Why don't you write more in this vein? The gift of song is a great thing. Would that all who have it might learn something from Whitman's declaration that "The business of great poets is to cheer up slaves and horrify despots."

J. KING.—Your criticisms are quite sound, but they do not touch us personally. Glad you were so pleased with Mr. Cohen's last week's article.

REFORMER.—We have nothing to do with domestic differences between Christian Churches and their supposed Founder.

H. ORGAN.—Glad to hear that our Meredith article gave you a permanent introduction to the *English Review*.

J. PARTRIDGE (Birmingham) writes: "It is pleasant to know you remember the Stratford-on-Avon trip as a 'golden day.' It was a never-to-be-forgotten day to us all."

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LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Shop Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

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

Sugar Plums.

We have already said that Mr. Foote is taking as much holiday as he can compatibly with a minimum of work. The date of this number of the *Freethinker* will find him at the Isle of Thanet, the air of which has hitherto always agreed

with him extremely well. He proposes to remain there for a fortnight, after which he will spend a week at Yarmouth with his old friend Mr. J. W. de Caux, J.P. Mr. Foote will take his work with him; not all of it, but as much as he cannot very well evade.

One of Mr. Foote's peculiarities is that when he has once written a thing he can take very little interest in it—at any rate, for a great length of time, when he can view it with a certain mental detachment, as though it were written by someone else. One result of this peculiarity is a carelessness in preserving pamphlets and other matters proceeding from his pen. He ought to have preserved them all for business reasons; but, as a matter of fact, he didn't—and there's an end of the matter. He is now trying to get a set of his things together. One of them is the *Heroes and Martyrs of Freethought*, written as far back as 1875. This work was published in twopenny sixteen-page parts. Is there any reader who has a set (or any of the numbers) and is willing to part with it? Mr. Foote will be glad to hear from him or her. Of course he is willing to pay a reasonable price.

Mr. J. W. Gott sought Mr. Foote's advice on behalf of Mr. Thompson, who was summoned for using "profane and disgusting language" at Blackburn. What the "profane and disgusting language" was we are not informed—as usual. The point on which we are asked to give advice does not concern the defence. It is whether the defendant should pay a fine or go to prison in default. Our reply is that advice cannot be offered in such an alternative. The defendant must always decide that question for himself. We declined to advise Mr. Boulter on the point, and we gave the same reason then. The question is a purely personal one, and must be answered personally.

Mr. J. W. Gott organised what appears to have been a successful demonstration at Blackburn on Sunday evening in protest against the recent prosecution for "profane language" under the Police Clauses Act. The defendant was Arthur Thompson, a cotton operative, who has been lecturing a good deal in the district lately. He appears to be too weak for such work, and the police frightened him into giving an undertaking not to lecture on Atheism again in Blackburn. This document has not the slightest validity. The magistrates appear to think that preaching Atheism is illegal, whereas it is quite as legal as preaching Christianity. Chief Constables, of course, violate the law every day of their lives, but Magistrates, with Chief Clerks to aid them, ought to know better.

Mr. Gott states that the expenses of the defence in this unheroic case are on the road to five pounds, and he applies to the N. S. S. through us for that sum. We are not able to request Miss Vance to send it. Mr. Gott must really take his own responsibilities in these matters. The N. S. S. cannot follow up his missionaries with a cheque-book. We have also to say another thing—reluctantly but firmly. He must stop using the name of the National Secular Society in his announcements and advertisements. Mr. Gott's courage is undoubted; his discretion is far to seek; and his want of sensibility leads him to do things that make other people shiver. We hope he will understand that this is serious. The N. S. S. simply will not allow Mr. Gott to use its name without its permission.

A flying visit was paid to Tunbridge Wells last Sunday by Mr. W. Davidson, who is assisting to expose the machinations of Mr. H. A. Marsh, of the C. E. S., in relation to the scandalous statements this gentleman has been making about the late Mr. J. M. Wheeler. Mr. Marsh, who has shifted his ground very often since his first pronouncement, but has still much to withdraw, was announced to lecture on Tunbridge Wells Common on Sunday afternoon. Mr. Davidson, who clearly explained that the object of his visit was to refute Mr. Marsh's statements, was courteously allowed to speak for half-an-hour by the chairman, the Rev. Stather Hunt, a local clergyman. Several other clerical gentlemen were present, and all must have been greatly edified by hearing Mr. Marsh, when confronted by his opponents, describe them as "Dirty dogs, who had followed him from London," and who were in the habit of engaging "thousands" to rush him from his platform in the London Parks. A crowded audience listened to Mr. Davidson in the evening, who addressed them until he was compelled to run for his train. Many requests were made for a return visit, and a local clergyman offered to debate with Mr. Davidson. This offer will in all probability be accepted, and Mr. Marsh may rely upon further attention until he makes the *amende honorable* to Mr. Wheeler's memory.—K. B. K.

The Gospel History a Fabrication.

THE NARRATIVES IN THE SYNOPTICS.

THE first three Gospels, as everyone knows, give an account of the sayings and doings of Jesus Christ, from the time of his baptism in the Jordan to that of his crucifixion and resurrection, so that in these Gospels (which are called Synoptics) we have three versions of the same sayings and doings. It may also have been noticed that, in a great number of cases, these Gospel events are recorded by all three Synoptists in nearly the same words. Another remarkable fact in connection with those incidents or discourses, is that, in the majority of cases, they are related by each Synoptist in the same order of sequence. Thus, we find that Matthew and Mark relate seventy-five of these events or circumstances in exactly the same order; next, we find that Mark and Luke relate seventy-two in the same order. Lastly, we find that Matthew, Mark, and Luke record sixty events or circumstances in exactly the same order. Some of these, it is true, would naturally be placed in the order given by all writers; as, for instance, the arrest of Jesus before his trial, the trial before the crucifixion, and the resurrection to follow: but that three independent writers should record such a number of unconnected, undated, and unlocated incidents in exactly the same order is one that calls for some rational explanation.

To make this matter clear, I subjoin a list of the various circumstances recorded in the same order by all three evangelists. These are the following:—

Ministry of John the Baptist—Baptism of Jesus—Temptation of Jesus—Jesus goes to Galilee after imprisonment of John—Jesus commences teaching—Healing a leper—Healing man sick of palsy—Call of Matthew—Levi's feast—Discourse on fasting—Patching of garments and bottles—Disciples plucking ears of corn—Healing man with withered hand—Parable of Sower—Herod believes Jesus to be the Baptist—Feeding five thousand—Jesus asks what men say of him—Jesus foretells his death—Taking up cross to follow Jesus—The Transfiguration—Disciples unable to cure demoniac—Jesus again foretells his death—Disciples contend who should be greatest—Jesus blesses little children—the Rich young man—The camel and needle's eye—Reward for following Jesus—Jesus again foretells his death—Healing blind man near Jericho—Two disciples sent for colt—Public entry into Jerusalem—Cleansing of temple—Authority of Jesus questioned—Tribute to Cæsar—Woman with seven husbands—How Jesus was son of David—Warnings against scribes and Pharisees—Jesus foretells destruction of Jerusalem—Priests take counsel against Jesus—Judas turns traitor—Disciples sent to find a room—Passover and Last Supper—Jesus foretells Peter's denial—Agony in Gethsemane—Jesus betrayed and made prisoner—Jesus before High Priest—Peter's denial of Jesus—Jesus before Pilate—Jews demand release of Barabbas—Simon bears cross—Jesus crucified—Casting lots for garments—Jesus mocked and reviled—Darkness all over land—Veil of temple rent—Testimony of Centurion—Women beholding afar off—Joseph of Arimathea—Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre.

To the foregoing may be added fifteen additional circumstances, omitted by Luke, which Matthew and Mark record in the same order; also twelve other circumstances, omitted by Matthew, which Mark and Luke give in the same order—bringing the total up to eighty-seven. Now, it is simply impossible that three independent writers—two of whom, Mark and Luke, had never seen nor accompanied Jesus—could record such a number of trifling, and mostly unconnected, incidents in exactly the same order. And, if to this order of sequence, we add the fact, already stated, that a large portion of these narratives are related in nearly the same words, we arrive at the only conclusion possible—that behind the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there lies an earlier and more primitive Gospel from which these evangelists took the discourses, events, and other circumstances that are now common to two or to the three. This common matter comprises nearly the whole of the Gospel of Mark; but Matthew and Luke give many additional narratives which they took from other primitive writings of their time, the most important of which are: the Birth stories (Matt. i.

and ii.; Luke i. and ii.), the Temptation (Matt. iv. 1—11; Luke iv. 1—13), and the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v., vi., vii.; Luke vi. 20—49). This supplementary matter I leave for the present, being concerned now only with the narratives common to the three, as represented by the Gospel of Mark.

According to the orthodox view, the three Synoptical Gospels are independent accounts of the sayings and doings of Jesus. Matthew, it is said, was an apostle, and therefore a witness of what he relates; Mark is stated to have been a companion of Peter, and to have committed to writing all the narratives preached by Peter; Luke, it is declared, was a colleague of Paul, and accompanied that apostle in many of his journeys, and composed his Gospel from the substance of Paul's preaching. All this is apologetic nonsense, which is disproved by merely reading the following short sample of the teaching of Jesus:—

MARK x. 14—15.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."

LUKE xviii. 16—17.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."

Now, assuming that Jesus uttered these words, as represented in the Gospels, neither Mark nor Luke was there to hear them; nor was Paul. Peter, supposing he was historical, might have heard them spoken *once*; but no reporter was present, and it is admitted that nothing which Jesus is recorded to have said in the Gospels was ever written down at the time. Neither, again, were any primitive Gospels in existence in Paul's day. Yet, more than half a century later, Mark and Luke reproduce the passage verbatim—the only difference being the word "and," which Luke or some copyist has added. How did these two evangelists, who never saw or heard Jesus, become acquainted with the words they record? To this question there can be but one answer—that which I have stated.

Rational criticism is, however, now beginning to gain more recognition. During the last two decades a closer examination of the Gospels has proved to many Biblical critics that the three Synoptists drew their accounts from a pre-existing *written* Gospel—which is called the Common Tradition or the Common Source. Upon this subject the Rev. J. J. Scott, Canon of Manchester, says:—

"Scholars are now of opinion that the likeness between the Synoptic Gospels is due to the fact that St. Matthew and St. Luke wrote with St. Mark's Gospel before them, and embodied in their Gospels such portions of St. Mark's Gospel as they deemed suitable for their purpose."—"St. Matthew embodies in his Gospel nearly the whole of the subject matter of St. Mark, and St. Luke includes about four-fifths of St. Mark."

Other critics, including Dr. Carpenter, take the same view. But even Canon Scott afterwards admits that "there are indications that St. Mark made use of a written record" in chapters xi. to xvi. It cannot, however, be shown that any portion of Mark's Gospel is original. The truth is that all three Synoptists took their accounts from the same Common Source, and living, as they all did, in post-apostolic times, they could not do otherwise. Not one of the three was an apostle or the companion of an apostle. Matthew, Mark, and Luke were merely editors who, in copying their narratives from an older Gospel, made additions or verbal alterations wherever they thought they could improve the narratives. This is why the Gospels they produced were said to be "according to" the first, second, or third editor—it being understood by the Christians of the time when they appeared that they were simply more accurate copies of the primitive Gospel then in use. (See Luke i. 1—4.)

I will now take a short example of verbal agreement from all three Synoptics in order to illustrate the method employed by these editors. The words in italics indicate their additions or alterations.

Matt. viii 2-4.—"And behold, there came to him a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou made clean. And straightway his leprosy was cleansed."

Mark i. 40-42.—"And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt thou canst make me clean. And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean."

Luke v. 12-13.—"And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities, behold a man full of leprosy: and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him."

Here it appears evident that Matthew's account is the nearest to that in the primitive Gospel, to which, apparently, he has in this case made no addition. The "kneeling down" of Mark and the "fell on his face" of Luke are the equivalents of the "worshiped him" of Matthew.

Now, in these three examples, there is nothing to indicate that Matthew or Luke wrote with Mark's Gospel open before him; but rather the contrary. Had such been the case, we might expect one or the other to copy Mark's phrase—"being moved with compassion"—which was evidently not in the original Gospel. I have not space in this paper for further examples of the verbal agreements; but any readers who wish to make a comparison themselves may commence with those that follow. The Revised Version should be used, if available, as it is nearer to the Greek than the Authorised Version.

Matt. ix. 9-13 ...	Mark ii. 14-17 ...	Luke v. 27-32
" ix. 14-17 ...	" ii. 18-22 ...	" v. 33-39
" x. 2-4 ...	" iii. 16-19 ...	" vi. 14-16
" xii. 1-8 ...	" ii. 23-28 ...	" vi. 1-5
" xii. 46-50 ...	" iii. 31-35 ...	" viii. 19-21

From the foregoing facts we obtain the following results: (1) That for the historicity of the threefold events recorded in the Synoptics we have no evidence whatever. This is obvious: the writer of the Common Tradition is unknown; so also is the source whence his narratives were derived. As to the latter, the probability is that the writer simply committed to writing a number of hearsay stories in circulation in his time—the originators being unknown. (2) That the orthodox assumptions respecting the writers of the canonical Gospels being apostolic, and their Gospels written under the influence of "the spirit of God," are now exploded for ever. We are therefore at liberty to examine the so-called Gospel "history" by precisely the same methods as any other ancient history.

ABRACADABRA.

Correspondence.

THEOSOPHY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—You have already effectively commented on what Dr. Horton said in his attack on Theosophy, but there was one statement made by that gentleman which struck me as being very peculiar, and even awkward, from his point of view. He is reported by the *Daily Chronicle* to have said that he thought "the doctrine of Theosophy must have been invented by people who had no conception of the depth of human love, who did not understand that it was eternal, and could not be broken even by death." This statement seems to me to be rather general, and I should like to offer a specific case for consideration.

There was a certain old Israelitish king named Solomon, of whom it was recorded (1 Kings xi. 1-3) that he "loved many strange women, together with [or, beside (margin)] the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites;.....that Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods....."

Now, if, according to Dr. Horton, love is eternal, and cannot be broken by death, how does the case stand with regard to the love between Solomon and all these women? Is it still existing, and how? For in applying Dr. Horton's theory, there would appear to be some very knotty points to settle, to which the question as to the woman who had seven husbands would be a mere bagatelle.

I am not in any way defending Theosophy, for I have never been able to discover any basis for it; but I should think Dr. Horton will find his hands more than full in defending his own religious beliefs without going outside to attack those of others. And when one reads that Mr. Harry Lauder has been enlisted in the service of the pulpit, one may well open one's eyes and ask, "What next?"

J. TOMKINS.

PORTUGUESE POLITICAL PRISONERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. C. M. Tenison's letter in the *Freethinker* of June 29 will not deceive anyone who is not deceived already. The four articles from my pen which appeared in the *Freethinker* issues of April 27, May 4, May 11, and June 8 of this year, made a long series of specific adverse comments and criticisms upon the fulminations of the crusading Duchess and the assertions of the "British National Protest." Neither the *Daily Mail* nor any of the British Manoelists have ventured to controvert my position of absolute scepticism concerning the validity of the charges and allegations made against the Republic. Instead of meeting my counter statements and refutations with a direct frontal attack, Mr. Tenison, writing as the honorary secretary to the Committee of "the British Protest," falls foul of my attribution of the pamphlet to Royalist authorship, and attempts to cover the mixed motives and ideas of the "British Protest" by the *ipse dixit* of Mr. Trevelyan.

Certainly I was not present at the Æolian Hall meeting on April 22, and, having regard to the brutal maltreatment which Senhor Gomes received for venturing very politely to ask permission to meet the statements of the Duchess with categorical refutation, I am not sorry that another engagement spared me from the fury of Mr. Trevelyan's Portuguese friends of "justice, humanity, and law."

I do not think that the citation of Mr. Trevelyan's uncorroborated opinions quite meets the necessity of the case. Does Mr. Trevelyan pretend to speak of his own knowledge when he states that "many" of the political prisoners in Portugal "are put there [i.e., in prison] because of their opinions, not because of their acts"? Because, on that point, Mr. Trevelyan ought to know that opinions, *quæ* opinions, are no more liable to penal repression in Republican Portugal than in Monarchical England. Indeed, I am perfectly clear as to this, that in England opinions, *quæ* opinions, will lead a man more speedily to prison than in Portugal.

I am glad to hear, even at the eleventh hour, that Mr. Trevelyan "protested against the execution of Ferrer," but I do not recall any protest that he made at the prison indignities and cruelties inflicted upon Ferrer when in prison, nor do I remember any public meeting of protest that he addressed when Ferrer's life was in peril, nor when his assassination had become an accomplished fact.

Ferrer did not fall under the distinguished patronage of live lords or dowager duchesses; and Spanish prisons, with Montjuich as their fateful emblem, never stirred the sympathetic breasts of aristocratic committees.

And now for the pamphlet and its authorship. Mr. Tenison is quite mistaken in supposing that I derived from *O Mundo* my impression that the British National Protest was made in Portugal. As a matter of fact, I first knew of the pamphlet by reading a notice of it in *O Mundo*, and quite believed at the time that the Protest was of undoubted British manufacture. The perusal of the pamphlet at once wounded my patriotic pride. The Portuguese spirit of the Manoelists oozed out from every line of the production, and this impression I made clear not only in my *Freethinker* article of June 8, but in the translation thereof which appeared in *O Mundo* of June 16.

I found that the writer speaks (p. 3) only as one living on the spot in Portugal could pretend to speak. Only a Portuguese Royalist, as it seemed to me, with an inner knowledge of the Carbonaria could speak (p. 10), on his own authority, mark you, of their "initiatory oath"; could count the number (23,000) of these dreaded adepts in "massacre by bomb, poison, or dagger," or put forward (p. 37) a claim for "amnesty for all the Royalist prisoners without exception," especially as amongst those prisoners were rebels caught, arms in hand, against the constituted authority of their native country. These internal evidences, together with the passages cited in my last article, seemed to be so many cloven hoofs left carelessly on the trail to mark the

nationality of the gay protester. And now what do I see and hear? Why, the statement that "an English author is responsible for the pamphlet"! This statement, of course, I unreservedly accept *au pied de la lettre*. And I submit, this time for the purpose of eliciting information, that this "responsibility" will not carry us very far as to the veracity of the pamphlet until we hear definitely whether the English author who framed this British Protest did more than polish up into literary form the polemical materials made for him in Portugal. A mere Englishman, writing in Fleet-street or living in Tooley-street, could scarcely produce these thirty-nine pages of Manolist protests from his inner consciousness.

The Duchess of Bedford, who contributes an eleven-lined "Foreword," only claims that "the writer" had exceptional opportunities of collecting "information"—so that until we know whether the English author "received" the "information" "collected" by another, or "collected" the "information" with his own hands, and attempted to verify his "facts" by critical examination and inspection on the spot (all which may, or may not, be the Duchess's meaning when speaking of his "exceptional opportunities")—until, I say, this is known, the ascription to an English author of our controverted pamphlet leaves its infallibility as much open to doubt as before, especially in view of Mr. Swinny's personal testimony and the detailed refutation of his charges in *O Seculo*.

As I have already stated in my previous article, amnesty is a blessed word and an excellent principle to adopt, but the Portuguese Government cannot be expected to carry out a policy of universal amnesty while the Royalists make murderous inroads from Galicia, or ally themselves with the bomb-throwers who, a few days ago, scattered death and destruction in the streets of Lisbon when patriotic citizens were celebrating the genius of Camœns, the great national poet of the country. The road to amnesty is through submission to the *status quo*.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

The Mission to the Heathen

In this German possession of Kamerun, West Africa, there are four lots of missions: Baptist (German), Basler (German Swiss), Roman Catholic (German), and the American Presbyterian. The two latter missions hold the field in South Kamerun, and, as is customary, each devotes part of its time in crying "stinking fish"—about the other one's goods. The following incident will throw a little light on the methods used by these Apostles of Peace in converting the heathen: A few weeks ago, in the district referred to, a Yankee soul-saver discovered that a native, upon whom he had his eye, had joined the Catholic mission. He thereupon approached the native and told him the Catholic pretensions were false, its theology all lies, and, indeed, that the holy Virgin Mary, about whom the Catholics made so much fuss, was really no better than she should be. As an extra and immediate inducement to the native to join the only true Church, the astute Yank promised him he might take a little strong drink, and that strict monogamy would not be insisted upon. These offers made it evident to the native that American Presbyterianism was *the thing*, so he promptly became converted to it.

This, of course, did not suit the Catholic missionary, so he went round to the American mission to speak to the native and with the missionary, but the latter, being evidently a man of deeds, promptly laid hold of the Catholic, gave him a severe shaking, and then knocked him over! The Lord, having failed to protect his holy Roman Catholic servant, the law was invoked, and a summons for assault issued. According to German custom, a "first trial" took place, at which endeavor was made to settle the matter; but, desiring to make a big blasphemy case of it, the Roman Catholic Bishop issued instructions that the case should not be amicably settled, but must be fought to the bitter end. The case was tried, and, to the utter astonishment of the Catholics, the judge refused to hear anything from the religious point of view, and, treating the case as one of simple assault, found each party to blame and dismissed it. I believe endeavor is being made to work a case up for blasphemy.

What a disgusting farce are these missions to the heathen, and what fairy tales are told in Europe about the devotion and sacrifice of these brave men, etc., etc.—instead of which—the Catholic priests are very partial to a good cigar and a whisky and soda, and I have seen a "lay brother" in a condition that would have secured for him in England a verdict of "five bob and costs." The Catholics are, of course, celebrates—that is to say, there are also nuns or sisters out here.

The Basler mission have a large trading concern, but I believe the departments of soap-selling and soul-saving are kept separate. The egregious American missionaries are, perhaps, the worst of the lot—for the most part snuffing ignoramuses, and nearly all ten-a-penny "doctors." Most of them are married, and the natives are not a little pleased to find the missionary *bring a wife with him*.

Of course, we must credit the missions with teaching trades to the natives; but the youth of Europe are taught trades without the help of missions, and let us hope it will soon be discovered that in tropical Africa and other "heathen" countries the technical school would make a really excellent (and cheap) substitute for the missions.

R. D. MORRIS.

A Score of Epigrams.

TOLSTOY.

WEARY of being a progenitor,
Tolstoy found children were against God's law:
Fatigued with courts, he found his God agrarian:
Bored epicure, he found God vegetarian:
Author and teacher for a whole life long,
He found that God thought novel-writing wrong:
Sated with love, when his old reins grew slack,
The Devil was an aphrodisiac:
The vainest egotist for centuries
Mistook his ennui for the world's disease.

THE JOURNALIST.

Such far-fetched metaphor! Such stern invective!
Such brilliant verbiage! Such noble rage!
If he's a worm, why are you so vindictive?
Because, old man, they pay me by the page.

GOD AND I.

If I were God, I'd not accept the apology
Offered for my existence by theology.

CHESTERTON.

Our Chesterton doth bless and damn,
According to his Beer and Joint:
He is our age's epigram,
Excepting that he has no point

THE LADY NOVELIST.

"You may decry them, but you find my novels
Enjoyed at once in palaces and hovels."
"True. Hut and hall two kinds of room are rich in—
One never mind, the other one's the kitchen.
And, by the way, your sales would rise like vapor,
Were you but printed upon thinner paper."

THE THEOLOGIANS.

"God is a spirit." Then the stern Freethinker:
"I'm a Teetotaler; you, Sir, are a Drinker.
It follows then that Catholics are fuddled,
Whereas the Protestants are merely muddled;
Protestants have *one* spirit, though it stinks,
Whereas the Catholics all mix their drinks."
However fair the theologic weather,
The Pope and Mr. Foote can't dine together.
How sad it is that cranks in drink and food
Militate so against true brotherhood.

CHRISTIAN POETS.

The theory that life on earth's a poem
Prevents the accomplishment of any poem.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

When Doctors differ, where to find salvation?
Our Paul backs love, and Origen castration.

THE JEW.

The star-lit desert did my fathers range,
And found their God. For me the Stock Exchange
Serves as a temple. Sheep and Goats? My prayers
Divide all mankind into Bulls and Bears.

"PUNCH."

When poor old dotard *Punch* sacked E. T. Reed,
He showed why he'd so sadly run to seed:
He'll not employ those artists that can draw,
But those that live according to the law.

AN EPITAPH.

'Gainst scorn and blows
And all his mortal pain
Not once he rose,
So cannot rise again.

THE SCANDAL.

The violet, who shyly droops her head,
Sleeps out at night, in a mixed flower-bed!

TO THE PHILISTINES.

That part of mankind that is most delectable
Respects most those who are not too respectable.

DEGENERACY.

Olympus ruled, and Art was firm and rigid,
For love was free: now a reverse is come—
Our poets, sordid in their lives and frigid,
Write their "free verses" in a London slum.

THE PHILANTHROPIST.

All day he ponders with a smile seraphic
Unwanted Babies and the White Slave Traffic.
At night he teaches, unctuous and demure,
Christian young men the Art of Being Pure.

RATIONALISTS.

Religion's lies
We fight with all our faith;
We dogmatise
Only on Life and Death.

THE MOURNER.

"History's writ in blood!" Of course, old man.
D'you think your God's a vegetarian?

TACT.

"They slew their tactless Poet." "Tactless they:
Thanks to his martyrdom, he lives to-day."

OUR NOVELISTS.

Does everyone who writes to-day a story
Dwell 'twixt the surgery and lavatory?

NIETZSCHE.

Nietzsche, who laid on all the gods a ban,
Succumbed at last—and to the Superman!
Strains Dionysian replaced the Orphic,
Apotheosis of the Anthropomorphic!

VICTOR B. NEUBURG.

Renan on Himself.

Let us be austere to ourselves, but do not let us impoverish life. Let us not deprive humanity of its joys; let us take pleasure in beholding its enjoyment. The joy of others is a great part of our own; it constitutes that great recompense of a good life, which is gaiety.

I have been reproached with too much parade of this religion, so easy in appearance, but the most difficult of all in reality. Wishing will not make one gay. One must belong to an old race, not *blassés*; one must also be satisfied with one's life. My life has been what I should wish, what I conceive as the best. I would not alter much if I had to live it over again. On the other hand, I have little fear of the future. I shall have my biography and my legend. My legend? Yes. Having myself a little of the trick of ecclesiastical writers, I can trace it out in advance. The legends of the enemies of the official Church are all cast in the same mould. The fate which the book of Acts attributes to Judas is its essential feature. For one party of tradition I shall finish like that, in a fashion compounded of Arius and Voltaire. God, how black I shall be! All the more because when the Church feels herself lost, she will go down maliciously, biting like a mad dog.

In spite of all I have confidence in reason. The enlightened part of humanity, the only part I care for, will hold me in some esteem. Five hundred years hence the Committee of the Literary History of France, in the Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, will redact my biographical notice. It will have to discuss some singular documents. It will read in the books approved by the Church, that I received a million from Rothschild for writing the *Vie de Jésus*, and nearly as much from Napoleon the Third, who, afterwards, having reduced me to destitution, gave me a fine pension on the *Journal des Savants*.— [Footnote—I joined the *Journal des Savants* in 1873, the fixed salary being 500 francs (£20) a year.] The committee will disentangle all this as it can, according to the rules of criticism; I am sure that its judgment will be an authority to sensible people in the future.

The only thing I really fear is apocryphal texts. There is already a considerable mass of phrases, sayings, and anecdotes attributed to me, which amuse the Catholic press. The clergy quote in general at second-hand; they take their citations from little, low clerical reviews. Almost all that the religious polemicists father upon me is sophisticated or full of absurdity. I implore the friends of truth only to count as mine which has appeared in the volumes published by the firm of Levy. When I gave to the world the *Vie de Jésus*, the journals subventioned by the Jesuits published pretended

autographs of mine, which I never took the trouble to denounce. It is in this respect that the Committee aforesaid, in the twenty-fourth century, will have an opportunity to display its sagacity. If criticism, instead of making progress, should decline—then I shall be lost. But if humanity is doomed to cretinism, I no longer covet its esteem; it may think of me all the nonsense it pleases.....

I am thankful for my life. It has been sweet and precious to me. I have not been without sin; I have had the defects of all men; but, whatever may be said by those who call themselves God's priests, I have never committed any very bad action. I have loved truth, and made sacrifices for it. I have desired the diviner day, and I believe in its advent. When my old beliefs crumbled away, instead of weeping and feeling irritated, I faced ill fortune with a stout heart. Weeping would have been cowardice, and irritation the greatest absurdity.—*Translated, with slight alteration, from "Feuilles Détachées."*

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF MONTHLY EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON JUNE 26.

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

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The monthly cash statement was presented and adopted.

New members were admitted for Colne, Leeds, and West Ham Branches and for the Parent Society.

This being the first meeting of the new Executive, the following officers were elected:—General Secretary: Miss E. M. Vance. Monthly Auditors: Messrs. Leat and Samuels. Benevolent Fund Committee: Messrs. Davey, Leat, Roger, Samuels, and Wood.

The Secretary formally reported that the L.C.C. had reissued the permits for collecting in the Parks, withdrawn in June last, and was instructed to settle the account for the solicitor's charges in connection with the case so far as it had gone.

The President reported the receipt by him of a letter from the Bolton Branch and also a letter from Mr. J. W. Gott, reporting that a speaker, unconnected with the Society, had been prosecuted under the Police Clauses Act at Blackburn, and after a general discussion, the following resolution, moved by Mr. Cohen and seconded by Mr. Moss, was carried unanimously:—

"That the Executive endorses the warning of the Bolton Branch against outside speakers who collect money on the pretence that they represent the N. S. S.; and that the Executive also warns all whom it may concern that irresponsible advocates of Freethought at outdoor meetings must not expect to be seen through their trouble by the N. S. S. if they cannot keep from using language which brings them under the 'profanity' clause of the Police Clauses Act."

The following resolution, remitted from the Annual Conference, was then discussed.

"That the N. S. S. be represented as far as possible at the forthcoming International Freethought Congress at Lisbon, partly as an encouragement to the Portuguese Freethinkers who have taken such a great part in the recent work of progress in Portugal, and also as a protest against the malicious falsehoods so industriously circulated to their detriment by religious bigots and political schemers in England."

Mr. W. Heaford, the N. S. S. delegate to the International Freethought Bureau, was instructed to inform the Lisbon Freethought Association that the N. S. S. would be represented by at least three delegates, and it was further resolved that arrangements should be made to include in the party any members or friends of the movement who contemplated being present at the Congress.

The outdoor propaganda was discussed and further arrangements made. E. M. VANCE, General Secretary.

Obituary.

We deeply regret to learn of the death of Mrs. H. M. Hyndman, and our sympathy goes out to Mr. Hyndman in his great loss. Mrs. Hyndman was in every sense of the word a "helpmeet" for her husband, and her death will leave a void in his life which only those who knew how devotedly attached they were to each other can understand and sympathise with. Mr. Hyndman has never concealed his Freethought views, which were shared by Mrs. Hyndman.

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.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Mr. Neary's, 94 Lordship-road, Church-street, Stoke Newington): Monday, July 7, at 8.30, Business Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15 and 6.15, Mr. Gallagher, Lectures.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.30, a Lecture.

CROYDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Katharine street, near Town Hall): 7, a Lecture.

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Edmonton Green): 7.45, J. Rowney, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley-road): 11.30, Miss Kough, "The Futility of Prayer"; 7.30, R. Rosetti, "The Pathway of Faith."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill Fields): 3.15, Miss K. B. Kough, a Lecture. Finsbury Park: 6.30, E. Burke, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.): 7, E. Beelzebub, a Lecture.

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7.30, Max Hope, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S.: Annual Picnic. From Snow Hill Station, 10.5; luncheon, 12.30, at the East Gate Restaurant, 15 Smith-street, Warwick. Return from Warwick, 8.5.

BLACKBURN BRANCH N. S. S. (Market Ground): Gilbert Manion, "Why Free Speech is Necessary"; 3, "God"; 6.30, "Christian Socialism Exposed."

BOLTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Town Hall Steps): Monday, July 7, R. Mearns, at 7.30, "The Latest 'Profanity' Prosecution"; Saturday, July 12, at 7.30, "The Four Gospels Analysed."

FARNWORTH (Market Square): Monday July 7, at 7.30, Gilbert Manion, "Why I am an Atheist."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (Bigg Market): 7, F. M. Wilkesbarre, "What I Offer in Place of Christianity."

PRESTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Market Square): R. Mearns, 3, "Historic Christianity"; 6.30, "Christian Socialism Exposed."

ROCHDALE (Town Hall Square): Matthew Phair, 3, "Socialism and Christianity"; 6.30, "A Prosecution for Profanity: How it is Conducted."

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