

THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

SCIENCE. RELIGION. PHILOSOPHY.

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It has become the fashion to distinguish between theology and religion. At one time, not so long since, the terms were synonymous, but they now seem to be diverging with the development of the thought which associates religion with the natural, and theology with the supernatural. Theology is that which expresses a knowledge of a personal deity. It is sometimes called a science, and it has certain generalisations which give its pretensions a color of exactitude. To discard theology is simply to abandon or discredit the supernatural. That this is the line of movement of the best thought of the age hardly admits of much doubt. On the other hand new interpretations are given to religion. The worship of art or science is religion in the natural sense. The worship of Humanity—Father Man—is religion with the Positivists. The desire to be good and do good, is a religious impulse in the eyes of the clerical author of "Village Politics." (See Reviews). And religion may be confined to the cultivation of morals. An Oxford professor—the author of *Ecce Homo* and of *Natural Religion*—finds the synonym of Religion in the term Culture, a word closely allied with Worship, but with an appropriate meaning of its own. Thus the word has become a shield to protect those who are in transition from a recognition of the supernatural to positive belief only. In this sense all intelligent earnest men are religious. Though the interpretation may be strained, the meanings indicate the vastness of the change that is rapidly disintegrating old forms of religious belief.

The death-beds of Freethinkers are a perennial source of comfort and joy to the faithful. The subject formed the staple argument in Mr Forlong's attempt to establish the truth of Christianity in Wanganui; "Tom Paine" serving as an example of what a man may come to whose belief and life are not governed by the fear of punishment after death. If true that Thomas Paine did shrink in the last moments and confessed his life a lie—and no greater untruth than the statement about this great man has ever done duty in vouching for the credibility of a hard-pressed religion—it would not be a good argument for the truth of Christianity. The weakness of the body immediately preceding death is generally an index to the mind. That is not the time when men are most likely to take just and comprehensive views of evidence or of questions involving sustained reasoning power. The death-bed argument tells against the system of rewards and punishments, for these are the inducements which tend to silence reason, acting as they do on the self-preserving instincts of the weak. There are of course weak natures who in weak moments would recant former opinions, but the fact expresses nothing more than a distressing phase of human nature. A belief in the "innocency of honest error," as Lecky has it, is the best protection against contingencies. Paine had braved death more than once without changing his opinions. The evidence moreover is overwhelming that the Christian story about his death-bed recantation is a pious fraud.

Geology has something to say about the theory of earthquakes, but it is equally certain that the time is far distant when the 'last word' will have been said on the subject. One thing is known, that the capacious bosom of mother earth contains the fires, the gases, the vapours, or other agencies which cause these visitors to fright so many isles from their propriety. The disaster at Ischia in Italy by which so many as 5000 human beings lost their lives shows the energy of the forces at work. Does it at the same time show a Providence? A Providence that observed the fall of a sparrow would be directly responsible for every life lost in that fearful catastrophe. It is more rational to suppose, however, that the conflicting elements of Nature were the efficient agents, and that Providence was asleep or non-existent. For, a Providence which does not *provide* is a contradiction. How silent are the ecclesiastics over the calamity! To-day, thanks to the spread of knowledge, they are content to see the Government issue an order that the houses in Ischia shall in future have no masonry in their structure, but be built of wood or iron. The deposition of Providence is a scientific fact.

The Rev. Charles Strong's orthodoxy is to be tested by the Melbourne Presbytery in a practical manner. Imagining that he is unsound on the divinity of Christ, he is to be questioned by the Presbyterian Inquisition as to his belief in the doctrines revolving in the system of which the god-man is the centre. If he refuse to answer he will be held contumacious. If he answer hesitatingly, his heresy will be met by a "libel," in the technical vocabulary of the Corporation. If he answer that he does not believe in the godhead of Jesus, he will be pronounced a heresiarch at once and perhaps deposed. Of Presbyterian actions of "libel" we know as little as one outside the pale ought to know of affairs of the kind, and therefore it is necessary to say that we cannot speak with authority on points of procedure. Mr. Strong is said not to have given prominence to the atonement and its associated doctrines. The inference might be drawn from this that he is in doubt, and in that transition state where conscientious minds hold opinions in abeyance or provisionally until a kind of certitude has been reached. The feature of the controversy affording edification, is where the *life* of the alleged heretic has attached to the man a large body of the laity of Melbourne, and his own congregation unanimously, who are ready to place it above all doctrines and confessions—a very hopeful outlook for the progress of the reformation which is gradually eliminating the supernatural and finding its account in good works alone.

The publisher of this Review informs us that he has no reason to complain of the general willingness of booksellers to undertake the agency on the usual business terms, but he has met with a number of refusals, chiefly on prudential grounds—the fearful consequences of being found selling freethought literature. The dread of being boycotted by their Christian customers has in-

fluenced these tradespeople, who however are well enough disposed towards us personally. Now we do not think they have correctly appreciated the state of public opinion, and that their timidity is not justified by the spirit of the age. Many ecclesiastics of course maintain the traditions of Cyril, and when they cannot refute incline to ban, but as a rule there is a wide tolerance among the laity, at least in the colonies, which, unless outraged, tends to judge fairly. It would be out of place to speak harshly of such refusals, for there are responsibilities of which we have no knowledge. For instance, when a man thinks he would be injuring his family by an act of what might be termed boldness, he is entitled to much consideration. But we are informed that in one instance the hand that condemned the Review in the press wrote privately congratulating the publisher. Nothing will justify such an act. As time goes on we have the hope that the courage of opinion unobtrusively expressed will be among the highest claims to the regard of one's neighbours.

Among the notices in the press on our first number, there is one to which a reply is perhaps due. Objection is made that we have taken reason as our guide,—an evident mistake, thinks this Christian editor, as “during the French Revolution this injunction was followed, and we know with what appalling consequences!” Then we have a reference to the thousands slaughtered and other horrors, painted in Rembrandt colors. “They [the devotees of the goddess of Reason] demonstrated in a terribly forcible manner the truth of the Christian's contention that a populace unrestrained by religion will soon degenerate into an assembly of devils in human shape.” This ill-digested piece of history forms the strongest indictment against Christianity. For fourteen centuries France had been under Christian teaching, and for its faithfulness its ruler had been styled by the Vicar of Christ the “Eldest Son of the Church,” when all at once the fruits of these centuries in the Revolution were exhibited. The crimes of the French Revolution therefore may not illogically be directly charged to the official Christianity which had been directing the religious education of the people. The political, religious, and social rebellion, led for a time by the Girondists (who were the representative Freethinkers of the period) was one of the most memorable and justifiable attempts ever made to overthrow tyranny based on the false doctrine of absolute submissiveness taught by Jesus. There are some Christians who will not learn or profit by the plainest facts of history.

Mr. Gordon Forlong has given two lectures in Wanganui on “Bible Difficulties,”—the beginning of a series on the evidences of Christianity. He represents himself as a converted Deist, and takes care to inform his audience that, having been educated as a barrister, he can translate Greek words and give them a meaning highly calculated to remove difficulties. This, we understand, is in keeping with the business of barristers *in Court*, but out of Court it has been held that Greek ought to be construed, even by barristers, according to recognised philological rules. It is quite proper for Mr. Forlong to contend that the standards are not infallible and need revision, that certain Greek words bear different meanings to those generally given to them, and that a revised New Testament, according to Forlong, is the want of the age. But if this is his opinion, on what moral ground does he withhold from the world at large knowledge so precious? Mr. For-

long, however accommodating, cannot personally be accessible to all who are perishing for want of a little pure Greek. Why does not this Grecian, greater than Bentley, at once issue a proper translation, and let it go forth with the imprimatur of ‘Forlong and Infallibility’? We are told by those who heard the lecture and understand English, that when Mr. Forlong got away from Greek, his arguments in the vulgar tongue disappointed his Christian friends, and greatly amused Freethinkers. But then it is generally understood that people who cannot reason in English are often overpowering in the tongue of Socrates.

The Wellington clergy came forward at a meeting of the Bible Society to defend the character of David from the attacks of “Ivo,” who had made the life of the “sweet singer” the subject of one of his discourses. Archdeacon Stock ingeniously suggested that “it would have been easy to leave out David's faults, as human biographies usually did; yet it was this very difference, this impartial history of his faults and his excellencies, which showed the divine origin of that record.” It requires more than impartiality to show a divine record. Has the Archdeacon not read Froude's *Reminiscences of Carlyle*? David's biographers may have been unconscious of the fact that he was so great a sinner, and so narrated with approval those very acts of which an Archdeacon now seems ashamed. It is not a little curious that the authenticity of the Bible is of more importance to the cleric, than the Bible picture, presented by the Freethought orator, of a very immoral personage being a man “after God's own heart”!

The apologies made for Christianity are sometimes very amusing. Archdeacon Stock the other day defended the Bible by producing an array of men who were devout believers in the book. He “mentioned Clarke-Maxwell, Faraday, Herschell, and Sir Isaac Newton, all firm believers in their day; also Havelock among pious warriors, Macgregor, the traveller, better known as Rob Roy; and the eminently useful Earl Shaftesbury.” This galaxy, we think, might have been considerably improved upon without much effort. It would be strange if the great institution of Christianity had not believers among eminent men, who, while engaged in physical research, do not trouble themselves greatly about a faith which transcends their reason and is beyond experiment. If miracles could have been arranged and examined like Faraday's lines of magnetic force, he would probably have told the Christian apologists all about them. Since he could not experiment, he read the penitential psalms on a Sunday among his Sandemanians, and resumed his philosophy on Monday. One Mr. Gordon Forlong has added a very notable name to the list. He has announced that Napoleon Bonaparte was “converted” at St. Helena, and acknowledged “the truth.” After this, who will doubt the truth of Christianity? It must, however, have been an oversight on the part of the “divine founder” that he left the matter in such doubt that it had to be resolved by “The Little Corporal.”

The circulation of Bibles by a wealthy Society does not appear to keep pace with the vice and heathenism of a large part of London. The Saturday Review has the following account of the success of Christianity in modern times:—“What a frightful picture might be drawn, and without exaggeration, of the things that go on daily in our streets; the millions of men who never open their mouth without an oath, and never utter a

single noun substantive without prefixing one and the same meaningless adjective; the shameless vice which hides not its head even at high noon; the Embankment, where men are nightly set upon, robbed, and thrown into the river; the gambling clubs; the suburban races; the court into which no decent person may venture by night or day; the music halls and their senseless and mischievous songs; the drinking; the wife-beating; the starvation. Were all these things written down, a picture might be produced which would make the London of Victoria compare with the Rome of Nero."—If it be true that London of to-day can be compared with Rome in the time of Nero, in those respects so forcibly described in the quotation we have given, Christianity has been a greater failure than might have been supposed from its wealth, command of power, and organisation.

"THE LAW WITHIN THE LAW."

"Cambridge, 10th March 1843."

"TO MAJOR GENERAL CRAWFORD."

SIR,—The complaints you preferred to my Lord against your Lieut. Colonel both by Mr. Lee and your own letters have occasioned his stay here. * * * * "Sir, The State in choosing men to serve it takes no notice of their opinions; if they are willing to serve it that satisfies. I advised you formerly to bear with men of different minds from yourself; if you had done it when I advised you to it I think you would not have had so many stumblings in your way. It may be you judge otherwise; but I tell you my mind—I desire you would receive this man into your favour and good opinion. I believe if he follow my counsel he will deserve no other respect from you. Take heed of being sharp or too easily sharpened by others against those to whom you can offer little but that they square not with you in every opinion concerning matters of religion. If there be any other offence to be charged upon him—that must in a judicial way receive termination." * * *

Your humble servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

This is a letter worthy of remark in more than one way, but its chief teaching centres in the fact of its being a preaching of toleration by an intolerant person. Few would be found to differ from the view of Cromwell's character which asserts him to have been impatient of contradiction to any of his well-considered lines of thought and action; politically he was the greatest iconoclast the realm of Britain ever knew; a man who saw through the tinsel of outward shows, and showered merciless blows upon the poor old graven images which had held men's eyes in awe for centuries. And socially the influence of his work was greater even than in its political significance; only one restraining power held the Revolution from degenerating into an Anarchy of society, when that society had seen its most sacred symbols and idolized safeguards broken down beneath the feet of the puritan soldiers. The restraining power was the intense religious feeling in the heart of the Great Soldier—a feeling so utterly beyond the puny "dilettante" religious life of the present day that not one in a thousand of us can believe that it ever did exist in all its passionate breathing life in the breasts of a whole nation. But the fact is there, patent to all who will take the trouble to interest themselves in the subject, and not one of those who do so but will close the study saying "The truth is clear, these men thought and acted in the light of their religion; it is idle to try to explain their motives and actions by the one careless explanation 'Cant and Hypocrisy!' There was faith, there was power, there was law in their view of life." But the effect of this religion was deep intolerance; that which they considered the rule of conduct for themselves must be made the rule for all others: especially was this evident in the dictates of their Chief; there was to be no Popery, no Antichrist in England then—Agnosticism was not even dreamt of, so needed no prevention. Reading his character thus, does not the letter which commences this article seem like a paradox, a startling falling away, and rejection of all those ideas by which his life was guided? A mere appearance only, for in reality this letter shows he had for a moment falling upon him a ray of higher light; he emerges from the bondage of the

lower law into the glory of the Higher Law, seldom able to pierce through the dusty windows of a soul whose early education and narrow surroundings had obscured the ability to receive such glorious messengers. Justice broke in, human feeling glowed warm, and the brotherhood with earnest manhood melted the ice of intolerance and formalism which had crystallized about his heart. So he says, "Here is your brother; recognize the good in him, look through the outer husk of him, and if you can only measure him by your wooden-headed standards of creed and doctrine—beware!"

And thus speaks every mighty brain, every great soul who has been a leader of his people, a prophet to his disciples, a moulder of the shape his nation shall take after he has passed away. Their deeds, and the deeds of their interpreters (alas!) have become history; their "revelations" after being the bread of life to thousands, become mouldy to the growing wants of their descendants. Happy indeed is it when their teachings have not become worse things than these, when their names have been turned into war-cries, and their religious symbols embroidered on flags floating over fields of carnage and the martyr's dungeon. But those who read of these men with eyes wide opened will see points of light touching the old darkness everywhere, and those points of light are the in-breakings of the Higher Law upon the minds of religious men. Before we attempt to show how this light fell, let us try to understand something of what this light is. Is there any higher law outside Necessity, outside social observances, outside the many "revelations" of the thousand creeds; a law in which the men of any recognized belief, or of no definite belief, can take refuge and find strength? Is there any common mental standing-ground on which the man who explores the star-depths and classifies the fossils to-day can take his place side by side with Moses and Paul, Buddha, Mahomet, and Cromwell. Surely there is. Among the mutable shifting things of the world one law stands so inexorably unchanging, so strongly speaking through the Eternal Silence that it should be called Divine, because it is clothed with what seems to us the attributes of Divinity. That law is "*Nothing of good is lost*"—a constant metamorphosis, but a constant progression, a slow widening out of To-day's narrow dark movements into a Beyond where "we lose ourselves in light". And it is the outer beams of of this glorious Light-Sea which have fallen through the ages here and there upon the souls of men exalted by their intellectual force into leaders of their fellows, raising them for a moment from the baser doctrines they had evolved from their surroundings. Let us notice some instances where the law comes clear from the past. When the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter formulated the creed which has been the religious guidance and the national safeguard of his people ever since, that creed, stripped of its priestly dress, was one of the lowest ever offered as the mental nourishment of a portion of our race, (it was not fitted or even proffered save to the chosen people) teaching as it did the dreadful dogma "The spoils to the Victor!" Keep your bodies strong and healthy, your family arrangements pure, your laws just to each other, and your reward shall be—eternal life after death? No—not a word of it. Serenity of conscience and intensity of moral beauty? No, but worldly success—permission to murder the peaceful inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and become the owners of the "land flowing with milk and honey." This teaching had its result and its partial attainment; in the days of the Captivity and the Dispersion it was very poor food for the soul, but in the days of Joshua and of Solomon there was power in the motor of the Mosaic creed—"Help yourselves, and you will be helped." Could that prophet who uttered a doctrine so cruel have seen one glimpse of the Higher Law? Listen. "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor and needy in thy land" "Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons nor take a gift." "Love therefore the stranger." "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or sheep go astray." "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped." "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother." Note how the human struggles through the priest, how the heart triumphs over the brain, and makes the urger to bloodshed kindred with the patriot he would destroy and the women he would massacre.

Let us pass over the records of a few generations, and stand by the side of Paul as he reasons in the light of a more cultivated age. He has told us all about predestination, how God from the commencement of the world doomed millions of his yet unborn creatures to the unquenchable flames, how God's anger with the world's wickedness could only be appeased when men had murdered his own son, how "the powers that be are ordained of God" (the Borgia Popes for instance), and that he who loves not the name of Christ is condemned already. Then, while we stand aghast to hear the threatenings, the terrors and the dismal folly of such a representation of a Divine Being, suddenly from the dry blasted trunk of this grim Creed breaks forth a blossom of human kindness, a flower of human brotherhood—"If I give my body to be burned but have not Love, it profiteth me nothing." "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Above the sophistries of his intellect, the mysticism of his dreams, he rose to the Higher Law, his mind taught unforgiveness and eternal fire to all who differed from him and would not accept his propaganda, but the light flashed into him and he cries—"Love, love, and pity for all poor suffering men." Thus too he labored with his hands, an honest independent man, living on no alms or contribution plate, disregarding personally the "lilies of the field" argument; and he is far above any consideration of "turning his cheek to the smiter" when contending with Peter or arguing concerning Apollos or Alexander the Coppersmith, or recounting his shipwrecks and fights with wild beasts at Ephesus—through broken sentences and half contradictions we have glances down into the inner Paul, and see the great force of Humanity lifting him up to us and to all who live. How little would the frozen creed of Buddha seem to promise to those with whom the sense of individuality is strong—a path leading nowhere, an enduring only of the ills and pleasures of life. Strip off those earthly desires, those longings of the flesh, says the great Teacher of Asia, rise above the follies and the weakness, the aspirations and entanglements which make up to most the sum of existence. And the crown, the victor's prize is Nirvana—Nothingness—Negation. How can a creed like this have been bread to the hungry souls and light to the weary eyes of the countless millions who have followed the teachings of Prince Siddartha for so many centuries, and be even now the comfort and consolation of millions who cry "We lose ourselves in Buddha!" The answer comes that it is because the great loving sympathy of the creed's founder glowed through the ice of his doctrine, and shone in words like these. "The succouring of father and mother, the cherishing of wife and child is the greatest blessing."—"Day by day dwell merciful holy and just, kind and true."—"Lay up lasting treasures of perfect service rendered, duties done in clarity, soft speech and stainless days."—"Never will I accept private individual salvation till every soul from every star has been brought home to God."—So we see that though experience and observation made him certain that there was only one way in which the individual could attain the serene peace; which was by the avoidance of all which could produce sorrow, and rising into a lofty atmosphere of isolation—"the high Nirvana-way"—the heart of Buddha knew that so long as men existed, that delightful network of affection for parent and child and wife and friend would do more to keep men pure and holy than all the rending apart of the passions which fitted men for his snowy Paradise. The creed of Islam spread by the sword would never have carried the Crescent to victory so often had it not held within its secret a force to touch the weak and to bind the strong. More is needed than the drunkenness of victory before a Belief can rear its head in sovereignty above the other opinions of mankind; it has to speak comfort to its wounded, and solace to its bereaved, help to the strong brain in the maze of doubt, and guidance to the seeker after wisdom. Without such teaching it could not hold its own for a generation. So Mahomet speaks to his people in words that seem to him divine. "Every good act is charity; your smiling in your brother's face; your putting a wanderer in the right road; your giving water

to the thirsty is charity."—"A man's true wealth is the good he has done in this world to his fellow men."—"There is no piety in turning your faces to the east or west, but he is pious who giveth his wealth to the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer; who is faithful to his engagements and patient under hardships and in time of trouble." Having thus cited evidence in support of the position, let us take account of the apparent discrepancy which some might take objection to, between a mere outburst of human feeling in the great religious leaders and that divine law "Nothing of good is lost." This stirring, this sparkling of humanity through intolerant creeds, is the manifestation in a practical way of that Higher Law. Moses in exhortations to brotherly kindness and justice recognizes in a blind way the rights of the patriot Canaanites he would treat as dogs; Paul by his honesty and independence proclaims the goodness in those sinners his creed calls depraved and fit for eternal fire; Buddha knows that Nirvana will never stimulate men to be kind and tender-hearted, but appeals to that sympathy of mortal desire and earth-born affection which unites mankind in one great family. So with Mahomet, Cromwell and all other religious leaders, their doctrine is intolerant, high-flown, idealistic, but the soul of each of them saw in flashes the eternal evolution of Good out of Evil, and that those who differed from them were not beings of the outer darkness.

Of all men, Freethinkers should take new courage and hope in considering this. The constantly heard taunt that we are those who break down and not those who build, that we destroy but give the world nothing in place of the thing destroyed, is repeated so often that in bitterness of soul we half begin to believe it ourselves. But though never granting that if such accusation were true we should be altogether wrong (for a lie should be struck down whatever may follow) still there is a way. Let us be glad there is a way. A hope and a faith that as in the past the Truth has always been to be found, has been near the hearts even of the intolerant, it may be seen clearer and purer with every passing age, and that the future triumph of Happiness above Pain is a matter of certainty and a spring of delight. A hope that reaches beyond the grave; not built upon old documents, variously interpreted, quarrelled over, and cavilled at, but a faith born in research and nurtured in observation. Not reaching beyond the grave for each separate individual with a promise of a selfish crown and a golden city, but an utter trust in the fact that the amount of suffering in the world is daily diminishing and will diminish, that the forms of evil triumphing for a time must fade out before the stronger elements of the good which cannot be destroyed, and that the ultimate of the Scheme of Things is the perfection of our race beyond the wildest dreams of modern men. If in the very founders of religions there could beam forth a recognition of the law of universal love, far more should those who have risen above the draperies and formalities of creeds acknowledge the debt of human kindness and the bond of mortal brotherhood. In the words Zoroaster wrote in the Zend Avesta thousands of years ago—"Let us then be of those who further this world."

EDWARD TREGEAR.

THE VIRTUOUS

Salt of the earth ye virtuous few,
Who season human kind!
Light of the world, whose cheering ray
Illumes the realms of mind!

Where misery spreads her deepest shade,
Your strong compassion glows;
From your blest lips the balm distils
That softens mortal woes.

By dying beds, in prison glooms,
Your frequent steps are found;
Angels of love! you hover near,
To bind the stranger's wound.

You lift on high the warning voice,
When public ills prevail;
Yours is the writing on the wall
That turns the tyrant pale.

Mrs. Barbauld.

Progress.

WANGANUI.

The past month's work of the Freethought Association of this town has been exceptionally good, and the Committee are to be congratulated. On Sunday, the 30th ult., Mr. G. Grant lectured on "Proof of the Divine Origin and Truth of Christianity." The weather was very bad, and Mr Grant came a considerable distance to fulfil his promise. There was, however, a fine audience awaiting him. The lecturer's diction was elegant, his enunciation vigorous, and his theological knowledge thorough. It was however an exemplification of a clever advocate with a very bad case, and the lecture lacked argumentative power. The "proof" was absent.

On Sunday, the 7th inst., Mr. Rawson discoursed concerning "The Relation of Astronomy and Religion," with illustrations. Several large sketches, drawn to scale, facilitated the lecturer in bringing to the mind of his audience the crude notions of the ancients, and the extreme ignorance of the Christian Fathers in astronomical knowledge. Mr. Rawson had evidently taken great pains with his lecture, and was successful in setting forth many instructive ideas.

On Sunday, the 14th inst., Mr. T. T. Youle, in a very able paper, criticised the lecture, "Proof of the Divine Origin and Truth of Christianity." A summary will be given next month.

On Sunday, the 21st inst., "Ivo" delivered his first lecture in Wanganui. We congratulate the party on having an advocate so well qualified to advance the cause on the platform as Ivo undoubtedly is. There is a sustained reasoning force in all Ivo's lectures which is not, we think, to be surpassed by the veterans of a thousand fights. His language is happily chosen, the ideas run in natural sequence, and he can exhaust a subject without for a moment becoming monotonous. There is a flexibility of voice and manner which easily adapts itself to the various moods of the subject. We understand Ivo's experience on the platform has been but short, yet he is already *facile princeps* in the art of logical exposition before a popular audience.

The Secretary has kindly furnished us with the following particulars concerning the Association:—

Wanganui, 25th October, 1883.

SIR,—During the past month I am pleased to report continued progress in the cause of Freethought in Wanganui, notwithstanding the fact that the ministers of religion are using every means in their power calculated to stem the tide of "infidelity."

Anti-Freethought lectures have been given under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association upon "Bible Difficulties." The vague, clumsy, and generally poor way the lecturer treated the subject has been the means of considerably strengthening our cause. I trust the same gentleman will give many more of his lectures.

A benevolent fund has been set on foot by our Association, the object being to give assistance when required, without regard to creed or race.

The celebrated Freethought lecturer "Ivo" is now lecturing here. His first lecture on Sunday last, "Is the Biblical Account of the Fall of Man Consonant with Human Reason," was well attended, the lecturer handling his subject with considerable ability.

Before concluding, I must congratulate you upon the great success that has attended the publication of your first number. Critics are unanimous in their opinions that it is the best Freethought paper in the Australasian Colonies. For my part, I know of no paper equal to it in style and matter (devoted to freethought). Wishing you continued success,

I remain, yours faithfully,

J. J. BUCKRELL, Hon. Sec.

NELSON FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

The Nelson Colonist of a recent date announces the formation of a Freethought Association in that city. A meeting was held in King's Assembly Rooms, when some 150 were present including a number of ladies. Mr Gilbert occupied the chair, and at some length explained the objects of the Association. Mr Player, of Wellington, likewise addressed the meeting, giving a history of the Wellington Association, and Mr Mears also gave an address, urging all present to take an interest in the movement. A provisional Committee

was formed for the purpose of drawing up rules, and to report at the meeting to be held the next Sunday evening. The following are the names of the Provisional Officers and Committee: President, Mr Gilbert; Vice President, Mr Stevenson; Secretary and Treasurer, Mr Chittenden; Committee, Messrs Player, Mears, House, D. Burns, King, Mrs Burns, and Mrs King.

In reference to the above, we have pleasure in publishing the following letter:—

Nelson, October 9th, 1883.

SIR,—It is with much pleasure that I have to inform you that we have been successful in establishing a Freethought Association in Nelson. Mr. Player, the Vice-president of the Wellington Freethought Association, paid us a visit about a fortnight ago, and he finding out a few Freethinkers, it was decided amongst us to advertise a meeting for all those interested in forming a Freethought Society, and to our great surprise the hall was filled. The President was chosen, and a very pleasant evening was spent. On the following Sunday the room was filled, a good many ladies being present, and all expressed themselves pleased. We enrolled fifty-five members that night, and four or five during the week, and, as far as I can see, there is nothing to prevent success. Mr. King has kindly placed his hall at our disposal for twelve months free of charge. Mr. Mears has consented to give us a lecture on Sunday evening, when I hope still to be able to report progress. We have also arranged for music, and now all we want is proper rules, so as to enable us to get along. If you can give us a few hints as to rules, management, or the class of music that would be most acceptable, I should be happy to receive same.

Yours respectfully,

LEWIS H. CHITTENDEN, Hon. Sec.

[We are very pleased to hear of the formation of an Association in Nelson, and wish it a prosperous career. The Dunedin Freethought Association has published a small book of hymns and music which we think will be found suitable. We publish in another column a model set of rules that can be altered at pleasure.]

WELLINGTON FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

We have to thank the Secretary of the Wellington Freethought Association for the following Progress Notes, judging from which the Association appears to be moving steadily forward:—

Wellington, 16th October, 1883.

SIR,—Last Sunday evening, 14th inst., our hall was crammed, and quite a hundred people turned away for want of room. "Italy" was the subject of the lecture, and the many places of interest were depicted on a large screen by means of the most powerful diorama ever imported into New Zealand. "Ivo" delivered the descriptive readings and recitations in fine style, and the Secretary worked the lanterns without a single hitch. At the close of the lecture, the President, on behalf of the Committee and members of the Association, presented "Ivo" with a testimonial, beautifully executed by Mr. Anderson, one of the members of the Committee. The subject for Sunday next is "Switzerland and the Rhine," illustrated with eighty photographic views, exhibited by means of the lime-light apparatus before mentioned,

October 23rd.

On Sunday evening last the Wellington Freethought Association had, in spite of miserable weather, a crowded house. An instructive lecture on "Switzerland, the Rhine, and Belgium," was ably delivered by one of the members. One hundred views of the many interesting scenes were exhibited by the Secretary by means of unusually powerful lime-light apparatus.

Yours truly,

ALFRED JARDINE,
Corresponding Sec. and Vice-President W. F. A.

CANTERBURY FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

The courteous Secretary of this Association again favors us with the following particulars:—

Christchurch, 14th October, 1883.

SIR,—Since my last monthly report the attendance of children at the Sunday morning Lyceum has continued up to the average, and at the evening lectures and readings the Hall has been well filled with members and visitors. We have had a piano on hire until now, but last week twenty members subscribed two pounds each to effect its purchase. On Friday evening a Secular Debating Class is held at the Hall and is well attended, considerable interest and ability being displayed in the discussions that take place. On Friday, the 5th ult., a ball was held in the Hall, the tickets for which were limited to members and their friends. The Hall was nicely decorated, and the dancing and music were greatly enjoyed by all who had the good fortune to be present. It is contemplated to hold a similar gathering shortly. There was a crowded Hall last Sunday, when Mr J. M. Thompson gave an instructive lecture upon the Planetary and Stellar Sphere, illustrated by magic lantern with the oxy-hydrogen light. An efficient band renders valuable assist-

ance at our evening meetings, and a supply of the new collection of pieces for general singing having now been procured from Dunedin, congregational singing will take its place at our future evening meetings.

WM. PRATT, C. Secretary.

CHRISTCHURCH SECULAR DEBATING SOCIETY.

The following items, kindly forwarded by the Secretary of the Christchurch Secular Debating Society, will be found interesting:—

Christchurch, 14th October, 1883.

SIR,—As most of us are subscribers to your valuable paper, and interested in the doings of like institutions, I take it that others are interested in us, and forward some particulars of last meeting on Friday evening. It was well attended, 73 being present, and opened for half an hour with recitations; after which, and until 9.30 o'clock, the resolution of the Church Synod (which is now sitting here) was ably discussed, and a resolution passed unanimously—"condemning the action taken by the Church Synod in trying to establish separate schools, thereby tending to weaken the present Education Act, and pledged itself to oppose any action that will tend to disturb the present grand system of education." It was also agreed to continue the meetings another three months, the past having been so successful, with good attendance of members. The Friday evening previous was passed most pleasantly with a ball, the first here under the auspices of Freethought; members, with "their sisters, their cousins, and their aunts," being present. A capital band, combined with a plentiful supply of refreshments, caused some 50 couples to thoroughly enjoy the evening until 12.30.—I hope your second number will have the doings of all other similar Societies in this and adjoining colonies, and trust others will forward particulars of their progress.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

ALF. H. MACLEAN, Secretary.

CONSTITUTION AND RULES.

(SUITABLE FOR ADOPTION BY FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATIONS).

(Compiled from several sources by a member of the Wanganui Freethought Association.)

CONSTITUTION.

INSTITUTION.

Article 1.—We, the undersigned, do hereby agree to form ourselves into a Society of Freethinkers by the name of the Freethought Association.

OBJECTS.

Article 2.—The objects of the Society shall be the attainment and promulgation of knowledge as the best means for promoting the welfare and happiness of mankind.

MEMBERSHIP.

Article 3.—The Society shall consist of all who are duly enrolled members in accordance with the by-laws.

AMENDMENT.

Article 4.—The constitution of the Society may be amended by a two-thirds vote of all its members present at a regular general meeting of the members, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a like regular meeting of the Society at least seven days before the vote is taken.

OFFICERS.

Article 5.—The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, two Vice-presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, two Trustees, and a Committee consisting of thirteen members.

BY-LAWS.

Article 6.—By-laws, not inconsistent with the constitution, may be adopted, amended, or repealed at any regular meeting of the Committee by a two-thirds vote, provided that not less than seven days' notice has been given of any such proposal to the members of the Committee. Any change of the by-laws adopted by the Committee shall be notified at the next general meeting of the Society.

CREEDS AND PRINCIPLES.

Article 7.—The Society shall not adopt any creed, articles of faith, or platform of principles.

ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

Article 8.—There shall be an annual general meeting, when the officers for the ensuing year shall be elected. The first board of officers may be elected on the day of organizing the Society without formality. Vacancies during the year may be filled by the Committee.

Article 9.—The powers of the society are unlimited, subject to its Constitution and the law of the land.

BY-LAWS.

Section 1.—Meetings: This Association shall meet regularly at

Section 2.—Ballot: The officers shall be elected by ballot, and the one receiving the highest number of votes for any office shall duly be elected.

Section 3.—Term of Office: Officers shall hold their offices one year, and until their successors are duly elected and enter upon the duties of their respective offices.

Section 4.—Vacancies: In case a vacancy shall occur by death, resignation, or in any other manner, of an officer of the Association, it may be filled *pro tem* by appointment of the President; or, in his absence, by the Committee.

Section 5.—President: The President shall be the presiding officer, and in his absence a Vice-President shall perform his duties, and in the absence of both a chairman may be elected to discharge the duties of President for the occasion.

Section 6.—Secretary: The Secretary shall keep a regular record book in which he shall enter the proceedings of all meetings of the Society, and shall perform the usual duties pertaining to the office.

Section 7.—Treasurer: The Treasurer shall keep a regular account book wherein he shall make specific entries of all money received and disbursed by order of the Association, and make a full report of his doings at each meeting of the Committee, and at such other times as may be required.

Section 8.—Trustees: The Trustees shall see to the incorporation of the Association in due and legal form under the statute, by which it will possess the right of holding property—and shall discharge all other duties devolving upon them in their office.

Section 9.—Committee: The Committee, of which all officers are ex-officio members, shall have the general management of the affairs of the Association.

Section 10.—Special meetings: Special meetings may be called by posting a notice in some conspicuous place on the building where the Association usually meets, or by advertisement in a newspaper, or written notice through the post addressed to the members individually.

Section 11.—Membership: Members may be admitted at any Committee meeting, by a majority of votes, and on the payment of the quarter's subscription of—

Section 12.—Certificate: A Certificate shall be issued to each member on joining the Association, in the following form:—This is to certify that _____ was enrolled a Member of this Association on the _____ day of _____ 188 ____.

(Signatures of President and Secretary.)

The President may at the request of a member who is leaving the district endorse the certificate testifying to the good standing of the member in that Association.

Section 13.—Special Committees: The Committee may appoint special Committees for one year of not more than five members in each, with special functions as follows:—

Finance: A Special Committee of three members on Finance.

Library: A Special Committee of three members, to take measures for establishing a Library, and have charge of same when established.

Music: A Special Committee of five members to provide for music in the meetings.

Lycum: A Special Committee of three members to take measures for opening Sunday schools under the auspices of the Association.

Benevolent Fund: A Special Committee of five lady members to administer the Benevolent Fund of the Association.

Section 14.—General Power: The Committee shall have power by resolution to make provision for any subject not provided for in the by-laws. In matters of urgency the President may decide and his decision shall have the force of a by-law. The Committee may draw up rules of debate and procedure for the regular meetings of the Association.

Passing Notes.

Launceston, Tasmania, is an orthodox place, and firm in the grip of the priests. Messrs Osborne having commenced the sale of freethought literature, they were denounced both from press and pulpit, while the police seized some of their books, and announced their intention of prosecuting the booksellers. In perhaps twenty years, Launceston will have arrived at the state of the towns of New Zealand in the matter of religious freedom.

The Christian religion still includes less than one-third of the population of the globe among its adherents. The present estimate by best German statisticians puts the total at 1,500,000,000 of whom 450,000,000 are Buddhist, 235,000,000 Mohammedan, 247,000,000 Heathen, 225,000,000 Roman Catholics, 140,000,000 Protestants, 110,000,000 Brahmins, 85,000,000 Eastern (Catholic) Churches, and 8,000,000 Jews.

The Rev. Charles Stubbs, vicar of Granborough, and author of *Village Politics*, has just sent to press with Messrs Sonnenschein a volume of sermons preached before the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. They all deal with the attitude towards social and political questions which, in the opinion of the author, the National Church must adopt if she would seek to influence the modern democratic movement in England.

The editorship of the Rolls Series of what is known as "The Tripartite Life of St Patrick," contained in Irish MSS. in the Bodleian Library and the British Museum, has been entrusted to Mr Whitley Stokes, of Oxford. The life is composed of three biographical homilies, and each homily contains a few old Irish poems and proverbial sayings. Though written in a rude, disjointed style, it has great value to the historian and philologist, and throws some light on ancient Irish institutions.

A believer in "conditional immortality" writes us urging that there is no text in the Bible supporting the contrary view. This is a matter of interpretation of the texts. The remarkable thing about most of these controversies is that the Bible supports all sides—in this respect, like Paul, being 'all things to all men.' But all heresies make for liberty. On this common ground we meet the "conditional immortalists" in a spirit of brotherly love. The opinion that might be honestly expressed with respect to the doctrine is that it is preferable to the Lake of Brimstone.

We have received a pamphlet published at Auckland entitled "The Electric Universe," by "Torpedo." The author guarantees to point out to "any of the governments of the world (or others etc.) for £500, a Force that is self acting, self renewing as long as machinery will last." The discoverer of perpetual motion however has to confess that "there is now patented in England and America what I was really the inventor of." The author's familiarity with the Sciences are out of keeping with his too evident aberration of intellect.

One of Moncure Conway's "Lessons for the Day" is "The Madonna of Montbazou" which Mr. Conway describes as "the largest bronze statue in Europe." "The head," he says, "was encircled by what seemed a strange kind of halo made of darting rays of light. But examination proved these to be the diverging points of a lightning rod. The rod ran up the Madonna's back, and branched out into a circle of points. It seemed rather droll that the pious people should have thought it necessary to protect their protectress, to shield the Queen of heaven from the lightnings of heaven."

Moncure D. Conway, who succeeded the eloquent member for Oldham, W. E. Fox, in the pastorate of the famous Unitarian Church near the Bank of England, about 20 years ago, has arrived in the colonies. He resided in London all these years, and became identified with its literature and social life. His letters in the Cincinnati Commercial have exercised a wide influence in America. It is not known whether he will make the tour of New Zealand, but he will probably lecture in Australia. He goes on to India, where he will reside some time studying the dialects of the Hindustani, in connection with a book on "Comparative Philology" which he is writing. Mr Conway is an enthusiastic student of Sanscrit, and reads from the Zendavesta at his regular Sunday services in London.

We take the following from the Australasian of September 15th:—"The Hon. Robert Stout, of New Zealand, writing in reply to a reference in a lecture by Bishop Moorhouse and the resolution of sympathy passed by the Australasian Secularist Conference with Messrs Foote and Ramsay, contends that the Bishop did injustice to those who carried the resolution, and proceeds:—"The Bishop has mixed up Messrs Foote, Ramsay, and the Secularists' Conference with Nihilists, Socialists, Anarchists, and Irish assassins, and he led his audience to infer that the cause of Nihilism, Socialism, Anarchism, and Irish assassination was Atheism. Now, I first remark, that all the Irish assassins were pious Roman Catholics. Then I state what cannot be controverted, that the majority of the Nihilists have been trained in the dogmas of the church with which many of Bishop Moorhouse's co-religionists desire to unite Further, I might ask how comes it that in those countries where the Christian religion has held and has now the greatest power, there is the greatest Social unrest—I refer to Russia, Spain, Italy? Compare the safety of property and life in countries where Freethinkers are allowed freedom, with the assassinations and robberies in lands where the priest is all powerful, and will the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* be applicable." [This is condensed from Mr Stout's letter published at length in the Argus—a letter that we hear has created a wide interest in Melbourne. We regret we have not seen the copy of the Argus containing it.]

Mr Moncure D. Conway was interviewed during his brief stay in San Francisco, and freely stated his views of men and things in England. Mr Conway, it should be remembered, is a native of Virginia, U.S., though he has been for 20 years resident in England as minister of a kind of Eclectic Church in London. Being questioned as to Bradlaugh and radicalism, he said:—"I have no desire to criticise him or his methods. He works in entirely different mental, moral, and social regions from myself. It is a mistake to suppose that he has loose

principles on the question of marriage, when the fact is he is a stickler for old-time ideas on that subject. He was formerly married, but his wife is dead. His relations with Mrs Annie Besant, his present business associate, have never been otherwise than honorable, and no other opinion is entertained in London by those who are familiar with his affairs. She was driven out of her husband's house because she was too liberal in religion for him, not because she was too free in morals. But, as I have said, he works in entirely different lines. My own radical views led me to a somewhat bold republicanism. I look upon a President as a monarch, and think the Swiss Republic, without any President, the best. I am also in favour of a Parliament, Assembly, Congress, or whatever you choose to call it, of only one house. I regard Mrs Besant as the most refined and highly-educated woman in London since the death of George Eliot. She is a mistress of all the modern European languages. She is also a shrewd business woman, who attends to the great publishers firm in which she is a partner. She knows how to take care of money, and is therefore prosperous.

Notes & Queries.

ANSWERS

5.—In answer to the query of "T" as to whether Dr. W. B. Carpenter acknowledged the truth of the phenomena of Spiritualism, Mesmerism &c, I beg to answer that Carpenter puts down the belief in Table-rapping, Table-turning &c, as an example of "a variety of aberrant actions bordering on Insanity," classing it with the Dancing Mania of the Middle Ages &c. As to Mesmerism, the following quotation will perhaps suffice:—"With respect to the modes in which the 'Mesmeric' Somnambulism is induced, it appears to him that they are all referable to those states of *monotony of sensory impressions* and of *expectation*, to which reference has been already made, as among the most potent of the predisposing causes of conditions allied to Sleep. It is asserted by Mesmerists, that they can induce the 'Mesmeric' state from a distance, without the least consciousness on the part of their 'subjects' that any influence is being exerted on them, an assertion which if true would go far to establish the existence of a force altogether *sui generis*, capable of being transmitted from one individual to another. Here, however, as in regard to the 'higher phenomena' last adverted to, the Author feels compelled to state that no evidence of an affirmative kind has yet been adduced, which can be in the least degree satisfactory to a scientific enquirer, who duly appreciates all the sources of fallacy to which these occurrences are open." First quotation from "I des-motor Actions"—second quotation from "Functions of the Cerebro-spinal Nervous System"—Carpenter's Physiology.—E. T., New Plymouth.

3.—In answer to "A Freethinker's" query *re* Southwell, I take the following from Mr. G. J. Holyoake's well known "History of Co-operation:—"Ultimately Mr. Southwell left England and settled in New Zealand, a singularly unsuitable retreat for one so fiery and fearless of spirit, unless he intended to set up as a Chieftain. On the stage, or the platform, or in the Secular press, he might have found a congenial sphere; but nothing fell to him available except the editorship of a Wesleyan Newspaper. It must have been a livelier publication in his hands than its readers had known it before. Its orthodox articles must have been written by proxy. When death befell him, as it did after a very few years sojourn there, he was waited on by members of the proprietary whom he served, to offer him the religious consolations available to that body, and were surprised to be told by their patient that he had edited their paper because no other employment was open to him, but he never undertook to edit their principles. He could not deny that Wesleyanism was a form of opinion he could live by, for he had lived by it, and he was much obliged to them for the opportunity of doing that. He, however, preferred to die in the principles in which he had lived. He was an Atheist."—RADICAL.

3.—The following is authentic; Mr. Campbell having known Southwell intimately:—"Charles Southwell arrived in Auckland about 1855 or 6, and, after trying his powers as an actor, became editor of the Auckland Examiner, which he conducted with ability until he died. He was buried in

the Cemetery, and a few Freethinkers subscribed and put a fence round his grave, and a headstone bearing the following inscription:—"In Memory of Charles Southwell, Editor and Lecturer, who died 7th August, 1860; aged 46." He did not become a Wesleyan, nor a preacher, nor editor of a Wesleyan paper.—A. Campbell, Auckland.

4.—"Tyro" will find a reliable statement of Odylism in Dr Carpenter's work, "Spiritualism and Mesmerism."

QUERIES.

1.—In a lecture delivered recently on the scientific evidence of the Old Testament stories, the lecturer stated that the gastric juices would have had no effect upon Jonah, if he had kept continually walking up and down for three days and nights in the Whale's belly. Can any of your readers inform me if this lecturer was Gordon Forlong Esq. (formerly a Deist)?—R.

2.—In the Contemporary Review for July Cardinal Manning makes a statement in toxicology which I would like to have some information upon, as follows:—"When Socrates was accused of atheism, he was condemned to hemlock." I always understood the poison given to Socrates, and used by the Athenians to carry out the last sentence of the law, was hemlock.

3.—I should be glad if anyone acquainted with the writings of John Stuart Mill can inform me if it is true that that great writer and thinker proved David Hume's argument against miracles to the fallacious.—A RATIONALIST.

4.—It would be interesting and instructive to have a clear and succinct explanation of Pantheism as a system of thought.—THEIST.

5.—Is there any great school or college in England in which theological teaching is forbidden.—A.B.C.

6.—What are the fundamental principles of Positivism? HUMANITAS.

Science Notes.

The Rev. Hugh Macmillan, writing on the Marriage at Cana, declares that the wine drunk must have been intoxicating, for besides its saying that the guests were "well drunk," the marriage taking place just before Passover, the wine must have been of the previous vintage and kept six or seven months. He moreover, asserts that specimens of the wines of Palestine have frequently been analysed by experts, and they are never found to contain less than 10 to 20 per cent. of alcohol.

An interesting discovery, of much importance for geological and archaeological science, has recently been made in a coal mine at Bully-Grenay, in the French department of Pas-de-Calais. A new gallery was being pierced, when a cavern was broken into, which discovered the fossil remains of five human beings in a fair state of preservation—a man, two women, and two children composed the group. The man measured about seven feet, the women six feet six and six feet, the children four feet and rather less than this. In addition, some fragments of arms and utensils of petrified wood and of stone, with numerous remains of mammals and fish, were brought to light. A second subterranean chamber enclosed the remains of eleven human bodies of large size, several animals, and a large number of various objects, with some precious stones. The walls of the cave exhibited drawings representing men fighting with gigantic animals. Owing to the presence of carbonic anhydride a third and a larger chamber, which appeared to be empty, was not searched. Five of the petrified human remains will be exhibited at the mayoralty at Lens. The remainder of the bodies which have been brought to the surface are to be conveyed to Lille, there to await a thorough examination by the Faculté des Sciences. Information has been telegraphed to the representatives of the Académie des Sciences of Paris and to those of the British Museum.

An interesting discovery has been made in Paraguay of a tribe of Indians with tails. An Argentine domiciled in the Argentine Missions has a yerba establishment in the Paraguayan Missions, in a district called Tacura-Tuyu. While gathering the yerba in the yerba woods the other day, his mules were attacked by some Guayacuyos Indians, who fled after killing several mules.

The muleteers pursued, firing on the Indians, one of whom, a boy about eight years old, was captured. This boy was brought to Prosedas, where Don Francisco Golcochoa, the Argentine referred to, lives, and excited much curiosity, owing to his having a tail 6 to 8 inches long. The boy, who has been photographed by Germans, is, it is stated, very ugly; but his body is not covered with hair. A brother of the boy, at present in the possession of Colonel Rudeciundo Roca, has also a tail; and all the tribe are said to be similarly adorned. If these Indians knew their value for exhibitional purposes they would not remain long in Paraguay. The possession of tails would ensure them a warm welcome and large profits on this side of the Atlantic, where we are ever on the search for pleasing novelties.—St. James's Gazette. [The discovery seems vouched for. Its scientific interest is limited to the fact that abnormal structures may be perpetuated. As Charles Darwin once observed, these monstrosities neither support nor contradict the theory of Evolution.]

The following is almost too neat to be true, but it is printed in the Hull Gazette: Mr. W. Dawson, a cattle dealer and a local preacher, of Winterton Lincolnshire, lately absconded, leaving large liabilities behind him, and forging, it is said, the names of two gentlemen to the amount of £7000. "The text of his last sermon, preached the day before he left the district, Acts xx. 38—'Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.'"

NEW ZEALAND CHRISTMAS CARDS.

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PONOPORO—With its tapering leaf and striking flower.
TUTU—The tints of the drooping flowers being reproduced in all their beautiful shades.
NIKAU PALM—Most celebrated of the New Zealand flora, the majesty and grace of the spreading leaves being beautifully depicted.
KARAKA—In this the transition tints of the berries, from olive green to a bright orange, are well shown.
TAWA—Showing the pretty purple berries on which the New Zealand pigeon generally feeds.
TITOKI—The New Zealand raspberry, whose handsome clusters of berries make this tree remarkable.
HOUIHI—The white open petals, with a faint yellow centre, are worthy of note.
PONGA FERN.—One of the finest of New Zealand tree ferns, the canopy of arching fronds constituting an effective picture.
KAREAO—The peculiar shape of the leaf and the bright scarlet berries of the Sappack are here represented.
MOCK ORANGE—Showing the contrast of the tiny white flowers and the rich orange berries.
KARAMU—With the clusters of bright berries on vividly green foliage.
BLACK MAIRIE—The spear-like leaves and variously-tinted berries of this well-known timber tree are shown to advantage.
WHERO-WHERO—The drooping leaves and berries of this parasitic plant are well represented.
POHUTUKAWA—The gorgeous appearance of these flowers has been well caught by the artist, who has here reproduced one of the most brilliant glimpses of scarlet in the N.Z. bush.

VIEWS.

RUAPHEHI—From the Wanganui side. The view is surrounded by a cluster of tree flowers and foliage.
MITRE PEAK—Mirrored Sound.
RANGITOTO ISLAND—At entrance to Auckland harbor.
MOUNT EGMOOT—A belt of cloud surrounding the snow-clad cone.
MOUNT COOK—From the Canterbury side, with mountain torrent issuing from its base.
LAKE MANAPOURI—With snow-clad mountains in the back-ground.
LAKE ROTORUA—At evening, with the shadows lengthening in the placid lake.

AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

Foxton ...	J. H. Copp	Masterton ...	T. E. Price
Palmerston North ...	H. Graff	Napier ...	R. T. Smythe
" ...	W. Park	Auckland ...	A. Campbell
Feilding " ...	Jas. Morris	Grey mouth ...	W. H. Perkins
Bulls ...	F. J. Mancell	Reefton ...	S. Schulhof
Kennedy's ...	M. T. Blackburn	Hokitika ...	H. S. Wales
Waverley ...	H. F. Mason	Nelson ...	W. H. West
Patea ...	Jas. Kenworthy	Christchurch ...	R. Shannon
Hawera ...	Jones & Son	Timaru ...	T. Collins
Normanby ...	C. E. Gibson	Dunedin ...	Jos. Braithwaite
New Plymouth ...	J. Gilmore	" ...	S. & W. Mackay
Wellington ...	W. Mackay	Invercargill ...	E. R. Weir

Those willing to undertake the agency for places not named are requested to communicate at once with the publisher.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A.C.—In our next.

J.G.—It is within the scope of the REVIEW to discuss Politics from the scientific aspect.

T.D.—We have not yet attained the proud distinction of being able to pay for contributions.

M.M.—We are reluctantly compelled to hold over till next month your interesting paper on Masonry. But the subject will keep.

SIGMA.—It is "an open secret" that the author of *Natural Religion* is Professor Seely, who fills the chair of Modern History in the University of Cambridge.

MATAI.—It may be an hallucination, but we have a strong impression that ridicule carried beyond very narrow limits injures the cause.

T.S.—The Maori supernatural power Te Atua was an evil divinity before the advent of the missionaries, who finding him available transformed him into Jehovah, retaining, however, the native name. In other words, the Maoris had a Devil, but no God.

VERAX.—Yes, we have heard that Mr. Grant is to deliver the same lecture before a congregation of the Baptist Church of Wanganui. Although Christians often claim to be Freethinkers also, we do not believe that they would allow the reply by "Y" to be read at a subsequent meeting of the Baptists. However, make enquiries in the proper quarter!

A correspondent writes as follows:—"I am heartily pleased to learn that Mr. Joseph Symes has been selected by Mr. Bradlaugh (according to request) to fulfil a lecturing engagement under the auspices of the Melbourne Society of Freethinkers. I have frequently heard Mr. Symes, and he is well-known in England as a gentleman, a scholar, and a speaker of rare eloquence. It is to be hoped he will extend his antipodean visit to New Zealand."

NOTICES.

The Proprietor begs to return his best thanks for the support given to the first number of the REVIEW, especially to those friends who have obtained subscribers and established agencies. The propaganda will be greatly advanced in this way.

The Editor respectfully suggests to contributors the necessity of condensing as much as possible their contributions, in order that the comparatively limited space may be made to embrace a wide variety of subjects. The object is to make the REVIEW comprehensive in the extent and character of its articles and letters. Of course no hard and fast line can be drawn, but the Editor may be greatly assisted in his task by friends remembering space and object. All communications should be addressed—The Editor of THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW, Wanganui.

The Freethought Review.

WANGANUI, N.Z., NOVEMBER 1, 1883.

SOCIAL PROGRESS.

Social progress means in our view the happiness of the many. Anything which tends to depress the multitude and raise up a ruling class, is so far destructive of those elements on the free play of which the maximum happiness depends. Yet there will, and ought always to be, a few comparatively higher than their fellow-men. The dead level of Socialism is the opposite state from that freedom in which exists the possibility of greater human powers being evolved. A hereditary titled and plutocratic aristocracy is indefensible, for it monopolises with mediocrity the place of merit. The aggregation of wealth under the existing laws in the Mother Country and her Colonies, is equally opposed to a higher civilisation, for artificial restrictions are placed in the way of its equitable distribution. The right of individual property is to be maintained when it is founded on principles that make for the general good. This is the natural limitation, and it stands on the same level as Liberty, which means the right to do as one pleases only so long as he does not deprive his neighbour of a corresponding privilege. The love of children and home is one of the deepest and noblest sentiments in human nature. But if a law encourages a testator to prefer males to females, and the first-born male to all that are born subsequently, it creates an aristocracy of privilege, and puts it in the place of an aristocracy of merit. Society therefore has the right to say what limitations shall be placed on bequest and inheritance. In this colony we have been retrograding by abolishing distinctions between children and remote relations in the system of legacy duties. A man does not labour for cousins, and if his property reverted to the State in the absence of closer ties of consan-

guinity, his exertions would not be less in consequence. The right of freedom of bequest should be preserved within certain limits, such limits to be determined by the State through the instrument of taxation. When the laws that govern Distribution are framed on a just and politic basis, the incentive to accumulation will not be weakened, but the opportunities of millions multiplied a hundredfold.

The object of the advocates of National Insurance is to prevent that state of helplessness and dependence which we call pauperism. But what has to be proved by them has not even been noticed. If, as we believe, there can be no social improvement without individual effort, what can be expected from men and women who have yielded the product of their industry without saving or prudence, and who, when so much has been wrested from them, are invited to enjoy without further effort? This is a system which brings forth no powers of self-restraint, of forethought, or of skill. It is Socialism of that objectionable type which destroys the essence of individuality. The only argument in its favor is that the sense of independence created would bring along with it that self-respect and prudence which would lead to exertion to increase the provision. There is a grain of truth in this. When men have gone some distance in saving, the desire to go farther is increased. Compulsory saving may implant the habit of self-reliance, but it is infinitesimal compared to those forces which begin in the individual the moment he looks to a future period of his life, and feels the constraint of providing for himself and those for whom he is responsible. Prudence and compulsion are not related terms. The former must be a natural and spontaneous growth to yield its proper fruit: neither stunted on the one hand by unjust laws of Distribution, nor on the other forced by a hot-house system that would deprive it of that native vigor which thrives in the inevitable struggle for existence.

What are the social forces, the action and interaction of which are to give us the higher civilisation? Nothing more or less than the factors men and women—politically equal, exercising all the franchises, no unit to represent more than any other, and no organisation counting for more than the sum of its units. On this basis should rest the superstructure of the State. Then on the activity of the members will all progress, rights, and happiness depend. Every integration will proceed from the free combination of these simple elements. When society has the power—by which we mean the intelligence—to determine its own good, none will be excluded, because there will be no interest but that of the great majority, and no right more sacred than that of the individual. By this we do not mean that subordinate groups will not exist. Liberty does not agree well with Centralism. Municipal liberties must become more valued, important, and sacred. There will only be one brain to effect the larger generalisation we call law. There will, at the same time, be those spinal centres which must be continually legislating subject to the greater generalisation. The work of administration will be performed by the heart, the lungs, and so forth, corresponding to the central executive and the local bodies. The more decentralised is government, the more men feel their individual responsibility.

The result of the continual movement of the elements is what may be termed the highest political and social education. Men, like gunpowder, are only dangerous when they are confined and under pressure. They lose all their explosive force as through freedom they become more social. Intelligence comes from discussion, and the sure sign of the growing intelligence of a nation is the disposition to consider questions in a social light—to ask, Will this law be for the greatest good of the greatest number? Whereupon it will follow that every feature of a proposed enactment will be examined from that point of view. Greater than all nostrums for greasing the wheels of progress must therefore be the freedom of the social units to arrange themselves according to what the general interest demands. Checks are not wanted. The conflict of the elements themselves is the only natural and permissible check; and the inherited tendency to self-preservation will guard against catastrophes.

CLERICALISM ON THE RAMPAGE.

During the past fortnight Canterbury folks have been entertained with another phase of Salvationism. The meeting of the Diocesan Synod has afforded the clergy an opportunity of making a wordy onslaught upon the Education Act. One Rev. gentleman said the morality of the public board schools was nil—and although he was flatly contradicted by one of the lay members who having been connected with the public schools from their initiation, and is now a member of the Board of Education, was therefore well able to speak authoritatively upon the subject—it did not induce the Rev. gentlemen to moderate their strictures, nor prevent them deploring the probable future result of their being denied facilities for indoctrinating the youthful mind with their sectarian dogmas; for this is their real contention, and accounts for all their lugubrious lamentations about the absence of morality and religion in the public schools which they further emphasise as Godless. This “war cry” meets with little attention or sympathy from outsiders, notwithstanding all their bluster and asseverations as representing the general opinion of the community. It is well known that all the lesson books in use inculcate morality and religion except those limited to arithmetic, for even “Colenso” could not adopt the assumption that “one is equal to three, and three the same as one.” The most hopeful feature for the future of our country is that this opposition to our invaluable educational system is chiefly limited to the interested leaders of the various denominations, and finds little or no response from the general public, evidence of which has been afforded from time to time when the integrity of the Education Act has been made a test question at elections. Notably was this shown when Sir Edward Stafford contested the Heathcote election against a very inferior and inexperienced candidate, and was rejected solely on account of his known hostility to the Secular system. Similarly, Bishop Moran’s defeat in Otago, and also in the result of every election when the Education Act has been made a prominent question.

Our representatives in Parliament honestly and consistently reflect the public mind upon the same question when defending it from numerous and covert attacks, notably the Rev. W. M. Green’s last disingenuous attempt to authorise the introduction of the Bible in Schools, which was rejected by a majority of 52 in a House of 68 members. To counteract the effect of the undenominational teaching of the public schools, the necessity for establishing Church day schools wherever practicable, was debated at great length in the Synod and finally carried, grants from the Church Estate to be devoted to this purpose. This debate opened up an interesting discussion upon the value of the Church Estate in this diocese, by which it appears to be not less than £250,000, exclusive of Churches and Parsonages valued at another £90,000. One of the clergy deprecated making public these particulars. It would be interesting to know how the Church acquired such a valuable estate, and if any, or a considerable portion, did not form part of the reserves made by the Canterbury Association and handed over to the first Provincial Council upon its payment to the Association of the sum of £25,000 or £30,000—which sum was raised by the sale of a block of land within the Town Belt, that had been especially reserved as an endowment of the future Municipality, and still known as the Town Reserves. In the early days of the settlement, a great deal of acrimonious discussion took place over the fact of the Canterbury Association having “borrowed” £10,000 from the Bishopric fund—perhaps this was repaid in hand, which at that time was a drug upon the hands of the Association, the first flush of founding a strictly Church of England settlement having passed away.

Strict morality has ever condemned the jesuitical maxim that “the end justifies the means”—still in the flagrant violation of the principle of the Education Act occasionally brought to light, Ministers apparently consider they are doing a commendable service to their Church and order in infringing it wherever possible. In one notable instance near Christchurch the members of the School Committee are virtually the nominees of the Clergyman, and as a very experienced and efficient master was obliged to resign, because he could not reconcile his duty to the Act with the requirements of the Minister, and as the school is now opened with prayer, and may be con-

sidered a church day school in all but name, and is referred to as a model of what may be done by a persevering clergyman, the presumption is that a pliable schoolmaster now fills the post. Bishop Moran has brought some of these proselytising schools under the notice of the Minister of Education, but as the Minister happens to be a Bible-in-schools advocate—he pretends to be unable to enforce obedience to a public law, for the proper administration of which he is supposed to be responsible. Why this anxiety and tribulation, lest the rising generation should discard the old myths! Such a change in the future, from an absolute and distracting theology to a rational and therefore natural religion, would not be greater than has occurred in the past from Roman Catholicism to some modern development of Unitarianism. If the clergy fear, when the bulk of the people of the future, having passed through the secular schools, and in consequence have been taught to take sensible and rational views of life and its obligations, that their occupation will be gone, and their order swept away—may take heart of grace from the fact that organisations similar to the various religious bodies will continue a necessity so long as the existing conditions of society remain unchanged, and a band of earnest self-denying men will still find their vocation as leaders and teachers and administrators of the vast wealth of the churches in the interests of humanity, now shamefully diverted into so many useless and unworthy channels.—X., Christchurch

EDUCATION.

Let us make our education brave and preventive. Politics is an afterwork, a poor patching. We are always a little late. The evil is done,—the law is passed, and we begin the up-hill agitation for repeal of that which we ought to have prevented the enacting. We shall one day learn to supersede politics by education. What we call our root and branch reforms of slavery, war, gambling, intemperance, is only medicating the symptoms. We must begin higher, namely, in Education.—Emerson.

Reviews.

Science and Religion: A Review of Judge Higinbotham's Lecture, by T. CHEYNE FARNIE, M. A. Dunedin: Joseph Braithwaite.

Mr Farnie, while sympathising with Judge Higinbotham's views where they are definite, pushes them to their logical conclusion. Enforcing and illustrating the distinction between religion and theology, he observes that religion is “the worship of ideals.” In this sense true religion “has the very closest connection with man's individual and social welfare.” But with modern theology, “worship has sunk into an accident, a second place, while belief is the essential element—belief in the existence of a divine architect and ruler of the universe, belief in the excellencies of creed and dogma pertaining to the antique churches.” “Theology has faded from the rank of a religion, and fallen into that of a superstition.” But is the distinction founded on true ideals only? Whether a divine architect exist or not, the belief sets up the ideal, and that is religion. The distinction is probably one of degree only, and not in the nature of the things described. Mr Farnie's reply to Judge Higinbotham on the vital point of his lecture is quite conclusive—“If man did not fall, then there is no need for the system of the Christian Churches— that system topples over as soon as this is shown.” Where Mr. Farnie deals with Theology and Science, he shows that Theology is not entitled to be dignified by the name of Science, and he asserts that it has “not given birth to one single new idea for hundreds of years.” Yet the conception of a supreme mind has been subject to a process of evolution, in passing from the region of revelation to that of metaphysics. Science is a very loose term wanting a better definition than any yet given to it. We agree with Mr Farnie that Theology is not entitled to be called a Science: but with the qualification that many other things so designated are also inaccurately described. Mr. Farnie clearly shows that the anthropomorphic conception of God cannot be got rid of while it is necessary to predicate attributes. Deprived of his attributes he is unthinkable. Mr. Farnie concludes his able and eloquent review by an apotheosis of the ideal of duty—perhaps the only thing worthy of the honor.

Village Politics: By CHARLES WILLIAM STUBBS, M.A.,
Vicar of Granborough, Bucks. London: Macmillan
and Co.

This is a book of sermons and addresses on the labour question, delivered at various times during the early progress of the movement under the leadership of Joseph Arch. It is dedicated "To the Farm Labourers of England in sincere sympathy with their struggle towards citizenship through self-reliance and association," and is full of 'light and leading.' The author is one of those men whose humanity throws his creed into the shade, and whose clear intellect dissects and analyses the current doctrines of the ruling classes with a boldness seldom equalled among the clergy of his church. To the question, "Can a poverty-stricken people be a religious people?" Mr. Stubbs replies in the negative. To the question, "What is religion?" the answer is thus supplied: "Religion, as I regard it, is the art of living well, not only of dying well. It is the science, if I may use the term, of being and doing good." He then proceeds to show the mutual responsibilities of all classes. "The welfare of all is wrapped up in each." The question is an economical one, and he thinks the clergy should try to understand political economy. It is an honest attempt to find out the causes of poverty. The economy is superior to the theology, some of the illustrations, such as that of David and Nabal, being unfortunate. But on the whole, the book is the most encouraging and hopeful reading that has proceeded from the clerical body for a generation.

Without God, no Commonwealth: By CARDINAL MANNING;
Contemporary Review, July, 1883.

The head of the Roman Catholic Church in England has attempted to establish—that without the idea of God a political society is impossible. By the term commonwealth he means "a condition in which men are bound together, and protected by laws, for their common welfare." He does not supply a definition of God, and he cannot "consent to argue this question as if God were already not only deposed from His Sovereignty but also outlawed from the world which He, and not our politicians and philosophers, have made." Having assumed the existence of God, Cardinal Manning has no difficulty in finding all civic and moral duties emanating from his *will*. Starting with the great assumption, the reasoning eddies in a circle, tending to establish a theocracy. The argument is apparently summed up in the sentence: "An empire without God cannot stand; for an empire which effaces God from its legislature has no longer a principle of unity." If a principle of unity can be found without God, the argument not only fails, but is turned against His Eminence. Having to account for the ancient commonwealths, the Cardinal found the principle of unity in the idea or conception of a God—Gods?—and "the heathen world was nearer the truth when it venerated a *Dea Roma*, than they who deny the natural or divine law as the foundation of Society." We have therefore the doctrine that the truth of the conception is secondary to the conception itself. *Dea Roma* equally with Jehovah will serve as the foundation of the State. Nor does it matter that the God should be personified. "It is better to have an altar to the Unknown God, than no altar and no God." There is some truth in the theory that the existence of a State postulates a principle of unity. But if *Dea Roma* may be this principle, so also may the Constitution of the United States, or *Vive la République*. If it is only the *idea* that is required, a nation's necessity for a supreme object of worship and veneration—the principle of unity—can be as fully satisfied in the protecting goddess of Athens, or of Rome, in the Sun in the East, in a paper Constitution like that of the United States, or in a phrase embodying a national sentiment—as in the God assumed by the Roman Pontiff and his priests. The paper seems to have been inspired by the discussion proceeding over Mr Bradlaugh and the oaths' question.

Lectures on Liberty, Authority, Freethought, Socialism, Naturalism, and Atheism: By Very Rev. Father LÉO MENANT DES CHESNAIS, S.M. Auckland: Freeman's Journal Office.

Bishop Luck, of Auckland, writes to these lectures an introduction, in which he observes: "No small favor is conferred on those who would wish to stem the tide of infidelity and social revolution, by putting within their reach a clever and brief *exposé* of the sophisms of those wretched men who

hate God and all those who are intent on their own true interests." Can any sophism be more transparent than to assert that men *hate* God? No theist hates the object of his faith, and no atheist can hate what to him is merely a term implying negation. He cannot very well hate *nothing*. The lectures themselves consist mainly of dogmatic assertions about God and his "pleasure," and Freethinkers and their "sensuality." God alone is absolutely free, and "alone can do as he pleases, having no one to put any restriction on his liberty, possessing every good, incapable of error." And here is another sophism. Granting his existence, he may no doubt do as he pleases; but if his goodness is infinite, he is subject to moral conditions, and his pleasure is accordingly restricted. Further, we are told that—"As God above has made man whatever he is, and given him whatever he possesses, so God alone has a right to govern him, and dispose of him, and of all that belongs to him—according to His good pleasure." And, of course, it follows that as He made the Freethinker what he is, he has the *right* to be so unjust as to execute his pleasure in the shape of vengeance on his own handiwork! If He does not "govern" the sinner, it is equally his pleasure,—exercised in this case perhaps to give Father Le Menant the opportunity of showing how logically gifted is one of his priests. Leaving these glimpses of revelation, we come to the burden of the song—the shocking wickedness of Freethinkers—the assurance being given that, "Before refuting them we shall faithfully explain their doctrine, and use their own expressions." Let us give an illustration of the rev. gentleman's *faithful* description: "Freethinkers maintain that all priests and statesmen are men without intellect and reason, and I suppose also all those who believe in them." The intellect of priests may be warped by their vocation, but Freethinkers have always recognised the craft and subtlety of these gentlemen. As for statesmen, it is just possible Freethinkers may have heard of Macchiavelli, Metternich, and Talleyrand. Does the Rev. Father think his people so illiterate that they will accept his unconscious humour without question? The lecturer then gives a quotation, but no authority, duly placed within commas, thus: "'The gratification of our appetites, passions, and senses (if we believe Freethinkers) is the end of our existence.'" Why the hypothesis "if we believe Freethinkers" in the middle of a quotation from a Freethinker? Here we think there is a little touch of dishonesty on the part of the Father. At once we deny that any representative Freethinker ever used the words. The lecturer will only maintain his veracity by producing his authority. The term "sensuality" is very frequently applied to Freethinkers and their views, but the application is in no one instance sustained. On the other hand, the charge is destroyed in order to make good a charge of hypocrisy. For, says the Rev. Father, "When Atheists practise any virtues it is from selfish motives. They are temperate, to preserve their health; they are liberal and generous, out of ambition and zeal for their own reputation. Their virtues are all hypocritical." Men who are such artful hypocrites as to be temperate to preserve their health, are not very likely to ruin their health by sensuality! These lectures are of a low order of intelligence, unscrupulous in statements of fact, but not ill-suited to an audience illiterate and superstitious.

Mr Henry George has written a reply to the many criticisms on his recently published volume on "Progress and Poverty." It is to be issued in London in a shilling volume by Mr W Reeves.

A delightful joke (remarks Mrs. Besant in the *National Reformer*) was played off the other day on the Christian world. It was announced that Noah's real original ark had been found on the top of Mount Ararat! The *Pall Mall Gazette* quotes thereon the following, which appeared in a letter to a "Conservative contemporary": "In these days of scepticism and rank infidelity, when men scoff at the truthfulness of the word of God, yea, there are those among us even professing Christianity who doubt the authenticity of the Pentateuch. Many there are also who disbelieve in the Old Testament altogether, and look upon it as an obsolete book. In these days, therefore, it is refreshing to hear from what may be considered a reliable source that Noah's Ark has been discovered." The "reliable source" was that truthful journal, the *Levant Herald*! I cannot, however, help suspecting that that believing letterwriter was, in his turn, playing off a joke on the *Conservative* sheet.

THE DEVELOPMENT, AUTHORITY, AND TEACHINGS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The following extracts from the writings of Lord Macaulay and several eminent divines present a variety of facts which are of interest from the forcible manner in which they appear to have presented themselves to the authors:—

In his Essay on Milton, Macaulay says, with reference to religion in general and Christianity in particular: "Logicians may reason about abstractions, but the great mass of mankind can never feel an interest in them. They must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude, in all ages and nations, to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is every reason to believe, worshipped one invisible deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In like manner, the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the sun the worship which, speculatively, they considered due only to the Supreme mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a single proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception, but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before deity, embodied in human form—walking amongst men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross—that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty legions were humbled in the dust! Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new Paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George took the place of Mars; St. Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux; the virgin mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses."

The Rev. Dr. Dick says:—"In the second writings we meet with sayings which are neither wiser nor better for being found in them than if they had occurred in ordinary history. It is evident that the Word of God can be given only to a part of the Scriptures, because they contain, besides a revelation, an account of human opinions. . . . Sometimes it is God who speaks, and sometimes it is man."

William Penn, the Quaker pioneer of America, wrote: "I demand of our adversaries (referring to those who positively accept the Bible as divinely inspired) if they are well assured of those men who first collected, embodied, and declared them (the Scriptures) authentic, by a public Canon which we read was in the Council of Laodicea, held 360 years after Christ. I say, how do they know that these men rightly discerned true from spurious? Now, sure it is that some of the Scriptures taken in by one Council were rejected by another for apocryphal, and that which was left out by the former for apocryphal, was taken in by the latter for canonical. Now, visible it is that they contradict each other, and as true that they have erred respecting the present belief."

In his *Rationale of Religious Inquiry*, the Rev. J. Martineau says: "If we could recover the gospels of the Hebrews and that of the Egyptians, it would be difficult to give a reason why they should not form a part of the New Testament. . . . What are Mark and Luke, who are received, more than Clement and Barnabas, who are excluded?"

The Rev. T. H. Horne wrote: "The accounts left us by ecclesiastical writers of antiquity, concerning the time when the gospels were written or published, are so vague, confused, and discordant that they lead to no

certain or solid determination. The eldest of the ancient fathers collected the reports of their own times and set them down as certain truths, and those who followed adopted their accounts with implicit reverence. Thus tradition, true or false, passed on from one writer to another without examination, until at last it became too late to examine them to any purpose."

Dr. Whistow said: "Can anyone be so weak as to imagine Mark and Luke, James and Jude, who were none of them more than companions of the Apostles, to be our sacred and unerring guide, while Barnabas, Thaddeus, Clement, Timothy, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, who were equally companions of the same Apostles, to be no authority at all?"

In his *Practical Sermons*, the Rev. Dr. Barnes, of Philadelphia, a far-famed man and devoted student of Bibliology, says: "I see not one ray to disclose to me the reason why sin came into the world, why the earth is strewn with the dying and the dead, and why man must suffer to all eternity. I have never seen a particle of light thrown upon these subjects that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind, nor have I an explanation to offer, or a thought to suggest, that would be a relief to you. I trust other men, as they profess to do, understand these better than I do, and that they have not the anguish of spirit that I have; but I confess when I look on a world of sinners, and sufferers, upon death-beds and graveyards, upon the world of woe filled with hearts to suffer for ever; when I see my friends, my parents, my family, my people, my fellow-citizens; when I look upon a whole race all involved in this seeming danger; when I see the great mass of them wholly unconcerned; and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet he does not do it, I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark to my soul, and I cannot disguise it."

RELIGION AND THE PAPUANS.

Captain Armit, the leader of the Argus expedition to New Guinea, gives the following account of one of the Native tribes:—"These inland Natives have no religion, yet one's property is sacred among them. If you drop anything and they find it, you will have it returned to you immediately. They are far more moral than Europeans. Any breach of the moral law is punished with death. But from what I gathered from Luija, the chief, such breaches are hardly ever known to occur. . . . The Coijari have no idea of a Deity that I can find out after repeated attempts. They are terribly superstitious, and will not speak of dead people for fear that by doing so they will come to life again, and do them some injury for bringing them back from beyond the curtain that divides mortality from immortality. Yet this rude, this primitive people have a very high idea of right and wrong."—*Australasian*, Aug. 25, 1883.

Correspondence.

CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

SIR.—In the discussion which followed the reading of a paper before the Wanganui Freethought Association, entitled "The Divine Origin of Christianity," the author Mr. Grant stated, that even the great infidel writer Strauss had to admit that the resurrection of Jesus was an authenticated fact; and tried to escape from this fact by the lame assumption that Jesus was not dead but only insensible when cut down from the cross. Now I have Strauss's "New Life of Jesus," and can confidently assert, without fear of contradiction, that in no place does he make such an assertion. True, he mentions such an hypothesis as having been advanced in different forms by Herder, Paulus, Schleiermacher, and Hase, but he himself in a masterly manner refutes the explanation as unsatisfactory and fanciful; and shows first, from the inconsistencies and contradictions of the Gospel accounts, how unhistoric is the evidence; and secondly, how natural it was such myths should arise in the early Church; inasmuch as it was necessary to show how superior Jesus was in death to the lesser lights, Moses, Enoch and Elijah.

For Mr. Grant to have made such a statement, shows great ignorance of the writings of what he was pleased to call the "infidel Strauss."

I am, &c.,

R.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The Review is well got up and cleverly written.—N.Z. Times.

An exceedingly well written periodical, devoted to the literature of Freethought, now hails from Wanganui. It is called "The Freethought Review," and is published by Mr. A. D. Willis, of Victoria Avenue.—Taranaki News.

... "Men are naturally religious—superstitious, if our friends will have it so—they seek an object to worship—it is a human instinct distinguishing our race from the lower creation, which neither makes to itself a god nor sets up an idol; and freethought fails to satisfy their instinct: it makes no revelations, rears no altar, indites no psalm."—Wairarapa Standard.

We cannot say that we welcome our newly-fledged contemporary into the ranks of literature, for we regard its aims as being distinctly pernicious to the welfare of society. The whole object of its articles seems to us to sap the faith of men in the Bible, and by this means to destroy Christianity, for take away men's belief in the Bible as an inspired work, and the very foundations of religion must immediately collapse. The writers pretend to be actuated by philanthropy, but instead of being the friends of mankind they are its deadly enemies.—Rangitikei Advocate.

The Freethought journal, the Echo, hitherto the only one published in the colony, has now a contemporary in its own line—The Freethought Review, published at Wanganui, of which we have received the first number. It is a well got up foolscap folio of 16 pages. The tone of the opening article is moderate, and the conductors claim that the existence of their journal is due to a growing want on the part of the non-sectarian class of an organ in which they may ventilate their opinions with the freedom denied by ordinary journals.—Southland Times.

The first issue of the Freethought Review, a monthly newspaper published by Mr. A. D. Willis, of Wanganui, has reached us. As a specimen of typography, it is certainly very creditable; but we are inclined to doubt whether there are enough people on the Coast belonging to what is at present regarded as the "advanced school" to support such a large publication, consisting as it does, of sixteen pages, similar in size to the New Zealand Tablet—a journal of very opposite opinions. As might have been expected from its title, Biblical subjects are freely criticised in the pages of the Review. Amongst the local contributions we notice one from Dr Curl on the "Antiquity of the Races of Men."—Egmont Courier.

The Freethought Review is the latest addition to the press of New Zealand. It is a neatly printed paper of sixteen foolscap pages, and issued from the office of Mr. A. D. Willis, Wanganui. According to the introductory article, the aim of the paper is the happiness of mankind in this life, and, therefore, whatsoever may tend to hinder advancement towards this ideal it will be the duty of the editor to assail. The paper is started for the purpose of diffusing Freethought principles, and will therefore from time to time "illustrate the positive side of the system, as illuminated by knowledge and science." The articles are well written, and show considerable erudition. Mr. John Gilmour is the New Plymouth agent.—Taranaki Herald.

This is the first number of a new monthly of sixteen pages, and we are agreeably surprised at its contents. We do not think we are stating anything more than the simple truth, when we say that there has not yet appeared in all Australasia an abler Freethought paper. The notes are vigorously written, the articles are broad and able, and the extracts given are such as must interest all who are engaged in the struggle for freedom. There are three short reviews of books, science notes, notes and queries, besides local news of the doings of Freethought societies. We hope that having such a magazine Freethinkers will be ready to aid it, and to make it a financial success. Its literary ability is undoubted; what is wanted is a big circulation.—Dunedin Echo.

And still they come! The small army of newspapers and periodicals already existing in the enlightened Colony of New Zealand has received another recruit within its ranks. We allude to The Freethought Review, the first number of which has reached us. This new journal appears in Wanganui and will be issued monthly. Its title reveals its aims and objects, and a perusal of the pages before us leaves no doubt upon our mind, that our new contemporary will make his mark among the adherents to the cause which he advocates. We may add that the paper is carefully and neatly printed, and that its literary contents are well worth perusing, no matter what creed the reader may belong to.—Inangahua Herald, Reefton.

The first number of "The Freethought Review," a sixteen-page publication issued by Mr A. D. Willis is now before us. Into the controversial element, which forms the mainstay of the literary department, we do not intend to enter, but the original contributions are marked by a fairness and moderation of tone to which the public are quite unaccustomed in the productions of modern Freethinkers. It is positively refreshing to take up a Freethought newspaper in which the reign of pure reason is not ushered in by flippant jocular-ity or coarse ribaldry. There is nothing of either in Mr Willis's Review, and there is, on the contrary, a good deal of information which cannot but be useful, however we may detest the conclusions erroneously drawn from it. The various departments of the journal are well compiled, and it is printed and got up in a style in which it has few rivals in the Australasian colonies. Mr Willis has, at any rate, done his part of the work very well.—Wanganui Chronicle.

Evangelist Barns, after bribing a policeman to get inside of the House of Commons, writes home an account of how cleverly he managed it, signing himself "Ever in Jesus."

In Memoriam.

WILLIAM DENTON.

The news of the untimely death of the distinguished geologist and lecturer, Professor Denton, will be received by all Freethinkers with profound regret. Not only by them, but we believe also by the thousands of Christians who followed him in his masterly exposition of the principles of Geology and changes which have taken place in the crust of Mother Earth. Professor Denton was as indefatigable in the pursuit of his favourite science as he was bold and fearless in his generalisations and conclusions. Implicitly accepting the law of Evolution, though differing from its great exponent, Charles Darwin, in some of his speculations, he was able to trace out the successions of life and forms as exhibited in fossil remains, in so clear and convincing a manner that it was difficult for the most orthodox or stubborn to reject his teaching. And he never for a moment subordinated the strict scientific aspect of a question to the craving for sensation or effect. All seemed natural, depending on what had gone before, and bound firmly together by the principle of continuity. It will be difficult to replace such a teacher. Professor Denton was a writer of no mean ability, both in prose and poetry, inspired chiefly by his earnest desire to see humanity raised to a higher plane of existence on the earth. He was a Freethinker, and avowed his opinions boldly; and he was a man whose life would have adorned any cause. When shall the time come when a monument worthy of his memory shall be erected over his grave in the strange land into the thick darkness of which he had thought to penetrate? Professor Denton died of fever on the 26th August, in New Guinea, while engaged as the scientific member of an exploring expedition sent out at the cost of the Melbourne Argus, and led by Captain Armitt.

CAUTION

In the morning's light advancing,
Forward bounds a gallant steed,
Decked with beauty's goodly housing,
Shod with Youth, Health, Strength, and Speed.
Who will mount the fearless courser?
Who can ride him to the goal,
With the spur of Emulation,
And the check of Self-control,
Perseverance's solid saddle,
Prudence's trusty bridle-rein.
Enterprise's elastic stirrup,
And Experience's curb of pain?
Who will mount the gallant courser?
Who can ride him to the goal—
Through the paths of life uneven
To the temple of the soul?
But be wary! ah, be wary!
Long the road, the time unknown!
And at morn, the rein is wanting,
And at eve, the spur is flown.
And, ere noon arrives, the rider
Oft so far has gone astray,
That, when evening's deepens,
He has not recalled the way.
Then be cautious at the starting,
Tho' the path be smooth and clear,
For the time—the time of spurring—
Is when home and night are near.

Ernest Jones.

Speaking of Mr. Beecher's 70th birthday, an old New Yorker said: "I like Beecher. He has done more to cool off Hades than any other man that ever lived." A New Yorker would like any man who would do that.—Boston Post.

A minister of the name of Sparks, whose pastorate lay in the north, was the father of thirteen children. At the baptism of the thirteenth an aged brother divine, desirous to choose what seemed to him an appropriate description of the life of a man, called on the congregation to join in singing the fifth paraphrase, beginning with the line, "As sparks in quick succession rise." So unconscious was he that he could not understand the people's titter, until, when he descended from the pulpit, his pun was explained to him.

Gems.

To a man contaminated by sensuality neither the Vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor strict observances, nor pious austerities will procure felicity.—**MENU.**

The true sage dwells upon earth as the bee that gathers sweetness with his mouth and wings, without harming the color and perfume of the flowers.—**BUDDHA.**

Return bad treatment with equity and remember kindness with kindness. Never do to others what you would not have others do to you. Fix thy thoughts on duty; practice without ceasing the virtue of humanity, and if you have leisure cultivate the arts.—**CONFUCIUS.**

As the earth supports those who trample it under foot and rend its bosom with the plough, we should return good for evil. Let the right hand of the good man be always open to the poor and the unhappy; and let him never boast of his benefits.—**CHRISHNA.**

Forsake all evil; bring forth good; master thine own thoughts; such is Buddha's path to the end of all pain. Overcome evil with good, the avaricious with generosity, the falsehood with truth. One day of endeavour is better than a hundred years of sloth.—**BUDDHA.**

In all things let reason be your guide. In everything you do consider the end. Study excellence and aim at acquiring it. Reverence thy parents. Cherish thy friends. Laws are like cobwebs which entangle the lesser sort; the greater break through.—**SOLOX.**

Strength of mind depends upon sobriety, for this keeps reason unclouded by passion. Youth should be habituated to obedience, for it will then find it easy to obey the authority of reason. Every man ought to act and speak with such integrity that no one would have occasion to doubt his simple affirmation.—**PYTHAGORAS.**

Do what you think to be right whatever people think of you. Despise alike their censure and their praise. The rational mind of man is more excellent than this sensitive soul, as the sun is more excellent than the stars; the discourse of a philosopher is vain if no passion of man is healed thereby.—**PYTHAGORAS.**

Do not allow thyself to be carried away with anger. Reply to thy enemies with gentleness. Take not that which belongs to another. Contend constantly against evil. Succour the poor and refuse not hospitality. Avoid everything calculated to injure others. Have no companionship with a man who injures his neighbors.—**ZOROASTER.**

O beloved Pan, and all ye other gods of the place, grant me to become beautiful in the inner man, and that whatever outward things I may have may be at peace with those within. May I deem the wise man rich, and may I have such portion of gold as none but a prudent man can either bear or employ. Do we need anything else, Phædrus? For myself, I have prayed enough.—**SOCRATES.**

The perfectly just man is he who loves justice for its own sake, not for the honors and advantages which attend it, who is willing to pass for unjust while he practices the most exact justice; who will not suffer himself to be moved by disgrace or distress, but will continue steadfast in the love of justice—not because it is pleasant, but because it is right.—**PLATO.**

We are created for the sake of mankind and to be useful to each other. Nature endears man to man. Nothing is more natural to man than kindness. Knowledge seems isolated and barren unless accompanied by love of all men and trust in our common brotherhood. All men are plainly bound together. Duty is always performed when the advantage of mankind is sought. He is a good man who benefits as many people as possible and harms nobody. True philosophers have not neglected the advantages and interests of mankind. Care for other men and serve the common brotherhood. Nothing is so much in accord with nature as utility. The standard of utility is the same as that of morality. Whatever is useful is virtuous, though it does not at first seem so.—**CICERO.**

If you are handsome, do handsome things; if deformed, supply the defects of your nature by your virtues. Be slow in undertaking, and resolute in executing. Praise not a worthless man for the sake of his wealth.—**BIAS.**

Goethe condemned the practice of congratulation upon marriage. "It is," he said, "as absurd as congratulating a man on having drawn a lottery ticket before you know whether it is a prize or a blank."

Sound health, moderate fortune, and a mind stored with knowledge—these are the grand ingredients of happiness. True happiness consists in perfect health, a moderate fortune, and a life free from effeminacy and ignorance.—**THALES.**

Friends are one soul in two bodies. A virtuous life is itself a source of delight. The purest and noblest pleasure is that which a good man derives for virtuous actions. Happiness consists in conduct conformable to virtue.—**ARISTOTLE.**

Extreme Unction—a most venerable sacrament of the Romish Church, and very efficacious in frightening the dying. It consists principally in greasing the brogans of those who are about departing on a journey to another world.—**VOLTAIRE.**

Prefer labor to idleness, unless you would prefer rust to brightness. The truly learned are not those who read much, but those who read what is useful. Young people should be taught those things that will be useful to them when they become men.—**ARISTIPPUS.**

If we are to seek no subterfuges, if we are not to halt between two opinions, if our yea is to be Yea, and our nay Nay—if we are to speak as honorable and straightforward men—then we must recognize the fact that we are no longer Christians.—**STRAUSS.**

Love is the god which gives the greatest safety. A true philosopher, unless prevented, will faithfully serve the state. Most people seek in the tavern for that pleasure which is to be found in labor. Whether the slave has become so by conquest or by purchase, the master's title is bad.—**ZENO.**

The Edinburgh Review, in a paper on the prosecution of the Jews, truly states that "proselytes from Judaism are very rare." If the new Jerusalem does not descend until all the sons of Israel are enlisted under the banner of the cross, it may not be expected until the Greek Kalends, at the present rate of progression.—**THE FREETHINKER.**

Woman in the Christian system "was represented (Lecky, Hist. Morals, vol. ii, pp. 338—40,) as the door of hell, as the mother of all human ills. She should be ashamed of the very thought that she is a woman. She should live in continual penance on account of the curses she has brought upon the world. She should be ashamed of her dress, for it is the memorial of her fall. She should especially be ashamed of her beauty, for it is the most potent instrument of the demon."

LABOR IN LOVE FOR HUMANITY'S SAKE.

While ignorance darkens our heaven-made soul,
While bigotry holds o'er a mortal control,
While slavery robs men of virtue and will,
And war has his gory hand lifted to kill,
While want can a brother's heart sorrowful make,
We'll labor in love for Humanity's sake.

Though some that were friends in affliction may fail;
Though bigots may frown, and like tigers assail;
Though felons may seek with the despot to bind us,
And ignorant priests with their errors to blind us;
Though stealthy assassins our lives fain would take,
We'll labor in love for Humanity's sake.

Till Freedom arise in her might from the grave,
And claim as her child every down-trodden slave,
Till plenty shall gladden each dwelling on earth,
And sadness and sorrow are banished by mirth;
Till no bond remains for the freeman to break,
We'll labor in love for Humanity's sake.

No storms shall discourage, no dangers repel;
All goodness is with us; it can but be well.
No angel shall tempt us our duty to shirk;
No demon shall scare us from doing the work;
No mortal shall coax us our covenant to break,
To labor in love for Humanity's sake.

William Denton.

ANTIQUITY OF THE RACES OF MEN

(By S. M. CURLE, M.D., F.L.S., &c.)

(Concluded from our last.)

Another invasion of India by a Mogul chief named Oghuz Khan took place 200 years after this date, and between B.C. 1800 and B.C. 1600 several other Tartar hordes invaded India, Cashmere &c. Not only do we see how numerous these people were in India and the neighbouring countries four thousand years ago, but we can easily learn how advanced was their civilization at this date; their literature was even then copious, their learned language had even then a most perfect inflectional, and precise form; its grammar was well understood, and many treatises then existed upon grammar, astronomy, and there were several perfect poems. Its religious works then contained the Vedic hymns, and in the Rig Veda alone there were 1028 hymns, each with an average of ten verses, and soon after the composition of the Brahmanas, and Sutras, and Upanashads, with the Puranas, were begun, and many other literary compositions completed.

So great was the number of people in Babylon and India at the time of Ninus, who founded Nineveh, he being the son of Nimrod, that his wife Semiramis invaded India with an army of three millions and a half of men to attack the king of that country, Virasena, sometimes called Stabrobates, who brought four million men into the field and conquered, and drove her back. Thus there were over seven millions of men engaged in this campaign. But we have to remember the date of 4000 years finds the Hindoos in India, where they had conquered the aboriginals of that country, whom we know as the Dravidian race, a black or dark brown people, speaking a tongue very different from the immigrating and colonizing Hindoos; but previous to this, 4000 years back, we find the Hindoos coming down very gradually during the preceding ages through the Punjab, the passes of the Himalayas, and the Hindoo Coosh, by successive migrations from the highlands of Asia, where was their ancient home, in which place dwelt the Aryan ancestors from which they had come a thousand years before, and where, between five and six thousand years ago, these same Aryans were settled in civilized communities, spoke a language like the Sanscrit, and were sending out tribes of men who, known as Gauls, Celts, Greeks, Slavs, Hindoos, were colonizing Europe and Asia and dispossessing the aboriginals of their lands. And not only are philologists able to trace up the roots of the words of the many Indo-germanic tongues into this ancient Aryan language, but ethnologists, from skulls, bones, &c., can trace the relationships, while archaeologists can also prove the affinities.

It would take up too much space to do this here, but in a work I am now engaged upon this will be all clearly set out and established. In Egypt, Menes established Monarchy B.C. 2,188, or 4,071 years ago, but before him many other monarchs had there reigned, and from this date exact histories show the state of the people to modern times; and the more modern of their writings in hieroglyphics, or in the Hierarchie, or in the Demotic scripts, the more powerfully is forced upon our minds the enormous strides this people had made in the arts, manufactures, and general knowledge, while their political and domestic economies and systems of philosophy come out better the more we read and learn of them. And although we are only now beginning to discuss the rights of women, these were fully set out and established in Egyptian practice, and are written of in deeds thousands of years old.

Having got back six thousand years among the civilized and partly civilized peoples, whose history has come down to us, we have to trace the history of men on the globe farther back without the aid of historians, either on the stone monuments, on clay tablets, or on written papyri, and have to take other kinds of evidence of how men lived before these dates, and what sort of men they were. But we find their bones preserved to us in the caves, in the peat-mosses, in the moraines and gravels, and clay beds, and petrified in the rocks, and we also find their tools, their weapons, their implements for sewing, spinning, digging, &c. Their canoes are there, and the seeds they sowed, the remnants of their houses, and their ornaments, and some of their drawings and paintings. In America, we see their burial places, their earthworks for defence, their pottery, their animals that they tamed or hunted, and other matters connected with them. And thus, with all the evidences presented to us so

abundantly, we are able to learn with certainty that for thousands of years before the light-brown, the white, or the yellow lived on this earth, a reddish-brown race preceded them; and anterior to this, a darker brown race lived, very much like the present Esquimaux, but that before all these the negro, or very dark brown, or black races lived, and moved, and hunted over the whole earth. These were the most ancient of all. They neither planted, nor built; they only hunted the wild animals, ate them for food and picked the wild fruits and roots, and lived upon these; had no settled homes, always roving about, savages pure and simple, using stones and chipped flints as weapons, with clubs and spears of wood. But even low as these were in the scale, they differed considerably, as do their descendants to this day, as we see them now in the aboriginals of Australia, the Andaman Islands, the Aheta of the Philippines, the black hairy people of the forests or wilder parts of Japan, and the sort of people found in the densest forests of Malacca, Borneo, Siam, and Melanesia. But these more or less crossed with the lighter brown races, Polynesian, Bharatas, or Malays. Thus in the earliest times of man's being on the Earth we learn that he was a black man of the lowest type, and that he lived for thousands of years in the greatest barbarism, and also that the types and races were always improving, until we at last arrive at those races that are left where the era of written history begins.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"The model prayer known as the *Lord's Prayer*, with which Jesus furnished his followers, he evidently borrowed from Jewish literature. The few instances of verbal difference between it and the following translation of a part of the Jewish Eucharist, made by a *revered and pious Christian*, may be the result of a little alteration effected by time, either in the Christian or the Jewish prayer, or even in both; or may have arisen either from Jesus's imperfect recollection of the Jewish prayer, or from the imperfect manner in which his repetition of it was reported by the Evangelists. The principal difference, however, is caused by Jesus's omission of several words found in the Jewish prayer, which would indicate that he knew it but imperfectly. But even now, at this distant time, when each has undergone a translation from a dead language, they are so much alike that they afford ample internal evidence of their identity. The Jewish prayer runs thus:—*Our Father, which art in heaven*, be gracious to us, O Lord our God; hallowed be thy name, and let the remembrance of thee be glorified in heaven above, and upon earth here below. Let thy kingdom reign over us, now and for ever. The holy men of old said, remit and forgive unto all men whatsoever they have done against me. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil thing. For thine is the kingdom, and thou shalt reign in glory, for ever and for evermore." (The works of the Rev. John Gregorie, p. 168, Lond. 1685.) All the expressions italicised in the foregoing prayer will be found in the following [the Lord's prayer]. Well might Basnage say that the Jew had an ancient prayer called the *Kadish*, precisely like Jesus's prayer; and Wetstein remark that it is a curious fact that the Lord's prayer may be reconstructed almost verbatim out of the Talmud. . . . But as Jesus's prayer is so much shorter and smoother in expressions [than the foregoing], while it has scarcely a word, and certainly not a single idea, that is not in the Jewish prayer, much older than his time, the proof is complete that either he, or some one else, borrowed it from the Jewish Talmud—a production—like all the Jewish writings—very justly represented, even by learned Christians, as replete with the most absurd and fabulous tales that were ever penned by the religious guides of any nation." ("The Prophet of Nazareth," by E. P. Meredith, page 426.)

[In a debate at a meeting of the Wanganui Free-thought Association the Christian disputant in his reply stated that the Mishna of the Talmud was written A.D. 250, and therefore he claimed originality for the prayer of Jesus. It would have been as pertinent, and have shown as profound a knowledge of the subject, to have argued that a history published in 1800 of the Baconian philosophy, was the date when that philosophy was given to the world! He did not apparently know that the Rabbins whose commentaries are given in the Talmud were mostly anterior to the Christian era.]

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