

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 Sanskrit, 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