

so it has ever been a landmark of Free-Masonry that the Entered Apprentice should be of that sex. (3.) The position of the Grand Orient of France, numerically speaking, is improving. It is not so important as either of the ruling Masonic authorities of Great Britain or Ireland. In 1882 it had 323 "ateliers" or "workshops," composed of 276 lodges, 25 chapters, 12 councils, 1 consistory, and the Grand College of Rites under its jurisdiction. In Sept., 1883, it had increased its "ateliers" to 329. Its financial position is very weak, the income being comparatively small (about £5000), and the expenditure so extravagant as to leave a balance on the wrong side of the ledger. (4.) I have been informed there is a lodge in Queensland holding from the Grand Orient; there are none in this colony. A letter was forwarded to the Grand Secretary from New Zealand some five years since, requesting information as to their mode of work and if charters could be procured, but no answer was returned.—

QUERIES.

- 1.—Can any of your readers inform me concerning the literary career and position of Mr. Shorthouse, the author of "John Inglesant, a Romance," who about a year ago suddenly rose to the top of Mudie's list?—Y.
- 2.—What is the best definition of gravity?—
- 3.—Where does St. Paul recommend craft and lying?
- 4.—What were the religious opinions of Emerson?—
- 5.—Can any of your readers give a sketch of the programme and work of a children's Lyceum?—
- 6.—How would one proceed to draw up a code of morals for instruction in the State Schools?—

Reviews.

The Belief in the Immortality of the Soul: 'The Westminster Review,' October, 1883.

The belief in the immortality of the soul is made the subject of an exhaustive enquiry in the article under notice. It is observed that great beliefs remain unchanged, while the ground is continually shifting upon which they are maintained. "Position after position is chosen and abandoned; entrenchments, seemingly impregnable, are relinquished after short contests; changes of front are effected to elude defeat; each army seems to be 'feeling' its opponent, and gradually manœuvring towards the ground where it means to put forth its full strength. But again and again decisive action is deferred, and one line of defence is no sooner broken though than another is thrown up behind." First there was the *theological* belief, accepted on the authority of a creed. Next came the *metaphysical*, founded on notions concerning immaterial essences. Then reasons were sought in *positive* research, the metamorphosis of insects furnishing a kind of parallel. "History was invoked to show that the belief in a future life was a necessity of the human intellect, an instinct which could not be without a justification in reality; and finally, the phenomena elicited by Modern Spiritualism . . . must be regarded, in a great measure, as an endeavor to establish the desired demonstration by actual experiment." "Alongside of these defences must be placed the plea that the belief in immortality is indispensable, inasmuch as morality would be baseless, and life not worth living without it." The reviewer proceeds to enquire from these different starting points—"Why and how did it originate, what has been its function in the education of our race, and what is its value now?" Space will not allow us to do more than give the writer's conclusion that in each case the ground for the belief is untenable. The Reviewer concludes: "To the present writer (for in such matters every one must speak for himself) there seems to be something excessive, abnormal, morbid, in this clinging to existence through eternity. Are you *never* to have enough of it? We can admit that a man should rise hungry from a feast, especially if he has been interrupted in it—well then, let the courses be brought on again, and if a second dinner is still insufficient, let there be a third, a fourth. . . . But is there never to be an end? Is this Self so precious that it can never be resigned? May it not be that *others* will

want their turn? We can but put the question, and let each reader answer it as best befits his taste."

The Biography of Charles Bradlaugh: By ADOLPHE S. HEADINGLEY. Freethought Publishing Co., Fleet Street, London.

There is recently to hand a second edition, revised and enlarged, of the history of Charles Bradlaugh to the present time. It is a plainly-written book, and no doubt is not intended to be considered an exhaustive examination of the work and character of the "incomplete" member for Northampton. We are of opinion that the best-written biographies are generally those which describe the lives of memorable men and women when they are beyond praise or censure, and the work under consideration is no exception to this rule. Another striking instance of the truth of this principle we have in the "lives" of Mr. Gladstone, by Barrett Smith and Lewis Apjohn. However, there is nothing calling for regret in this biography of Charles Bradlaugh, and Mr. Headingley within the limits of his sketch has produced a very interesting book. One cannot read the first chapter, detailing the school-days of the great reformer, without being carried along through all the exciting and singular incidents of his dauntless career to the historic Northampton election of April, 1880. It is generally conceded that but for his iconoclastic attitude towards theology and great interests, Charles Bradlaugh would have been numbered among the greatest statesmen, orators, and lawyers of his time. He has scholarly pretensions not to be despised, as a platform speaker he has a power and finish which few men possess, and he is an uncompromising foe to any abuse. That he has made mistakes none can deny. Where is he who has not? But in almost every instance it has been on questions of policy, and the probity of Charles Bradlaugh's life is above any serious charge. But we are just now most concerned with Mr. Headingley's literary production. We think it a pity that this writer did not give a fuller history of the secular movement, and more especially where the subject of his biography was concerned. For example no mention is made of the well-known two nights' able debate in the Hall of Science between Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. G. J. Holyoake. It is an important and interesting chapter in the history of the Freethought movement in England. It threatened all organisation at the time, and we can recall to memory some other equally momentous events not alluded to even by Mr. Headingley. Taking it, however, as a fragmentary biography of Charles Bradlaugh, we welcome it most heartily as showing what singleness of purpose and courage can accomplish. Here is a great deed which calls forth our admiration, and a perusal of the biography cannot fail to act as a stimulus to increased efforts on the part of all Freethinkers.

Correspondence.

SERMONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

SIR,—I have heard many sermons, but the following are so unique in their way that I will give you the mere outline, and then let your readers judge for themselves. The first was by a Dailyite, taken from the text, "If I, your lord and master, wash your feet, so ought ye to wash one another's." One would expect that a lesson on humility was the burden of this text; but in place of that, this minister occupied fully half an hour in proving, or trying to prove, that the feet must be the dirtiest part of the body, and this is the reason why Christ so peremptorily commands his disciples to wash their neighbor's feet. The second sermon was given in a Church of England place of worship in this city. The subject was a charity sermon, and the text was, "Make for yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." From this the rev. gentleman endeavored to press on his hearers the necessity of giving alms or charity, for "we are to make friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, and if we fail in obtaining one place of rest in the world to come, they may at least receive us into their everlasting habitations." The authors of these two sermons are dead and gone, and by withholding their names we render some respect to the old adage, "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*"; but the author of the following is still alive, and Rector of St. Matthew's Church in this city, and he can, if he likes, defend himself if I have misunderstood him. About two years ago he was delivering a course of lectures on "Heaven, Hell, the Judgment, &c," and in reference to this last he remarked, "We are not to imagine that the old orthodox opinion