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Pending farther arrangements, F. C. Hall Esq., the Secretary of the Christchurch Freethought Association, has kindly undertaken to take charge of and distribute THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW in Christchurch.

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

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T.H.—We shall try to publish the Treaty of Waitangi in our next issue, as well as the list of N.Z. Ministries.

J.R. (Timaru).—Your letter is unavoidably held over. It will appear in our next issue.

The Freethought Review.

WANGANUI, N.Z.: SEPTEMBER 1, 1884.

THE PROGRESS OF FREETHOUGHT.

THERE can be no question that Freethought is making rapid progress in this colony. During the past few years it has become organised in definite Associations, whose members exercise an influence out of all proportion to their actual numbers, for the simple reason that they call attention to the fact that the popular creed is openly challenged by men at least as competent as its supporters to judge of its truth. In addition to this, when it is seen that people who are known to reject Christianity do not fall below the prevailing standard of morality, even the most earnest Christian is forced to admit that a man's character is not necessarily determined by his creed. Hence the prejudice against Freethinkers, expressed by such terms as "scoffer" and "infidel," is dying out, and leaving fair minded people among the orthodox to judge the question of supernaturalism upon its merits. It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that more than a very small proportion of the Freethinkers of the colony own themselves as such. The conviction that time is on their side, makes many, who thoroughly sympathise with the anti-theological movement, disinclined to take any active part in it, and it must be confessed that there is enough bigotry still existing to demand, in special cases, no small amount of self sacrifice from those who do. This was abundantly evident during the late elections, but it was also equally clear that public opinion as a whole was opposed to religious intolerance. Even an Agnostic Premier did not shock the feelings of the House and the country, and a "Bradlaugh difficulty" would be impossible with us. The truth is that the orthodox faith is not only losing its hold upon the reason of mankind, but in new countries it is failing to satisfy the imagination as well. All those associations, which in an old country like England are a main support of the national religion, are to a large extent wanting in the colonies. At best they are memories, not facts which appeal to eye and ear and quietly exercise an influence, which though hardly recognised in consciousness, is none the less effective. Hence definite appeals to reason and experience produce a much greater practical effect here than in the old country. In short, opinion and the reality of things are in closer agreement. There is loss as well as gain in this, at least for a time. The poetical side of life is apt to vanish from our sight, but that is perhaps because the imagination, like the eye, requires time to adjust itself to new conditions of light and object. Be this as it may, the fact is certain that argument "tells" much more rapidly here, than those who have only English experience to guide them, suppose, especially in theology, where the "interests" which so largely dominate political and social questions have less effect. For this reason among others it is satisfactory to find that this Review has largely extended its circulation. The present issue is the twelfth, so that it has agreeably disappointed its best friends, who at its birth feared it would not survive for three months. We may fairly conclude from its living so long that its organisation is healthy and suited to its environment. —R.P.

He that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven.—LORD HERBERT.