

THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

SCIENCE. RELIGION. PHILOSOPHY.

VOL. I.—No. 3.

WANGANUI, N.Z.: DEC. 1, 1883.

PRICE: 6D. [6s per annum; or, post paid to any part of N.Z., 6s 6d.]

The Pope has addressed a letter to three of his Cardinals, in which he expresses his desire that the resources of the Vatican Library should be available for the vindication of "the truth." This is one of the greatest of the world's Libraries, and why it should have been kept closed to the historian so long is one of the secrets of the Roman curia. It is not certain that the concession now granted with a flourish of trumpets will prove of much value. The object indicated by the letter is to enable the historian to prove from authentic documents that the rule of the Roman Pontiffs is not "an obstacle to the welfare and greatness of Italy." But the task of thus educating the rising generation of Italian patriots is not to be thrown open, as it were, to public competition. Words of deep import faithfully reflect the policy of the Holy See: "We do not doubt, Beloved Sons, that the weight of your office and the reputation of your merits will secure the co-operation of learned men skilled in historical writing, to each of whom you will be able to assign the task best suited to his abilities, and in accordance with certain rules which we have sanctioned." When the historian has thus been carefully selected and "sanctioned" by the Pope and his Cardinals, who will doubt his impartiality in the work of defending the Church! Is it still true that the historian needs his patron?

Were it not for the grand assumption that the Church is the fountain of all good and must be defended, the Pope's letter might be taken by many as a sign of progress. Some of his maxims and sentiments are elevated. He recommends that—"Strenuous efforts should be made to refute all falsehoods and untrue statements by ascending to the fountain heads of information, keeping vividly in mind that 'the first law of history is to dread uttering falsehood; the next, not to fear stating the truth; lastly, that the historian's writings should be open to no suspicion of partiality or of animosity.'" Sound doctrine, the reader will assuredly admit. But it is immediately followed by that which contains a double meaning and cannot meet with the same general assent: "Manuals are also needed for the use of schools, which, while leaving truth intact, shall put aside all that is harmful to youth." The word "harmful" might be construed to mean anything which deprecated the "Temporal Power"; and here we should expect the "sanctioned" historian to write according to his cue, bringing into the foreground the documents which established 'the truth' of that bulwark of the Church. In the early ages of the Church, anti-Christian writings were unscrupulously destroyed, and Libraries burned with the connivance of Christian Bishops. If the Vatican contained the works of Celsus as well as the reply of Origen, if it included the volumes of the Serapion, the learned and sceptical world might well await with breathless anxiety the opening wide its doors. Still it no doubt contains priceless treasures peculiar to itself, and the questions arise,—why should these have been concealed, or be now surrounded with restrictions suggestive of timidity?

There was no good reason why the evidence taken last session before the Select Committee in support of the Education petitions should not have been published. The evidence, it is true, was mostly on one side, and hostile to the established system of public instruction. The fear on the part of the supporters of the system was that *ex parte* evidence would be likely to bias the public mind. The rule of judicial procedure, however, does not hold good here, for the reason that the public is not deprived of evidence and facts on the other side, but is supplied with all that enables it to form a correct judgment continually. The working of the system is in itself the best evidence in its favour. Besides, it is a great advantage to have the case of the other side disclosed. Its own strength and weakness are equally revealed, and everyone now knows what the Roman and the Anglican hierarchy want, with the reasons they are able to advance. The political candidature of Bishop Moran of Dunedin made it evident that the secular system had more friends than enemies. The alliance of Rome and Canterbury in a Parliamentary paper has made it well nigh impossible for public money to be filtered through the fingers of the priests under any elementary scheme of education, if busybodies are only prevented from pulling down the fabric piecemeal in order to satisfy their fads. But there is an indispensable condition to the maintenance of the system, and that is the political education and earnestness of the people. At present they hold the fort, and have only to recognise a mitred head as the common enemy, to make the position impregnable.

In the Criminal Code Bill introduced last session in the General Assembly, Blasphemy is thus dealt with: "Whether any particular published matter is or is not a blasphemous libel is a question of fact—But no one is guilty of publishing a blasphemous libel for expressing in good faith and in decent language, or attempting to establish by arguments used in good faith and conveyed in decent language, any opinion whatever upon any religious subject." As the Bill will probably become law at no distant date, Freethinkers should consider whether it contains any restriction on liberty. The definition of Blasphemy reduces the offence to a question of taste, and unless an *arbiter elegantiarum* be set up to decide what is and what is not permissible, it is quite within the bounds of probability that successful prosecutions might follow. Suppose we were to say, what Freethinkers believe there is good historical ground for maintaining, that Jehovah was merely the tribal god of the Jews, as mythical as Baal, Chemosh, Bel, and the rest of them, an orthodox jury might find the language "indecent" and blasphemous. The Rev. Joseph Cook of Boston would certainly have no scruple in applying either adjective. Yet in our view it would only be a fair and moderate expression of opinion on a question of historical evidence. But supposing the extreme case of a Foote caricaturing Christian mythology, even then we can see no criminal offence. Majorities and minorities ought to have the same rights, and while there is no

blasphemy in ridiculing the faith of an Infidel (if we may express the paradox), there should be none in ridiculing the faith of a Christian. There should no longer therefore be such a thing as the crime of Blasphemy known to the law.

Bishop Luck, of Auckland, thinks the State has no conscience, and that the Atheistic State has no sense of duty. Before the Select Committee on Education last session, this Bishop expressed himself to the effect that—"The State has no conscience whatever; it is very elastic, and whether we are Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Mohammedans, it does not matter one bit to the State." The meaning of this is that the State has no religious conscience—a very different thing from having no conscience. But the State at any rate professes to be the guardian of liberty of conscience, and in making the profession it claims to have a conscience on this point of duty. The State seems to have a very clear conscience when it makes a law and votes money that no child shall grow up without the means of education. And it appears to be acting moreover with a conscience when it refuses to allow religious jealousies, hatreds, and feuds to interfere with the duty it has undertaken to perform. Bishop Luck gives another definition when he observes: "We have States of all colors and shades—the atheistic amongst the rest which admits no duty." If he means no religious duty, he is expressing a truism, but if he means no duty whatever, he should have been asked to name the State. When the French Republic banished the Jesuits, it at once provided with princely liberality the secular schools which it intended should replace those of the Order of Loyola. The atheistic sense of duty is founded on the welfare of mankind in this life, and is of the strongest and deepest.

The veteran secularist William Swanson put the following question to Bishop Luck: "Are you aware of any Catholic State, where there is a Catholic majority, where they do not allow some of the State funds for education?" The answer was thus given: "The Catholic Church never gives any grant to any religious education which it does not know to be the true one. This great cry for State education is entirely one of our own times." The Catholic Church admits of no compromises, and of course if it believes in itself it is quite justified in pursuing the policy. But let us see if the State should not be influenced to act in a similar way. The Catholic Church presumably feels itself to be right and every other church to be wrong. The State, however, 'without a conscience' knows nothing about one church being right and another wrong—it has no knowledge on the point—and being in this state of oblivion it solves the difficulty by refusing to recognise any church. In this dilemma the State has no alternative but to cut the Gordian knot and reject all demands from the rivals until they have agreed on a common religion, or found out what Pilate was in search of—Truth. The more the State attempts to compose the differences and adjust the claims of the warring sects, the further will it become involved in the maze of their interminable pretensions. It can only do as the Roman Governor did, and wash its hands. Before the "great cry for State education," we had the education of the churches, and let it be placed on the record how well and satisfactorily under the direction of 'conscience' they performed their duty!

The fourth centenary of the birth of Martin Luther is being celebrated by Protestant Christendom in honor of the lion of the Reformation. Luther had exactly those qualities fitting him for war with Rome. Possessed of unflinching courage and burning religious zeal, he returned blow for blow, eliciting the admiration of sturdy Germans whose rough sense of honor bound them to defend him against menaced dangers. Luther had studied the Bible, and failing to harmonise it with the half Pagan rites and doctrines of Rome, he founded the system of Bibliolatry which has obtained since his day among Protestants. Though we cannot admire the character, we shall not refuse our tribute of gratitude to a man who faced with unflinching bravery untold dangers, with a constancy never excelled, and with results highly advantageous to humanity. His dogmatism and ignorance were largely the fruit of the age in which he lived. We can now afford to laugh at his attack on Copernicus: "People (he contemptuously remarked) gave ear to an upstart astrologer who strove to show that the earth revolves, not the heavens or the firmament, the sun and the moon. Whoever wishes to appear clever must devise some new system which of all systems is of course the very best. This fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy. But Sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and not the earth." It was confidence of this kind, though better founded, that enabled the monk to win against all the organisation and machinery of Rome. For his bravery and success we honor his memory. It was hardly his fault that he retained the vices of a monk, and saw but dimly in the first dawn of science what so few then were able to see with clearer vision.

The Protestant Bishop of Dunedin in a recent address to his Synod said: "It may be within your recollection that last year I devoted a part of my address to you to the consideration of certain possible steps towards the reunion of divided Christendom." In token of his success in this direction, he mentioned that since his return from England in 1879, he had been concerned in the reception of six ministers of other communions into our own." It happened that two of these perverts were probationers for the Wesleyan Ministry, who, according to the statement of the Rev. Joseph Berry, Wesleyan Minister, went over without discharging certain debts of honor incumbent on them. On this point we do not care to dwell. Charges of the kind are often the result of disappointment and bitterness. The striking feature of the case is Bishop Nevill's happy idea and plan of promoting "the reunion of divided Christendom" by appropriating the novitiates of other churches. "It has always been the desire of my heart," the Bishop remarks, "that I might be in some humble way instrumental thereto." The humbleness of the method of promoting the "reunion" goes without saying. If the ingenious Bishop and his coadjutors could only win the whole of the Wesleyan probationers, the Wesleyan Church would undoubtedly be "reunited" out of existence in a single age. And so the plan would be as effectual as it is "humble." On the other hand, if the ranks of the novitiates should be duly recruited after every secession, it is difficult to see any approach to reunion. But if the students for the Ministry are inclined to receive calls from the Church of Henry, the Wesleyan foundations are certainly in some danger. Bishop Nevill may have struck a rich vein.

Bishop Moran says there is no such thing as 'a common Christianity,' and proudly rejects the apparent approach of other denominations towards an alliance on equal terms. That very wonderful exponent of science, Father Le Menant des Chesnais, has been the means of placing the Protestants in a rather invidious position. At his lecture in Wanganui, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and a Free-thinker! occupied the platform. Of course the Free-thinker was there out of sheer good nature and nothing more hurtful to his self-respect. At the conclusion of the missionary's dissertation, an Anglican, in a complimentary speech, exclaimed—"Thank God! we can all stand on a common platform." He meant, probably, all Christians, and was trying to emphasise the necessity of their combining to withstand the steadily advancing flood of Freethought. Cardinal Manning and Bishop Moran are anxious for a Holy Alliance to be inaugurated in the ninth decade of the nineteenth century, but only on the express condition that their Church shall be its supreme head. They recognise no 'common platform' of Christianity, only a 'common platform' against the Infidel. All is fish that come to their net—Anglicans, Wesleyans, Presbyterians. The poor Protestants no longer shriek defiance, but are asking for terms of accommodation. While they are covering before the philosophical boldness and mental honesty of Freethought, Rome is beckoning to them to come and take shelter under her wings. Forgetting the chief corner stone of the Reformation—the right of private judgment—they seem not disinclined to protect themselves against the exercise of that right carried to its logical conclusion, by placing themselves under the leadership of a corporation of priests that insists on mental submission or prostration as a cardinal virtue. The Mormons, who are the most consistent of Bible Christians, will not be refused admission to the 'common platform.' They can be classed with the heretical sects, the product of the Reformation movement, and all together enrolled as Helots in the army of Leo.

Passing Notes.

John Stuart Mill said that his father "looked on religion as the greatest enemy of morality, by setting up a Being as Divine whose character was hateful." Should it be an offence to describe a hateful character in his true colors?

The 'Echo' has been publishing the eloquent lectures of Mr Moncure D. Conway, who has the faculty of placing every subject he touches in a new, true and philosophic garb, which at the same time charms and instructs.

We much regret to notice that our contemporary the 'Echo' is to disappear for the present from the ranks of the press. The 'Echo' has been conducted with conscientious zeal and great ability, and its loss will be severely felt. All Freethinkers will admit it has done a noble work for the cause of Freethought, pointing the way to a wider liberty, and vindicating the cause against misrepresentation, opposition, and all uncharitableness. It is announced that the 'Echo' may shortly be revived as a monthly.

The 'National Reformer' gives the following account of a brawling clergyman:—"The Rev. George Moore, Vicar of Cowley, a minister of the church that teaches 'peace and good will' towards all men, has just been summoned for assaulting an undertaker at a funeral. The Chairman of the Oxford Court of Quarter Sessions said the case was thoroughly discreditable and disgraceful. A brawl between a parishioner and incumbent over the dead body of an infant was too objectionable and too vile to be commented upon."

Miss Ellen Baker, daughter of Sir Samuel Baker, has just committed suicide from religious mania.

The Bishop of Gloucester attributes the absence of working men from Church to "waning interest in doctrine and the desperate struggle for existence." This is equivalent to the confession that the Church of England at least is not the Church of the poor, and that it is hardly the Church of Jesus.

The annual income of the Established Church in England and Wales has been estimated at ten millions, the lowest estimate eight millions. If Freethinkers had only the one-fourth of this gigantic power, how much more might they not accomplish in raising and educating the masses in practical morality!

Bishop Hadfield and the Reverend Mr. Coffey have given two more instances bearing out Herbert Spencer's assertion, that a theological training does not conduce to strict adherence to fact or truth. In their evidence before the Education Committee of the House of Representatives, they both state that the Jews are precluded from availing themselves of the present secular system of education. The same Committee put the question, "Do you believe in secular education?" to Mr. Shrimski, M.H.R., a Jew, to which he emphatically replied, "We do." The public will judge between the evidence of the Jew and the Christian.

The charge made by "Ivo" against the great Bible Society, that it would be better for humanity if it devoted the millions of pounds to improving the homes of the London poor, recalls to memory the following passage from Dickens's "Sketches by Boz": "Gin-drinking is a great vice in England, but wretchedness and dirt are a greater, and until you improve the homes of the poor, or persuade a half-famished wretch not to seek relief in the temporary oblivion of his own misery with the pittance which, divided amongst his family, would furnish a morsel of bread for each, gin-shops will increase in number and splendour. If Temperance Societies would suggest an antidote against hunger, filth, and foul air, or could establish dispensaries for the gratuitous distribution of lather-water, gin palaces would be numbered among the things that were."

A correspondent wishes to have the editor of the FREETHOUGHT REVIEW's opinion about Spiritualism. The editor is here an Agnostic—he does not know—has never had demonstration. He cannot dogmatically say there's nothing in it, for in this he would be arrogantly setting his negative against the experiences of believers. Science is far from having exhausted the secrets of Nature, and the manifestations of Spiritualism may be in accordance with some hidden law. It is certain that many good earnest men of great intelligence, like the late Professor Denton, accepted Spiritualism upon what no doubt appeared to them sufficient evidence. We cannot accept it without satisfactory evidence to ourselves, and having got rid of a great many ancient delusions, are afraid of making the greater mistake of rushing into modern ones without the romance of antiquity to plead in justification.

A debate of interminable duration is proceeding in Auckland on the subject of "Conditional Immortality." The champions appear to have a plentiful supply of the old Christian weapons, and abuse each other in the intervals when they are not hurling texts across the table. The controversialists are named Dunn and Brown, and it is termed the "Dunn-Brown debate." Said Mr. Dunn: "Mr Reid is as far above Mr. Brown as a scholar, and a Christian"—The 'Star' reporter continues the sentence thus—"Here there was a burst of mingled hisses, stamping, groans, and applause, which the Chairman was unable to quell." The report concludes in the following words: "The course of events last night showed conclusively that party feeling ran high between the Orthodox and the Conditionalists, and the rancour and ill-feeling called forth by the discussion suggest the idea that such debates serve rather to excite bigotry than to advance truth." Another illustration only of how much the Christians love one another.

Mr. Bradlaugh spoke very eloquently to his constituents at Northampton in September, when he declared he would take a decisive step to be admitted next session to the full rights of a member of the House of Commons. "The Tories," he said, "have thrown down the gauntlet of illegal force. If I cannot break it by law, I will crumble that gauntlet with stronger fingers than any of which they dream."

The works of Huxley, Tyndall, and Herbert Spencer were recently stopped by the Collector of Customs at Montreal, and confiscated as being "immoral, irreligious, and injurious." The Premier, Sir J. Macdonald, intervened, and restored to the "immoral" literature its freedom. This is an illustration of the tendency on the part of a section of Christians to pronounce all literature which does not meet their approval "indecent" and "immoral." The Protestant Index Expurgatorius differs little from that of Rome, except that it is hypocritical.

Father Le Menant des Chesnais is a French Priest who is winning renown in this colony by unscrupulous attacks on Freethinkers. He gives no authenticated facts about the "sensuality" he imputes. We shall set him a good example in this respect. In the criminal statistics of France (see 'Journal Officiel,' February 14, 1880) there is published a list of condemnations for crimes against public morals from 1871 to 1879. Out of 43,249 lay teachers, 126 were committed for crimes against chastity, and 49 for misdemeanors, making a total of 166. Out of 9,469 religious teachers, all vowed to celibacy, 65 were condemned for crimes against chastity, and 11 for attempted offences of the same kind, making a total of 76 persons. Celibate priests and monks were guilty of more than double the number proportionately of offences against chastity as compared with laymen.

In the last Primer of Edward VI. there is a "Prayer for Landlords" which soon fell into disuse, perhaps from its offensiveness to many who did not recognise in it the economy which "buys in the cheapest and sells in the dearest market." Let the prayer speak: "The earth is Thine, and all that therein is, notwithstanding Thou has given the possession thereof to the children of men. We heartily pray Thee to send Thy Holy Spirit into the hearts of them that possess the grounds and pastures of the earth; that they, remembering themselves to be Thy tenants, may not rack and stretch out the rents of their houses and lands, nor yet take unreasonable fines and incomes, after the manner of covetous worldlings; but so let them out, that the inhabitants thereof may be able to pay the rents, and to live and nourish their families, and to relieve the poor." This prayer, if it had occupied a prominent place in recent times in the Prayer Book, might have shamed the Bench of Bishops into giving a few votes for measures limiting the power to "rack and stretch out the rents."

The series of lectures undertaken in support of "Christian Evidence" in Wanganui has given signs of moral disaster. The second lecture was by the Rev. W. J. Williams, Wesleyan Minister, and was marked by coarseness and slander. He referred to the "great Freethought champion Tom Paine"—though in the first lecture by Mr Gordon Forlong, Paine was claimed to have recanted and found 'the truth' on his death-bed. If Paine is in the heavenly mansion, his future companions in bliss ought to speak of him more respectfully. Colonel Ingersoll was alleged to have signed a petition to the President of the United States, asking permission for "obscene and filthy literature" to be sent through the post. The Secretary of the Wanganui Freethought Association wrote and asked Mr Williams for his authority. The answer was—the Rev. Joseph Cook of Boston, in a lecture delivered in Auckland. The report of the lecture, however, shows that Cook admitted Ingersoll had signed the petition under a misapprehension of its object, and had "withdrawn his name from the movement." This was carefully suppressed by Mr Williams, who thus stands convicted of making an accusation which he must have known—if he had read the report of the lecture on which he

founded his charge—was substantially untrue. Common candor and common honesty required that the qualifying statement should not have been suppressed.

Notes & Queries.

ANSWERS.

Replying to Query No. 5: University College, London, at which I was myself educated, is a great College at which "theological teaching is forbidden."—AGNOSTIC.

I know no better definition of Pantheism than that given in Brande's Dictionary of Science:—"In Metaphysical Theology, the theory which identifies nature, or the *To Pan*, the universe in its totality, with God. This doctrine differs from atheism in the greater distinctness with which it asserts the unity and essential vitality of nature; parts of which all animated beings are. The most ancient Greek philosophers were pantheists in this sense; Anaxagoras being the first who distinctly stated the co-existence with nature of a reasonable creator—'a mind the principle of all things.' In this sense, too, Spinoza may be called a pantheist."—B.

In answer to "Theist's" enquiry concerning the teachings of pantheism, I think the following extract from Mr. Lecky's "Rationalism" is clear and succinct:—"The pantheistic writings that flowed from the school of Averroes, reviving the old Stoical notion of a soul of nature, directed attention to the great problem of the connection between the worlds of matter and mind. The conception of an all-pervading spirit, which 'sleeps in the stone, dreams in the animal, and wakes in the man'; the belief that the hidden vital principle which produces the varied forms of organisation, is but the thrill of the Divine essence that is present in them all—this belief, which had occupied so noble a place among the speculations of antiquity, reappeared."—T.

There is no longer any doubt that hemlock—the Greek *Kōneion*—was that used by the Athenians to poison their criminals. The following symptoms are described in the Phædo of Plato:—"Socrates, having walked about, when he said that his legs were growing heavy, lay down on his back; for the man so directed him. And at the same time he who gave him the poison, taking hold of him, after a short interval examined his feet and legs; and then having pressed his foot hard, he asked if he felt. He said that he did not. After this he pressed his thighs; and thus going higher, he showed us that he was growing cold and stiff. Then Socrates touched himself, and said that when the poison reached his heart he should then depart. But now the parts around the lower belly were almost cold; when, uncovering himself, for he had been covered over, he said (and they were his last words), 'Crito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius; pay it therefore, and do not neglect it.' 'It shall be done,' said Crito, 'but consider whether you have anything else to say.' To this question he gave no reply; but shortly after he gave a convulsive movement, and then the man covered him, and his eyes were fixed; and Crito, perceiving it, closed his mouth and eyes." A case of poisoning with Conium (hemlock) described by Dr. Hughes Bennett in his *Clinical Lectures*, and experiments by Dr. Christison on animals, have established beyond all doubt its identity with the poison given to the great atheist. The action of hyoseyamus (henbane) is essentially distinct, producing delirium like that of delirium tremens. Cardinal Manning has made a mistake.—B.

In perusing your REVIEW of November 1st, I notice the reply of "E.T.," of New Plymouth, in answer to the query of "T." as to whether Dr. W. B. Carpenter acknowledged the truth of the phenomena of Spiritualism, Mesmerism, &c. Carpenter puts down the belief in Table-rapping, Table-turning, &c., as an example of "a variety of aberrant actions bordering on insanity." Quoting from a very able work on Spiritualism, "Undoubtedly Dr. Carpenter considers that his theory of unconscious cerebration explains the phenomena of Table-tipping, Table-rapping, &c." But any one who attempts to account for the manifestations of Spiritualism by so shallow a subterfuge as this, must remember that 99 out of 100 manifestations take place where there is no physical contact, and where there could be no unconscious cerebral action. It was long ago the method resorted to by Dr. John Borce Dods, of the United States—this back-brain theory or the unconscious cerebral

action in table-tipping; but Dr. Dods was compelled to confess his error when he saw things fly through the air that were not within several feet of the medium. We defy Dr. Carpenter or any other scientific man to produce an effect of unconscious cerebration upon an object that is not in contact with any person. These are shallow explanations that serve the scientific world when they do not care to take the time to carry out a thorough investigation, but they do not satisfy those thinking minds who acknowledge the ability of those gentlemen in the various departments of science, knowing there are some things in heaven and earth not dreamed of in their philosophies. Spiritualism is the sublimest fact of the nineteenth century. It either belongs to that class of phenomena that for ever ennobles and elevates humanity, or it proves that the human mind itself is duped by the most sublime of forces. In either case it commands the attention of every enquiring mind, and every fact we can add to the aggregate of its experiences becomes available as the property of humanity.—INVESTIGATOR, Palmerston North.

In answer to "A Rationalist's" enquiry, "If it is true that John Stuart Mill proved David Hume's argument against miracles to be fallacious," I reply that he did nothing of the kind, but merely expressed surprise that "this very plain and harmless proposition, that whatever is contrary to a complete induction is incredible," "should either be accounted a dangerous heresy, or mistaken for a great and recondite truth." The whole of chapter 25, vol. 4, of his System of Logic, headed "Of the Grounds of Disbelief," is devoted to an examination of the arguments commonly used by orthodox writers against Hume, and especially to an exposure of certain fallacious applications of the mathematical "theory of probabilities" to the credibility of testimony, of which Mr. Babbage's "Ninth Bridgewater Treatise" is the best known example. No doubt Hume's argument has occasionally been interpreted to mean that a miracle is in itself impossible, and Mill points out that, granting the existence of an omnipotent Deity, this is a contradiction in terms, but he goes on to say that "Hume has made out that no evidence can prove a miracle to any one who did not previously believe the existence of a being or beings with supernatural power; or who believes himself to have full proof that the character of the being whom he recognises is inconsistent with his having seen fit to interfere on the occasion in question." And he adds that "if we do not already believe in supernatural agencies, no miracle can prove to us their existence." The fact supposed to be miraculous may be proved, "but nothing can ever prove that it is a miracle." It may be due to some unknown natural cause, as indeed it may be even if the existence of the supernatural is admitted. "Religion following in the wake of science, has been compelled to acknowledge the government of the universe as being on the whole carried on by general laws, and not by special interpositions. To whoever holds this belief . . . there is an antecedent improbability in every miracle, which, in order to outweigh it, requires an extraordinary strength of antecedent probability derived from the special circumstances of the case."—R.P.

PINDAR.—The reference 'I sit as God' is in Tennyson's Palace of Art Act:—

"I take possession of man's mind and deed,
I care not what the sects may brawl;
I sit as God, holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

In reply to Query 6 in Number 2, the fundamental principles of Positivism are expressed briefly by Comte himself in his Preface to the 'Catechism of Positive Religion,' as follows: "In the name of the Past and of the Future, the servants of Humanity—both its philosophical and practical servants—come forward to claim as their due the general direction of this world. Their object is, to constitute at length a Providence, in all departments—moral, intellectual, and material. Consequently they exclude, once for all, from political supremacy, all the different servants of God—Catholic, Protestant, or Deist—as being at once behindhand and a cause of disturbance." The maxims "Do to others" and "Love your neighbour as yourself," are abolished as imperfect, and their place taken by the precept "Live for others." Humanity is the real Great Being, suggesting the sacred formula of Positivism:—

Love as our principle,
Order as our basis,
Progress as our end.

—S.S.

QUERIES.

1.—Is it now believed by the best Oriental scholars that the original teaching of Buddhism excludes the idea of a Personal Ruler of the universe?—AGNOSTIC.

2.—Is it true that the stronghold of Buddhism—Thibet—is, by the confession of Christian missionaries themselves, one of the happiest and most truly moral countries on the globe?—AGNOSTIC.

3.—Can any of your readers give a brief and comprehensive view of the Philosophy of Descartes?—H.

4.—Would a Maori scholar give a description of the Maori Atua before the arrival of the Missionaries?—CENTURION.

Progress.

A Freethought Association has been formed at Palmerston North, but we have not received any account of it. We hope to be able to report progress in our next.

The Freethinkers' Convention at Rochester, New York, was a great success. Miss Susan C. Wixon made an eloquent speech on "Woman and the Church." Another lady Miss Amelia U. Colby addressed the assembly. A declaration of principles was adopted which we shall make room for in our next number.

The advance of Freethought depends on the number of Associations, of organizations and individuals not afraid to declare their opinions. Wherever there are six Freethinkers in a place, however small the centre, they should form an Association, and meet in a member's house if they are not strong enough to engage a hall.

Steps have been taken to form a Freethought Association in Auckland, where there must be a great number of Freethinkers. In the very earliest times of the colony the Freethinkers of the Northern Capital had their meetings and organisation. The notice in the present issue of the REVIEW will, we trust, lead to the formation of an Association, with a Lyceum. We might suggest that when it has been arranged among a few to form, a notice in one of the daily papers, inviting the co-operation of friends, would be effectual in strengthening the movement.

At a meeting of the Nelson Freethought Association on Sunday the 18th ult, Mr W. D. Meers gave a most interesting lecture, the subject being "A Review of the Lutheran Commemoration and an analysis of the Bible," showing the impossibility of its having emanated from a Divine source. The lecturer admired Luther as a man of advanced thought, with courage to declare his opinion, but considered that had Luther lived in the nineteenth century, he would not have translated the Bible in its present form. The lecturer was many times applauded during the evening, and several of the audience expressed a wish that the lecture should be printed in pamphlet form.

Lewis Masqueric, of New York, is a veteran in the ranks of Freethought, to which he has devoted life and fortune. The following resolution he sent to the Rochester Convention: "Resolved that Liberal Associations be organized in every township of New York, and that they should be established in other States and Nations—That the meetings be held in the dwellings, shops, barns, sheds &c., of the central places in the townships during the afternoons of every Sunday, and that all earnest Liberals should welcome the missionary friends free of charge for entertainment and for rooms for meetings—That a fund be established to enable lecturers without means to go through each township or county in New York, with printed Constitutions to aid organizing Societies. I hereby tender the Association one hundred dollars, now in bank, to aid the movement." Here is earnestness of a practical kind which ought to find many imitators.

AUCKLAND.

We have much pleasure in publishing the following letter, to which we would direct the special attention of those interested in the Freethought movement:—

SIR,—At the request of several Freethinkers, I beg to announce that a private meeting will take place during Christmas week, with the intention of forming a Freethought Association for Auckland. Those ladies and gentlemen interested will kindly communicate with

Your obedient servant,

W. H. WEBBE,

Hobson Street, Auckland.

November 20th, 1883.

WANGANUI FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

The Secretary, Mr. J. J. Buckrell, has forwarded the following items concerning the work of the Wanganui Freethought Association during the past month:—

SIR,—During the month the meetings held by our Association have been more interesting, if possible, than formerly, the Lectures given under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association affording capital matter for discussion. The points raised at these lectures were ably dealt with by members of our Association at our meetings, and it is perhaps well for the prestige of their lecturers that discussion was not allowed. It is an interesting fact that public advocates of the claims of Christianity invariably substitute low personalities and slander for argument. The truth of this was strongly shown in the recent lectures, when the Rev. Williams blackened the character of Colonel Ingersoll, and Sir William Fox the characters of Mrs. Besant and Charles Bradlaugh. To my mind this mode of endeavouring to establish the truth of anything is very degrading, and is a direct insult to any intelligent mind.

The Rev. Father Le Menant de Chesnais also gave a lecture which was far more liberal and tolerant than the previous ones. I believe the sight of the platform on that occasion would have gladdened the heart of Cardinal Manning—Christians of various denominations forgetting their past differences, and seeking the protecting arm, as it were, of the Catholic Church.

It has been suggested that a Lyceum for children be formed in connection with our Association. The suggestion, I think, is a good one, and I trust before writing to you again it will be an accomplished fact.

Mr. Willis has just executed a Member's Certificate card, which is beautifully got up, and reflects great credit upon the designer.

I remain yours &c.,

J. J. BUCKRELL.

Secretary W.F.A.

November 20, 1883.

CANTERBURY FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.

Under date November 19, the Corresponding Secretary, Mr. W. Pratt, writes:—I have the honor to forward you the following report of the proceedings of the above Association since my last communication:—

On Sunday the 21st October, Mr. T. Parker gave an original address upon Health, which was both interesting and instructive, and it received well merited applause from a large and appreciative audience.

On the 28th instant, Mr. Thomas Williams, in conjunction with a local Artist, provided a good and most mirth-provoking entertainment. The holding capacity of our Hall was taxed to its utmost limits. A dioramic view of some well read scenes and events comically treated, was gradually unrolled to appropriate music, and explained by Mr. W., an apt student of the Artemus Ward school, and his quiet impromptu drolleries, free from vulgarity, kept the large audience in a state of convulsive laughter the entire evening.

On the 4th November, Mr. E. M. Clissold chose the "Bible in schools" question—which still surely agitates the clerical minds—for the subject of his address, which rivetted the attention of the audience for over an hour, and elicited frequent bursts of applause during its delivery.

November 11th and 18th.—On each of these evenings, suitable readings were given—discussions, Shakesperian recitals, music, and singing filling up the programme.

The average attendance of children at the Sunday Lyceum is 50. In addition to the marching, singing, reading, calisthenics, and teachers' addresses upon some suitable and interesting subject, good progress is being made in the theory of music (old notations) under the able direction of Mr. J. M. Thompson.

I also send herewith a copy of a letter (suppressing the name and occupation of the writer) as evidence of the spirit animating the consistent Freethinker, and also as supplying the certificate referred to by Colonel Ingersoll in the following words, "that every individual not perfectly free to act according to his honest convictions, is a certificate of the meanness, and intolerance of the community among which he resides."

DEAR SIR,—Having read in the Freethought Review No. 2, Nov. 1st, 1883, Constitution and Rules suitable for adoption by Freethought Associations, and doubting not but the Christchurch Association is based on similar principles, I have determined to ask

for enrolment in your Association By reason of my peculiar employment I perceive it would be imprudent for me to make any intrusive attack on the superstition of the majority, or even any public avowal of my own belief, nor does it appear to me to be at all necessary, but this much I think is demanded of every man—that he contribute as far as he is able towards the propagandism of the tenets and principles in which he himself believes. I may not take active part in Freethought beyond the limit of my own family of eight individuals, who are growing up, and shall be in positions free to profess and follow their principles when they become men and women, but I presume there is nothing to hinder my being enrolled with Freethinkers, and contributing by quarterly or other subscription towards the cost of Freethought propagandism.

I shall be much obliged if the Secretary will be good enough to send me copy of constitution and by-laws, and communicate the necessary information for acquiring membership.

I remain, &c.,

Wm. Pratt Esq., President

Freethought Association, Christchurch.

Canterbury, Nov. 9th, 1883.

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS.

SIR,—The festive opening of a social Hall in connection with the Christchurch Working Men's Club, which took place on the 25th of last month (October), seems to present a favorable opportunity for reviewing the remarkable progress made by this Club since its inauguration (July 4th, 1880), particulars of which cannot fail to interest your readers, and may stimulate and encourage the formation of similar Clubs in other centres of industry. In response to my application, the courteous Secretary of the above Club has supplied me with the following information:—

The Christchurch Working Men's Club was established July 4th, 1880. There were then twenty-four members. It now numbers over 400, and has a fine quarter-acre section in the centre of the town, with a good substantial building for the Club proper, containing eleven rooms, as follows: Reading room, card room, chess room, library, committee room, social hall, secretary's office, bar, steward's sleeping apartments, &c. The library, though small, is one of the best selected ones in the colony, and embraces the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Chambers' Encyclopaedia, Dictionaries of Languages and of Mechanics, the latest works on Electricity, Chemistry, Carpentry and Joining, Engineering, Mechanics, Medicine, in fact all that is necessary for the artisan and mechanic. A new lecture hall has just been erected at a cost of £700. The size of the hall is 66ft by 33ft, having a stage 30ft wide and 12ft deep, fitted with scenery and a very handsome act-drop, painted by Mr. E. Briggs, the scenic artist, the subject being the Lake of Como. The ceiling of the hall is coved, having two sun-lights and three centre flues for ventilation. The hall is built of the best pressed bricks and plastered throughout; the walls are hollow, and consequently will always be dry. I see the members are to have a Concert and Ball on Thursday next, to celebrate the opening of the new hall. About 350 are expected to be present. The building is the best of its size in New Zealand, and reflects credit on the institution. The total worth of the Club at last balance was £1141 13s, and I think there is every possibility of this being one of the most prominent institutions in Christchurch.

The very marked and most hopeful feature of the present age is the general awakening to intellectual life and mental activity of the industrial classes, which finds expression in combined action, whether of a special or general character, by means of co-operative Societies, Trades Unions, and Clubs for promoting, social, political, and literary culture and advancement. And working men, by their earnestness and self-reliance, are demonstrating their capacity and determination in achieving their own emancipation from the effects of ignorance and thralldom that centuries of oppression and neglect have imposed, and which have been countenanced, encouraged, and perpetuated by a vicious and misleading system of ethics, teaching servility for manliness, and subserviency for independence. It is not strange that while in a general way extolling the virtue of self-reliance the most effectual means should have been taken, by a course of teaching and training especially calculated, by withdrawing men's minds from a consideration of more worldly affairs, and fixing their hopes and trusts upon some unseen hypothetical power, to materially limit, if not banish, its exercise, the result of which has been ignorance, intemperance, degradation, misery, oppression, and want to the great mass of the real wealth producers. And it is only in these latter days, from the spread of education and a cheap press, a large class have so far shaken themselves free from some of the old trammels as to perceive where their true interests lie, and by mutual help and combination have at length acquired the power and

sure incentives to further progress and improvement. It is a long way from a club of working men in the latter end of the nineteenth century to our primordial ancestors of the caves and gravel-drift periods; but it is very clear that if tact, courage, and self-reliance (which is closely allied to the instinct of self-preservation) had then been wanting—if in the then fierce struggle with Nature's rude surroundings for a bare existence, and in the dangerous conflicts with the savage and powerful beasts, their contemporaries, they had relied upon or appealed to any power but their own thought and cunning, and the poor, miserable, insufficient stone weapons which they had rudely contrived—the human link in the chain of creation would doubtlessly have disappeared, in company with many other extinct forms, and we should not be here to-day to speculate upon what might have been, or to assist in extending civilisation in this new country but yesterday in the sole occupation of a savage and cannibal section of our common humanity.—WILLIAM PRATT.

Christchurch, Nov. 19, 1883.

Correspondence.

THE NATIONALISATION OF THE LAND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to bring to the notice of your readers the following extract bearing on Land Nationalisation:—“It is well said, ‘Land is the right basis of an Aristocracy,’ whoever possesses the Land, he, more emphatically than any other is the Governor, Viceregent of the people on the Land. The Land is *mother* of us all; nourishes, shelters, gladdens, lovingly enriches us all; in how many ways, from our first wakening to our last sleep on her blessed mother-bosom, does she, as with blessed mother-arms enfold us all. . . . Men talk of ‘selling’ Land. Land, it is true, like Epic poems and even higher things, in such a trading world, has to be presented in the market for what it will bring, and as we say be ‘sold’; but the notion of ‘selling’ for certain bits of metal, the *land* of Homer, how much more the *Land* of the World-Creator, is a ridiculous impossibility. We buy what is saleable of it: nothing more was ever buyable. Who can or could sell it to us? Properly speaking, the Land belongs to these two: to the Almighty God; and to all His Children of Men that have ever worked well on it, or that ever shall work well on it. No generation of man can or could, with never such solemnity and effort, sell Land on any other principle; it is not the property of any generation, we say, but that of all the past generations that have worked on it, and of all the future generations that shall work on it.” This extract is not, as may be supposed, from the pen of a red-hot follower of Henry George—it is from a work called “Past and Present,” written by a man honored by all Englishmen—his name is THOMAS CARLYLE.

I am, &c.,

E. T.

New Plymouth, November 10th, 1883.

DIFFERENT MASTERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW.

SIR,—Having read with much satisfaction, the “Gems,” in your Journal a few extracts occasionally may, perhaps, prove acceptable.

“What shall I do to obtain possession of Bhodi?” (Knowledge of eternal truth) was the question asked of a Buddhist teacher. “Keep the commandments.”—“What are they?”—“Thou shalt abstain from murder, theft, adultery, and lying,” answered the master.—Pali version, translated by Burnouf.

“Good master, what shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” a man asks of Jesus. “Keep the commandments.”—“Which?”—“Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not bear false witness,” etc.—Matthew, xix, 18.

When told that “Jesus Christ is our Redeemer”! I simply ask—but when cometh the redemption? Would not living up to these Divine injunctions exalt and purify humanity? Are they more Divine, when uttered by one person than another? If it is god-like to return *good for evil*, is the precept less important if uttered by an Indian philosopher, than given by the Nazarine? Proof is being afforded that the Golden Rule was not original with Jesus,—that its birth-place was India, “the head-quarters of Heathendom,” as our Christian preachers would try to convince us. The benighted Hindoos, taught the precept, “return good for evil,” thousands of years before the advent of Christ—before Jehovah's command “An eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth.”

I am, &c.,

J. C. WILKES.

Auckland.

Patti says music belongs to heaven rather than earth. Well, Patti, remarks the Philadelphia Times, if the angels are going to charge us \$5 a seat every time they sing, we are sorry to have been so good, that's all!

Health Notes.

A German doctor recommends bread made with sea water as a wonderful remedy against scrofula and disorders resulting from insufficient nourishment. Sea water ought to stand twelve hours before being used for making dough, in order to free it from impurities. Bread made with it has no unpleasant taste.

It is stated in a letter to the Standard, on the authority of the late Dr. Goolden, that a powerful disinfectant can be made as follows: “Half-a-drachm of nitrate of lead dissolved in one pint or more of boiling water. Two drachms of common salt dissolved in a bucket of water. Pour the two solutions together, and let the sediment subside. A cloth dipped in this solution, and hung up in a room will sweeten a fœtid atmosphere instantaneously, or the solution thrown down a sink water closet, or drain, or over a heap of rubbish or manure, will produce a like result. Clothing worn by a patient with infectious disease, or bed linen, can be put at once into this solution without injury to the material, thus destroying the risk of infection for those persons who wash the clothing. Although it is a strong poison taken internally, it does not injure the skin. A room could be scrubbed with the solution, and would be sweetened at once by the process.”

Miss Juliet Corson, in Harper's Bazaar, treats the bread question, as all other details of cookery, from a practical point of view. She says a good word for aerated bread, made of dough, into which carbonic acid gas is forced, and baked before the bubbles have a chance to escape. The main objection to fresh yeast bread for dyspeptics is that it is soft, and therefore too easily swollen, whereas the “stale” bread requires much mastication. If sufferers who have been avoiding new bread will take the same trouble in chewing it as they are compelled to do with the old, they will get all the advantage of their patience in the more palatable article. The fresh bread eater really takes his digestion with a much larger mass of spongy quality than the stale bread eater, and one which has not been as well broken up by the action of the saliva. If dyspeptics were careful to take the smallest mouthfuls at a time they would find even fresh bread more manageable, with sufficient chewing, than is supposed. In the choice of flours, that made from hard winter wheat is the richest in gluten; in Europe it is used for making the different varieties of macaroni; the brown bread of Europe is made from this wheat ground entire. Soft spring wheat yields a white flour rich in starch. Bran bread may be very irritating to some invalids, so “Graham bread” and the “whole-meal” fashion should only be adopted when it is proved to be satisfactory. The particles of bran may cause an irritation of the alimentary canal and produce diarrhæa. Undoubtedly this irritation or stimulus may be exactly what is needed by some constitutions.

THE GOD WE KNOW.

1. There is a yearning, drawing power,
Diffused all nature through;
In ev'ry place, through ev'ry hour,
In things both old and new.
2. The starry worlds, in systems join,
The dew-drops meet and mate,
The rills unite, the streams combine,
And all things gravitate.
3. The trees extend their giant arms
In love, towards the sun.
The flowers unfold their beautiful charms
To him, till day is done.
4. And heart seeks heart, with fervent beat,
In bird, and beast, and man;
They love, unite, and life repeat;
Through love all life began.
5. Love draws, love binds, and love creates,
Impels us to preserve,
Rules happy homes, and prosp'rous states,
(Gives life, and health, and nerve.
6. And ever thus, throughout all time,
'Throughout th' eternal whole,
The universal force of Love,
Remains the moving soul.

Auckland.

A. Campbell.

MR. W. H. WEBBE, L.A.M., L.S.S.A., &c., Teacher of Pianoforte, Harmonium, Organ, and Harmony.

TERMS:—Elementary Pupils, Two Guineas per Quarter
Advanced „ Three „ „
Harmony (in class), 12 Lessons, One Guinea
„ Single Lessons, 7s 6d.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC, "LYCEUM," HOBSON STREET,
AUCKLAND.

NEW ZEALAND CHRISTMAS CARDS.

NOW READY FOR SENDING HOME BY MAIL.

BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED, AND PRINTED IN COLORS BY
MEANS OF CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHY.

TO BE OBTAINED FROM THE PRINCIPAL BOOK-
SELLERS THROUGHOUT THE COLONY, OR FROM
THE PUBLISHER,

A. D. WILLIS, VICTORIA AVENUE, WANGANUI.

Price: 6d., 9d., and 1s. each, including postage.

TO ADVERTISERS.

THE FREETHOUGHT REVIEW offers special facilities to Advertisers, as it has a large and increasing circulation throughout New Zealand.

TERMS:—3s. PER INCH FOR EACH INSERTION.

Special terms for long periods.

AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF THE FREETHOUGHT
REVIEW.

Foxton ...	J. H. Copp	Napier... ..	R. T. Smythe
Palmerston North	H. Graff	Gisborne F. Parker
" "	W. Park	Auckland ...	A. Campbell
Feilding ...	Jas. Morris	" "	R. E. Finch
Halcombe ...	J. Parkiss	Greymouth ...	W. H. Perkins
Bulls	F. J. Mancell	Reefton ...	S. Schulhof
Marton	H. Humphrey	Hokitika ...	H. S. Wales
Kennedy's ...	M. T. Blackburn	Nelson	W. H. West
Waverley ...	H. F. Mason	Motupipi (Nelson)	J. Harwood
Patea	Jas. Kenworthy	Blenheim ...	W. Tucker
Hawera	Jones & Son	Christchurch ...	R. Shannon
Normanby ...	C. E. Gibson	Timaru	T. Collins
New Plymouth	J. Gilmour	Dunedin	Jos. Braitbwaite
Wellington ...	W. Mackay	" "	S. & W. Mackay
" "	H. Baillee	Invercargill ...	E. R. Weir
Masterton ...	T. E. Price		

Pending further arrangements, W. Pratt, Esq., the President 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.

JULIA.—Lines received.

M.—Your paper on Spiritualism in our next.

W.S.—We fear we have not space, and that a long poem would not be read, however excellent.

A.C.K.—Contributions received with thanks, but, though the sentiment is excellent, they are hardly suitable for our columns.

WELLINGTON FREETHOUGHT ASSOCIATION.—Just received on going to press monthly report, which is unfortunately excluded from our present issue.

C.J.R., Canterbury.—We regret being compelled at the last moment, owing to great press of matter, to hold over "Signs of the Times." It will appear in our next.

DELTA.—No census return has ever given the real number of Freethinkers. It is estimated there are eight millions in the United States. The nominal Christians are a hundred to one of those who pay any regard to the "verities."

S.C.—The late Robert Chambers had for many years the credit of being the author of "Vestiges of Creation," but the authorship is still involved in mystery. The author of "Supernatural Religion" is known to be Professor F. W. Newman, brother of Cardinal Newman.

ARTURUS.—As a "Christian Freethinker," you ask for liberty to think for yourself. This is turning the tables on us in an ingenious manner. As Freethinkers without any qualifying term, we have had to demand for ourselves the "liberty of prophesying"; and we have not been accustomed to find Christians humbly requesting the same indulgence from Freethinkers. When the time comes that all intelligent men will be avowed Freethinkers, we have no doubt the boundaries of freedom will have been enlarged. You cannot do better than persuade your Christian friends to practise the principles of freedom, which will be the best shield and protection for themselves when they have become the minority.

The Freethought Review.

WANGANUI, N.Z., DECEMBER 1, 1883.

CLERICALISM AND SCHOOLS.

THOMAS PAINE thought one good schoolmaster worth considerably more than one hundred priests, and the civilised world since has been fast approaching the opinion of "the rebellious staymaker of Thetbury." And it must have been somewhat the same enlightened and liberal spirit which actuated our legislators in New Zealand when they instituted our present school system of free, compulsory, and secular education. It is one of the most statesmanlike acts which the politicians of this colony can lay claim to, and one which shows that they were determined to keep abreast of our Australian neighbours, and of the foremost and most progressive nations of Europe. "The faith once delivered to the saints," and other old-world rubbish, has thereby become relegated to the limbo of forgetfulness, so far as the authority of Parliament is concerned, and the world will be a better and happier place for the change. As might naturally be expected, the ecclesiastical mind of New Zealand has been sorely exercised in consequence, and the Education Act of 1877 has been greatly reproached by them. So frequent and uproarious have been the complaints of these clerical gentlemen that Parliament recently permitted several representatives of the churches to state their grievances before a committee. The result of this enquiry has been printed by the Government, and nothing could be more effectual than a perusal of this report to show how completely these clergymen failed to prove that they suffer any injustice at the hands of the State in the present mode adopted to educate the children of the State. There was an utter nonconformity of opinion, of course, among these gentlemen, and the bewildering character of the claims put forward by Bishop Hadfield, Bishop Redwood, and the Rev. Mr. Bavin would be alone sufficient to dismay the most generous and intrepid politician in this colony, and that is saying a great deal. What an ecclesiastical trio to legislate for! Why the occupant of a seat on the Ministerial benches, who might consider himself capable so to amend the Education Act as to satisfy all parties, would at once be considered a political Jonah, and his colleagues would throw him overboard for a great deal longer than three days. Although, at first sight, it may appear both liberal and wise that the Government should have allowed the representative expression of opinion in the manner named, it cannot be urged that these clergymen could claim it as a right by virtue of their office. Fortunately, we have no State church; and unfortunately, too, although we are a heavily-taxed people, the national exchequer does not receive a single penny upon the enormous property held by the churches in this colony. The inverse of the proposition—"no taxation without representation"—should be made to apply to clergymen and their churches as well as to others. The sole reason urged why these clergymen should have been heard before a Parliamentary Committee against the Education Act, that they are recognised in the clerical office under the "Registration of Marriages Act," does indeed seem a pitiful one, and is the last vestige, and that but a partial one, of the past adulterous connexion between Church and State. What right have these ecclesiastics, then, other than as citizens, to oppose the school system of the colony? In the case of Bishop Redwood, we have the authority of Mr. J. Sheehan, M.H.R., that the communicants of his church would be willing to send their children to the State schools if the priests would allow them. The Right Rev. Bishop is, of course, a true disciple of one who did more than any other of the Roman Catholic Church to dispel the dark ignorance of the middle ages, and therefore speaks with some little authority. But, unfortunately, faithful followers of Ignatius Loyola, to use the words of Thomas Carlyle, "think they can best serve God by taking the devil into partner-

"ship." The result is that the very country in which this order of men started their first school (Germany) had to expel them in the name of liberty and good government; aye, and even in Catholic France that fiery fiend of freedom, Leon Gambetta, had to give them notice to quit. Legislators of New Zealand, beware! and let experience teach you wisdom. Nor does it come with good grace from Bishop Hadfield, as the colonial representative of the Church of England. So inefficiently did this church employ its vast wealth—the richest corporation in the world!—in the education of the people during three hundred years, that the Education Act of 1870 had to be passed to make public provision for what it had so long neglected to accomplish. And as to the Rev. Mr. Bavin, who spoke as the President of the Wesleyan Church in this colony, he but represented a very harmless sect in the matter of education—

"Who never did a foolish thing
Because they never did a wise one."

This gentleman, however, gave his views before the committee in a far more liberal and well-intentioned manner than either of the other clerics. But if the Wesleyans only desire what the Rev. Mr. Bavin urged, then there is no earthly reason why they should not avail themselves of present opportunities. It is very evident that if the Education Act becomes altered to the desires of these clerics, we shall then suffer all the evils of sectarian strife, which is such a drawback to the efficient working of the School Board system in England.

Y.

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

One of the most singular changes in theological opinion is taking place in the Church of England itself, with a rapidity which must seriously endanger her pretensions to be considered an authoritative guide as to the meaning of that supernaturally inspired book, which is the basis of the Christian religion. If there was one doctrine which more than any other has always been held to be part and parcel of the Christian faith, it is that of the doctrine of eternal punishment. As lately as 1864, the Archbishop of Canterbury stated in his Pastoral Letter dealing with the celebrated Privy Council judgment in the case of "Essays and Reviews," that "the conclusions at which I arrived on the subject of the charge against Mr. Wilson relating to the everlasting punishment of the wicked did not result from any doubt in my mind as to the doctrine of the Church of England upon this point. This doctrine I consider to be clearly indicated in the Communion Service, the Burial Service, the Apostles Creed, and the Athanasian Creed; to the effect that the reward of the righteous is everlasting life, and the punishment of the wicked everlasting death; nor do I conceive that the Church has any more sure warrant for belief in the eternal happiness of the saved than it has for belief in the eternal suffering of the lost." Yet, at least a year before this official utterance of the mind of the Church of England upon this momentous question, Canon Farrar had "indicated" in the article "Hell" in "Smith's Dictionary of the Bible" that he held a totally contrary opinion, and in 1876 preached in Westminster Abbey his five famous sermons subsequently published with notes in a book called "Eternal Hope." Perhaps the most remarkable feature connected with this subject is, that not only has Canon Farrar incurred no penalties for his boldness, but that intellectual and cultivated as well as fashionable audiences whom he addressed, accepted his views calmly and without surprise, a sufficient proof of the direction in which the lay mind at least had been travelling. In 1878 no less than fourteen learned and reverend gentlemen of whom several were doctors of divinity, discussed the question in the 'Contemporary Review' with the result that no two of them thought precisely alike as to the exact meaning of the "inspired record," while on the main question their opinions were about equally divided. The fact is that the truth of the doctrine of eternal punishment cannot be decided by minute scholarship at all. The application of this sort of criticism to the Bible is merely playing the

theological game according to rule. When we have arrived at the precise meaning of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, with its equivalents *Inferi* and *Hades*, when erudition has done its best to prove that every text bearing on this subject, conveyed a very different meaning to St. Augustin or to Calvin, to that which it conveys to a modern Englishman, we have at the most formed some vague idea of what men's opinions were in a state of civilization different from our own. From the heart of things we are as far removed as ever. To us the important question is not what men think but what actually is. Modern science and modern morality stand aghast at the picture presented by a theology derived from barbarous times, showing the merciless tyrant of the universe condemning the vast majority of mankind to endless torments. Even our professional theologians are at length forced by the modern spirit to "read between the lines," for natural selection controls belief as much as it does animal and vegetable life. Beliefs incompatible with existing knowledge die out, and the "survival of the fittest" obtains no less in the moral than in the physical world. Just as Mr. Lecky argues, that the belief in witchcraft disappeared, not so much because the evidence on which it rested was proved to be false, as because other beliefs had taken its place, so is the belief in eternal punishment disappearing in a similar manner and from similar causes. How the doctrine of the Atonement can survive the doctrine of eternal punishment would puzzle even those ingenious scholars who, in the Revised Version of the New Testament, have evaded so many difficulties by substituting Hades for Hell.

R. P.

RELIGION STATISTICS.

The following from Whitaker's Almanack is the estimated numbers of religious denominations amongst English-speaking communities throughout the world:—

Episcopalians	20,000,000
Methodists of all descriptions	15,000,000
Roman Catholics	14,000,000
Presbyterians of all descriptions	10,250,000
Baptists of all descriptions	8,000,000
Congregationalists	6,000,000
Unitarians	1,000,000
Freethinkers	1,000,000
Minor Religious Sects	1,750,000
Of no particular Religion	8,500,000
English-speaking population	85,500,000

MODERN MIRACLES,

The Catholics have a Holy Shrine at Caravaggio, the church of which has been visited this year by more than one hundred thousand pilgrims. The Virgin Mary appears there. An eye-witness, writing to the London Court Journal, says:—

"Each day, at noon, the vision of the Virgin Mary rises from a dark recess behind one of the pillars of the aisle, and the struggles of the thousands of eager devotees to catch a glimpse of the holy apparition are most extraordinary. The shrieks and screams of the victims who are thrown down and trampled on amid the confusion are appalling. Those who cannot approach near enough to the shrine, throw handfuls of copper coin against the iron grating which encloses it, and the shock of the metallic sound amid the deep, monotonous intoning of the priests, seems to produce a kind of frenzy in some of the visitors, who rush wildly about, shrieking, and tearing their hair, and without mercy treading on the limbs of the paralytic patients outstretched upon the pavement. The simple village church, which, in ordinary times, is considered full to overflowing when only containing a few hundreds, is made at this festival to hold not less than ten thousand individuals, who, although suffocating, perspiring, trembling beneath the heat and vapor, yet find strength enough to 'howl' forth their invocations."

"It was curious to observe the sudden excitement of the people on the Piazza Maggiore each time the long, dismal howling of the pilgrims within the church announced the appearance of the misty vapor that arises within the shrine just before the appearance of the Virgin Mary. In an instant all the people fall to the ground, and shriek forth the litany composed for the occasion. The crippled patients fall back upon the stones, the mugs and drinking vessels are left to float upon the surface of the fountain, and then a few moments' silence succeeds the din, and all is calm again."

Comment would be superfluous.

We are pleased to learn that arrangements are likely to be made for the establishment of a Freethought Association in New Plymouth on the basis of the Wanganui one.

Reviews.

The Religious Revolution of the Nineteenth Century: From the French, by Edgar Quinet. London: Trubner & Co., 1881.

Edgar Quinet may rightly be termed the Apostle of modern Politico-religious thought in France. The work is "an explanation and a defence of the principles and policy of the French Government with reference to the Roman Church in France." Quinet was one of the victims of the Coup d'Etat of '51, and was for nineteen years an exile from France. It has been said that *The principle of Liberty* and *the Importance of the Individual* were the two leading ideas of Quinet's philosophy. Recognising that "the foster-mother of all the tyrannies in Western Europe, was the Roman Catholic Church," he devoted his talents to the solution of the problem, how this great power for evil was to be overcome. Quinet advises the same means of destruction as the Church employed against the Pagans, and justifies the exercise of the whole of the Power of the State in crushing a religion which seeks to undermine and destroy the principles of civil liberty on which the State should rest. Reciting the interdicts of Theodosius against the Pagan worship, he would use them, with necessary changes, against the Roman Church. He maintains that the application of the *lex talionis* is justified from the fact that "as far as experience yet goes, there has been no time nor place in which the Catholic Church has been allowed to remain with unfettered hands by the cradle of Liberty, but what in a short time Liberty has been found stifled in its swaddling-clothes." He applies the Catholic law therefore to the Catholic Church. What Quinet recommended, has been faithfully carried out in the expulsion of the religious orders from France, and his philosophy is animating the dominant school of French statesman to-day as well as the special school of Gambetta. His doctrine is that if Catholicism be not crushed in countries where it is the religion of the masses, it will extinguish Liberty. Nor can education destroy a baneful religion when that religion has command of the education. To understand the meaning of the hostility of French and Italian statesman towards the Romish Church, one cannot do better than read this little work, so full of epigrammatic force and eloquence. Quinet died in 1875.

Maximus in Minimis.

A religious paper asks, "Why do flies bite so much worse in church than elsewhere?" and the N. Y. Commercial Advertiser says it is simply because they find "so much worse" to bite.

Sydney Smith said to his vestry, in reference to a block pavement proposed to be built around St. Paul's: "All you have to do, gentlemen, is to put your heads together, and the thing is done."

A Boston clergyman chose for his text last Sunday "It is not good that man should be alone." At the close of the sermon every unmarried female in the congregation touchingly responded, "Ah, men!"

The Biblical Recorder says that a young colored preacher in a recent sermon, wishing to display his learning, would occasionally use the word "Curriculum," and as often as he used it some one of the sisters said "Glory!"

A political view of the situation:—"A pretty time to come home, John," said a young bride, pointing to the clock, which stood at 1.10 a.m., "and you just married, too. Ugh!" "Mary, my dear," said John, pompously, and somewhat thickly in speech, "I am a Liberal, you are evidently Conservative. Let us neither now nor henceforth discuss politics; it will make home unhappy."—London Society.

"Ah, me!" sighed a South Side Christian the other day, while discussing heavenly affairs in the midst of his family, "Rev. Mr. Thompson has gone off on Beecherism. He is a good preacher, too, and I am sorry for this. 'Well, I've always thought he and Mrs. Jones were entirely too intimate and that it would end in something like that,' said the dear wife, as she left the room to see about supper.

Hop Lee, a Chinese laundryman of this city, went to church last Sunday. While engaged in his devotions, some one entered his laundry and carried off £350. Hop Lee does not feel encouraged to go to church again.

An Italian newspaper announces that, in consequence of the secularization of a convent, the effects will be sold at auction, and adds, with malice prepense, that the auctioneer values a weeping Madonna, with boiler, spirit lamp, and tubing in working order, at £7, but would accept an offer of eighty cents for the bones of St. Peter, sixty cents for those of St. Anastasius, and forty cents for those of St. Clement.

Puck's recipe for an Orthodox sermon: Take fifty-five minutes of nasal tenderness of tone, one thought from the "First Principles" of Mr. Spencer, and two from his "Psychology," and three allusions to the "survival of the fittest." Stir gently till the whole begins to simmer. Then add rapidly the Orthodox conception of good, seasoned beforehand with savage raillery, and two sliced compliments to the newspapers. Then cook up a tablespoonful of evolution until smooth, not brown, and strain into a Unitarian saucepan. Garnish the whole with prayers to the unknowable, and serve.

A priest was hearing confession, and a boy came to him and said he had a bad sin in his mind.—"Well, me good boy, come on wid it," said his reverence.—"Augh, thin, your reverence, I do be always sayin, 'Be the Holy Father!'"—"You do?—that's very bad, me boy.—Now how often do you be saying that?"—"Begor! more than forty times a day, your riverence."—"Go home now," said the priest, "and get your sister to make you a bag and hang it round your neck, and every time you say 'Be the Holy Father,' drop a little stone in it, and come to me this day week."—That day week his reverence was as usual in his box, and he heard an awful noise in the church, so he looked out and saw his penitent dragging a sack.—"Tady Mulloy," says he, "what do you mane by such conduct as that in church?"—"Shure, your riverence," says the fellow, "thone is all 'Be the Holy Fathers,' an' the rest of un's outside on the dray!"

A Salvationist residing not far from Hetton, wishing to become a captain in the "Army" applied to the district officer for the appointment. The following conversation is said to have taken place:—Officer: "You wish to become a captain, do you?" Candidate: "Yes, sor." Officer: "Have you been a public performer?" Candidate: "Wey, noo, aa can play varry canny on the tambourine and concertina." Officer: "No, no; I mean have you ever performed in the ring?" Candidate: "Wey, aa've played kiss in the ring mony a time." Officer: "No, you mistake me—I mean the prize ring. Have you ever been a pugilist, or have you ever been to Pentonville or Millbank?" Candidate: "No; but aa've been to Sunderland mony a time." Officer: "Well but I mean have you ever been transported?" Candidate: "No; but aa should have been." Officer: "Yes, yes; no doubt of it." Officer (pointing to a dark room): "Well, this is where we make the captains. Just step in there and I'll lock the door while I raise the devil, and if you stand before his Satanic Majesty a quarter of an hour I'll make a captain of you." Candidate: "No, no, divvent; aa have ne backers here to show us fair play; an' aa've said that much about the beggor ahint his back, aa divvent want to meet hime fyace te fyace!"—Newcastle Chronicle.

REVOLUTION.

Truth is shining, earth's awaking;
Freedom rising, chains are breaking;
Tyrants on their thrones are quaking,
For their reign is nearly done.
Knowledge coming, error leaving;
Pen and press their past retrieving,
Swiftly fly their shuttles, weaving
All the nations into one.

Priests and creeds are retroceding;
Men the guide within are heeding;
Every one his garden weeding,
Headlong bigotry is hurled.
Love upspringing, hate is dying;
Men rejoicing, knaves are sighing;
Deadly curses fast are flying
From a renovated world.

William Denton.

Science Notes.

John Riley and Patrick Manley, while excavating on Edward G. McCleary's farm in Watervliet Center, N.Y., recently, unearthed a mastodon at a depth of about thirty feet. Some of the bones will be taken to the Geographical Museum in Albany. A large smooth stone of reddish color, and shaped like a heart, was found near the ribs.

It would seem from experiments made by M. Gustav Hauser, that the sense of smell in insects is seated in the antennæ. Glass rods moistened with oil of turpentine or acetic acid were presented to a great number of insects, causing them to turn sharply round; but when their antennæ had been previously removed, the same insects gave no signs of perception, even when they were placed quite close to the strong smelling substances. Blow-flies, from which the third joint of the antennæ had been cut away, were no longer attracted by putrid meat, though they flew about as before. Enveloping the antennæ with a thin coating of paraffin produced the same effect.

One of the most singular features in the scenery of the Territory of Idaho, in the United States, is the occurrence of dark rocky chasms, into which large streams suddenly disappear. These fissures are old lava channels, produced by the outside of the molten mass cooling and forming a tube, through which the still molten lava passes till exhausted,—the roof of which having at some point fallen in, presents an opening into which the river plunges and is lost. At one place on the banks of the Snake, one of the rivers reappears, gushing from a cleft high up in the basaltic walls, from which it leaps into the Snake River below. Where this stream has its origin, or at what point it is swallowed up, remains a mystery. The lava conduits are also frequently found packed with ice masses which never entirely melt.

At the last meeting of the British Association, a paper was read on the so-called "missing link" "Krao." "Krao," we are told, possesses no ape-like characteristics inherited from the family of which mankind is a cadet branch. She is a very human child, born of slave parents of normal type. She has one or two ape-like tricks, easily taught, such as bending her hands and feet backwards; and using her cheeks as a pouch for food. There is no abnormal appearance of a tail, and the foot is such as any woman might be proud of. The only peculiarity is the hairy skin, from which she seems to be accepted, by the professors, as possibly a "throw back," a capricious reversion to an earlier type. Dr. Garson thought that in all probability primeval man was covered with hair; and that a return to that condition was one of those freaks of nature less common than is often supposed. Modern physiologists go further, and say that the embryonic history of man includes periods when he is undistinguishable from fish, fowl, and quadruped, successively thus comprising in a short space a summary of the evolution of ages.

CHILDLIKE TRUST.

A storm swept over sea and land;
Harvest and bloom are beaten low,
And many a treasure on the strand
Marks the wild track with loss and woe.

Where in the solitude it searched
A child hath hung his one harp-string;
The blast to melody is touched,
Prelude to blessings it would bring.

O heart, my heart, when clouds of fate
Shroud thy fair sky and on thee beat,
With childlike trust to live and wait,
Win from each storm its music sweet.

M. D. Conway.

In his trial sermon before a Boston church a preacher said: "The children of Israel were repeatedly on the point of manumission, but at the very last moment the Lord afflicted Pharaoh with auricular ossification." He received a unanimous call.—TROY TIMES.

Gems.

Act towards others as you desire them to act toward you.—ISOCRATES.

We should do good to our enemy and make him our friend.—CERBULUS.

Do nothing which will occasion grief to yourself or others.—CLEANTHES.

A calamity is always the better borne for not being previously dwelt upon.—MME BUNSEN.

Four things come not back—the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, the neglected opportunity.—HAZLITT.

No man ever did a designed injury to another, but at the same time did a much greater injury to himself.—BISHOP BUTLER.

Remember that every person, however low, has rights and feelings. In all contentions, let peace be rather your object than triumph. Value triumph only as the means of peace.—SYDNEY SMITH.

No one loves to tell a tale of scandal, except to him that loves to hear it; learn, then, to check and rebuke the detracting tongue, by showing that you do not listen to it with pleasure.—JEROME.

To talk about eternal torment is not difficult, to press belief in it may be possible even for good-natured people, but to think it, to bring it home to reason or heart, is what the stoutest cannot do.—FROTHINGHAM.

The wrongs we inflict upon our neighbors follow us like our shadow. Love of his fellow-creatures should be the ruling principle of the just man in all his works, for that weighs the most in the celestial balance.—CHRISHNA.

Friendship is reciprocal benevolence which inclines each individual to be as anxious for another's welfare as his own. It is better to be poor than illiterate; for the poor only want money, the illiterate lack the distinguishing characteristics of human nature.—ARISTIPPUS.

Use moderation. Believe not all. Be equally mindful of friends present and absent. Cherish thy parents. What thou bestowest on thy parents thou shalt receive from thy children in thy old age. That which thou blamest in another do not thyself to thy neighbour.—THALES.

Watch thyself with all diligence and hold thyself in as the spirited steed is held in by its owner. Master thyself; so mayest thou teach others, and easily tame them, after having tamed thyself; for self is hardest to tame. The taint worse than all others is ignorance.—BUDDHA.

The grandest of empires is to rule one's self. There is nothing grand that is not also calm. Who has most? He who desires least. Throw away all anxiety about life and make it pleasant. If you hear that others have spoken ill of you, consider whether you have not done the same about many people. How much better to heal an injury than to avenge it. I shall take the world as my country. Guard vigorously that social tie which binds man to man and establishes the rights common to the human race. Life is warfare, and those who climb up and down steep paths and go through dangerous enterprises are the brave men and the leaders in the camp: but to rest basely at the cost of others' labors is to be a coward, safe because despised.—SENECA.

Does the song of the herald-angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," express the exaltation and the yearning of a human soul, or does it describe an optical and acoustic fact—a visible host and an audible song? If the former, the exaltation and the yearning are man's imperishable possession—a ferment [*sic*] long confined to individuals, but which may by and by become the leaven of the race. If the latter, then belief in the entire transaction is wrecked by non-fulfilment. Look to the East, at the present moment [1877], as a comment on the promise of peace on earth and good will toward men. That promise is a dream dissolved by the experience of eighteen centuries. But though the mechanical theory of a vocal heavenly multitude proves untenable, the immortal song and the feelings it expresses are still ours, to be incorporated, let us hope, in purer and less shadowy forms in the poetry, philosophy and practice of the future.—TYNDALL ON MAN'S SOUL.

Whatever tends to preserve and ameliorate mankind is good; and whatever tends to the destruction and deterioration thereof is evil.—VOLNEY.

Faithfulness and sincerity are the highest qualities. When you transgress do not fear to return. Learn the past and you will know the future. Not to correct our faults is to commit new ones. Be rigid to yourself and gentle to others, and you will have no enemies.—CONFUCIUS.

The only true aristocracy, probably, is that of kindness. Intellect without heart is infinitely cruel; as cruel as wealth without sense of justice; as cruel as muscle without mercy. So that, after all, the real aristocracy must be that of goodness where the intellect is directed by the heart.—COL. INGERSOLL.

Do not that to your neighbor which you would not wish to take from him. Speak ill of no one, not even your enemies. Whatsoever you do, do it well. Never boast of your plaus before they are executed, for fear of the ridicule and disappointment to which you will be exposed if you do not accomplish them.—PIRACUS.

Justice is the virtue of treating every one according to his deserts. Justice includes the observance of the laws for the preservation of society and the discharge of obligations and debts between equals. Learning is the best provision against old age. There is just as much difference between the wise and the foolish as there is between the living and the dead.—ARISTOTLE.

It is criminal not only to do mischief, but to wish it. He who subdues his passions is more heroic than he who vanquishes an enemy. Do nothing shameful though you are alone. It is the office of prudence, where it is possible, to prevent injuries; but where this cannot be done a wise regard to our tranquility will prevent us from avenging them.—DEMOCRITUS.

There is no better way to true glory than to endeavor to be good rather than seem so. Only the wise man can be brave, just, and temperate. Vice of every kind is ignorance. If a man is cowardly it is because he does not rightly appreciate the importance of life and death. He thinks death an evil and flees from it. If he were wise he would know that death is a good thing, or at least an indifferent one, and therefore would not shun it.—SOCRATES.

I deny the existence of such a being as the Hebrew Jehovah, or Calvin's God, who walked and talked with men; who destroyed them purposely with flood and fire, earthquake and plague; who turned a woman into salt; made an ass speak; killed fifty thousand and seventy men for looking into the ark; stopped the sun and moon in order that a Hebrew "fillibuster" might slaughter the Canaanites; saved a drowning prophet in a whale's belly; and who makes "decrees" for the salvation of some, and allows others to inhabit an eternal hell.—R. C. ADAMS.

Theology is now making its voyage from the iceberg-breeding regions of the far north, where the pinnacles and the towers, and the mountains of wondrous gleaming glory, sail slowly every day to their destruction, melting at the bottom by the warmth of the water of the Gulf Stream, melting at the top by the shining of the sun. They turn over every once in a while, groaning as they turn, and by-and-by, rotted, they sink and are mixed with the ocean flood. So the old systems of theology, on which honest men, good men, expended their lives, are bound to dissolution.—H. W. BEECHER.

Nothing can ever spring from nothing, nor can anything ever return to nothing. The universe always existed and will always remain, for there is nothing into which it can be changed. There is nothing in nature, nor can anything be conceived, besides body and space. Body is that which possesses the properties of bulk, figure, resistance and gravity. It is this alone which can touch or be touched. Space is the region where body is or may be occupied by body, and which affords an opportunity of moving freely. Besides these—body and space—no third nature can be conceived; for such a nature must either have bulk or solidity, or want them, that is, it must either be body or space. The universe consisting of body and space, is infinite, for it has no limits. Bodies are infinite in multitude. Space is infinite in magnitude. The universe is to be conceived as immovable, since beyond it there is no place into which it can move; and as eternal and immutable, since it is neither liable to increase nor decrease, to production nor decay.—EPICURUS.

CAN A MASON CONSISTENTLY BE A FREETHINKER?

(BY M.M.)

On a perusal of your first number (which please allow me to say is an exceedingly creditable production), I find that you shortly discuss the question, "Can a Mason be consistently a member of a Freethought Association." With your permission I will consider the question at somewhat greater length. I may first premise that to be a member of such an association you have simply to have your name enrolled, pay the subscription fee, and get your member's ticket. I may not be quite right here, but at any rate you have not to subscribe to any particular form or dogma; of that I am certain. I take it that among the members of a Freethought Association you may find Deists, Theists, Agnostics, Spiritualists, Positivists, Unitarians, and many other shades of religious thought. In fact, any line of thought on that or cognate subjects. I have purposely left out Atheists because I cannot conceive the idea of an Atheist in the sense in which the term is popularly employed, viz: one who denies God.

But now let us enquire what is required of a Freemason holding a certificate from either of the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland, or Scotland. Each of these ruling bodies has a Book of Constitutions for the guidance of their members, each differing from the other in minor details, but agreeing in all essentials. Centuries before Grand Lodges came into existence Masons were guided more by oral tradition than by written law, but *some* of the old written laws or regulations have been preserved and are bound up with the aforesaid Constitutions. They are denominated "Ancient Charges." These latter are recognized by all legitimate Grand Lodges all over the world. The first article "Concerning God and religion" it is necessary to quote from. It says: "A Mason is obliged by his tenure to obey the moral law, and if he rightly understand the art he will never be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine. He of all men should best understand that God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh to the heart. A Mason is therefore particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience. Let a man's religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the Order provided he believes in the glorious architect of heaven and earth, and practise the sacred duties of morality. Masons unite with the virtuous of every persuasion in the firm and pleasing bond of fraternal love; they are taught to view the errors of mankind with compassion, and to strive by the purity of their own conduct to demonstrate the superior excellence of the faith they may profess."

I am aware that some men who belong to the Fraternity will tell you that, to be admitted a Mason you must believe in a personal God and a resurrection from death. Such is the force of personal feeling and sectarian prejudice when allowed to retain their influence over the mind unmolested even of a member of this the most unsectarian Institution that ever existed, —an Institution that may well be termed a Church without a dogma. In the above extract God is translated as "the glorious architect of heaven and earth," and, afterwards as the neophyte is initiated into the various mysteries, or degrees, The Great Architect of the Universe —The Grand Geometrician of the Universe—The Most High—The Grand Overseer of the Universe—The I AM THAT I AM. What a breadth of view! what a grandeur of conception is here implied! Can any thinking, reasoning being suppose for a moment that herein is depicted a man-god,—God in the likeness of puny man, however so many times the form may be extended? Truly we should view the reflections of such a mind "with compassion." And yet to the cleverest men amongst us, to the greatest minds of this or any past age, what do these designations, separate or combined, imply? What meaning do they convey? Simply the inscrutable mystery of the UNKNOWN, the Isis whose mysterious veil has never yet been drawn aside, before whom the wisest and the best of mortals have ever stood appalled. Indeed it is only perhaps a few of those engaged in the work of Nature's great revelations, whose hearts have throbbled with the fearful joy of hope expectant, that the Great Mystery may ever be solved by the finite mind of man.

A Mason's professed work is the research of "the hidden mysteries of nature and science"; and well may it be said that he of all men should best understand that God seeth

not as man seeth," for if he is a true Mason he of all men should have the grandest conception of Infinite Power and Wisdom that earthly mortals may hope to aspire to. The dogma of a personal God is not in Masonry, or of it, and even one of the "profane or outer world" can see, from the nature of the work on which we are employed, that such cannot be. "The use made of the Bible in Masonic ceremonies as well as in Masonic ritual," can only be variously estimated according to the various lines of thought of different members of the Institution. For example: The Christian neophyte, in taking his OB, accepts the Book as a whole, Old and New Testament combined; the Jew accepts only the Old; the Mahomedan accepts neither, but will be bound by the Koran; the Bhuddist requires the Rig Veda, and the Parsee would (I am credibly informed by an eye witness) consider himself insulted by having the Sacred Volume presented to him, and will only give *his sacred word of honor*. If this is so (and I believe I am fully warranted in considering these things as facts) the "vanishing point" of the Bible in the Lodge, to a Christian believer, is at the invitation of his Jewish brother, and the conception of God to all these men, according to the faith in which they have been educated, must be different, until they each and all attain that grander conception which belongs to Masonry. That many Masons do not attain to that conception I grant, but the why and the wherefore of this we cannot now stop to enquire. That the Old Testament is necessary and of importance in a Lodge will I think be granted by Masons of all shades of opinions, not as an authority for dogma, but as a legendary, historical reference, without which the symbolism and traditional history of Masoury would lose its vitality, and perhaps after a time its form and character. Neither do I see any great objection to its being termed the Sacred Volume, for sacred undoubtedly it is to our Jewish brethren (and a Mason should ever be ready to respect the religious feelings of others). Sacred may it almost be said to be to those who no longer look on it as inspired, notwithstanding the martyrdoms which it is said to have been the cause of, and which after all must be considered as the result of the human intellect on all sides being sunk in the slough of Ignorance. Sacred on account of its being the teacher through all the Ages of one God pure and indivisible, and who, though it clothed at times with powerful and terrible human attributes for good or evil, affords us sometimes a glimpse of that great JENOVAH which in this present day we yet stand in awe and wonder of—that inscrutable mystery at which we stand appalled.

That Masonic ritual makes use of the Bible, need not surprise us when we consider that, as regards the history of Masonry, the ritual we now possess is such an elaboration of that used by Masons of the olden time that could they re-visit the scenes of their former labors, and again assemble within the walls of those grand old edifices which stand as monuments of their surpassing skill, they would stand transfixed with wonder, if not with admiration. Primitive rituals of the Craft were short and concise. It was when the speculative element was introduced into Masonry that ritual was enlarged and elaborated, and of course partook of the particular line of thought of the individuals performing the work, not perhaps designedly so, but from the natural bent of ideas. But the dogma of a resurrection to life eternal can only have been imported into Freemasonry by those brethren who were anxious to christianize the Institution, for if it may be said to be shadowed forth anywhere, it is in the legend of the third degree. This degree, called the "Master Mason," is comparatively of modern date, for we are informed "In ancient times no brother, however skilled in the craft, was called a Master Mason until he had been elected into the chair of a Lodge." We know it was not in use before the year 1716, for up to that period all Masons not having been elected to the chair of a Lodge were called Fellow-Crafts. Its authorship is generally imputed to Drs. Anderson and Desaguliers; and Oliver says "the legend was evidently borrowed from certain tales taken out of the Jewish Targums which were published in London A.D. 1715, from a manuscript in the University Library at Cambridge." And Dr. Anderson himself said in a work published A.D. 1730, that it "seems to allude to a beautiful passage in the sixth book of Virgil's *Æneid*." For the different interpretations, paganistic, political, and biblical, put on this legend by the Craft at the time of its first appearance, I must refer your readers to "Oliver's Freemason's Treasury," pages 295-6-7. But that it *has* an impressive occult

significance and teaching worthy of so beautiful an allegory, I think no true Mason should be ignorant of.

The Grand Lodge of England is now busy with the revision of their Book of Constitutions, a work forced on them by the advance of the times. On the completion of that, it would redound much to their common-sense were they to revise, and in some measure reconstruct, the ritual. This can be done without sweeping away any of the real landmarks of the Order, or destroying its beautiful allegory, and they would at least gain credit for consistency from those Indian Princes and other eastern gentlemen who have been initiated under their rule, and for whom certain references in the ritual can have no meaning. Then the ancient and honorable order, venerable with hoary antiquity, instead of posing before the world simply as a charity organisation, to be used in some instances as a masked phalanx of support for Church and State, may in altered circumstances retain more of the bright intellects that fall out of her ranks year by year, to be supplemented by those who never rise to a conception of the nature and objects of the Institution. Then would the East indeed be a place of Light and Wisdom, and the rays of the Sun of Knowledge would shine strong and radiant on all within the circle of its influence. Then might it be truly said that "A Mason's Lodge is a Mason's Church."

A DARWINIAN REVERIE.

One evening when he was more than commonly out of sorts, after sitting some time in moody silence, he roused himself, and taking up a book that lay on her table, he glanced at its title and turned over the leaves. It happened by ill luck to be a volume of Darwin that Mrs. Lee had just borrowed from the library of Congress. "Do you understand this sort of thing?" asked the Senator abruptly, in a tone that suggested a sneer.—"Not very well," replied Mrs. Lee, rather curtly.—"Why do you want to understand it?" persisted the Senator. "What good will it do you?"—"Perhaps it will teach us to be Modest," answered Madeleine, quite equal to the occasion.—"Because it says we descend from monkeys?" rejoined the Senator, roughly. "Do you think you are descended from monkeys?"—"Why not?" said Madeleine.—"Why not?" repeated Radcliffe, laughing harshly. "I don't like the connection. Do you mean to introduce your distant relatives into society?"—"They would bring more amusement into it than most of its present members," rejoined Mrs. Lee, with a gentle smile that threatened mischief.—But Radcliffe would not be warned; on the contrary, the only effect of Mrs. Lee's defiance was to exasperate his ill temper, and whenever he lost his temper he became senatorial and Websterian. "Such books," he said, "disgrace our civilisation; they degrade and stultify our divine nature; they are only suited for Asiatic despotisms where men are reduced to the level of brutes; that they should be accepted by a man like Baron Jacobi, I can understand; he and his masters have nothing to do in the world but to trample on human rights. Mr. Carrington, of course, would approve those ideas; he believes in the divine doctrine of flogging negroes; but that you, who profess philanthropy and free principles, should go with them, is astonishing; it is incredible; it is unworthy of you."—"You are very hard on the monkeys," replied Madeleine, rather sternly, when the Senator's oration was concluded. "The monkeys never did you any harm; they are not in public life; they are not even voters; if they were, you would be enthusiastic about their intelligence and virtue. After all we ought to be grateful to them, for what would men do in this melancholy world if they had not inherited gaiety from the monkeys—as well as oratory."—Extract from "Democracy," an American novel.

BRUNO'S THEORY.

"Struck with the problem of the generation and maintenance of organisms, and duly pondering it, he came to the conclusion that Nature does not imitate the technic of man. The infinity of forms under which matter appears were not imposed upon it by an external artificer; by its own intrinsic force and virtue it brings these forms forth. Matter is not the mere naked empty capacity which philosophers have pictured her to be, but the universal mother who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb."—TYNDALL.

WILLIAM DENTON

From a sketch by D. M. Bennett, in his work 'The World's Sages, Thinkers and Reformers,' we gather the following particulars concerning Professor Denton, who died of fever in New Guinea:—

"This courageous geologist and Radical," says his biographer, "was born at Darlington, Durham county, England, on the 8th January, 1823. William's father was quite poor, and ignorant of all scholarship, but a true, sturdy, industrious woolcomber, and had to support a family of four children on 10s a week. At the age of eight William Denton was placed at a day school, in which the tutor gave experiments with a galvanic battery, besides giving "practical lessons in phrenology and electricity." At this stage of his career William commenced his studies in geology, reading closely on the subject, and preparing, hammer in hand, for future researches. "When eleven years old he was hired by a carrier of Darlington for a year at half crown a week. After serving his time in the carrier's shop, he was employed 3 months by a Methodist minister in a grocery store. This situation was highly satisfactory to his father, who was a firm Methodist. William, one day, however, detected his master giving false weight, by placing a piece of lead on the scale. He told his father, who went to "the Methodist minister grocer," and after denouncing his dishonesty, took the boy away from his service. After leaving the grocery business, William was sent to the Darlington Grammar School, where he acquired the rudiments of Greek and Latin. At the age of 14 he was apprenticed to Timothy Hackworth, at Shildon, to learn the trade of machinist. Working during the day he did not waste his leisure hours at night, and read the works of Lyell, attended scientific lectures, and became a member of the Mechanics' Institute. He also pursued his geological studies in a railway tunnel near Shildon. At 16 he joined the Methodist Association Church, and within a year after commenced lecturing on Temperance and giving addresses on religion in Sunday School. He soon became an adept at speaking, taking part in theological debates and addressing meetings in farm kitchens or on the open green. At length he got hold of Combe's "Constitution of Man." The minister said to him, "William, that is a very dangerous book," and proceeded to prove the statement by citing Combe's illustration of the two boats. Denton, however, continued studying Combe, and found the illustration of the boats true, and straightway began to manifest heresy in his speeches. He was now 19, and still with Timothy Hackworth. One day his master told him to go to a brewery to repair some machinery. This would conflict with his radical temperance principles, and he spoke to Hackworth about having conscientious scruples. Hackworth sneered at "conscience," and sent Denton away. He next tried teaching in a school at Newport. He also lectured on Temperance, and preached frequently in London. He often used to walk 12 miles to Cardiff on Saturday, preach three times on Sunday and walk back on Monday morning in time for school. At this time he was one of the most active fighters for Temperance in England. He continued lecturing on Temperance, Mesmerism, and Radicalism, until he made many enemies, and was dismissed from the school. He had to sell his books to prevent starvation, and emigrated to America. He landed in Philadelphia in 1848. His life in the United States continued to be a series of struggles. During the latter years of his life he continued to lecture and write principally in New England. A series of his discourses are published. He has established a reputation as a geologist, and was reckoned amongst the ablest advocates of Spiritualism.

THE MORNING STAR.

We have the morning star,
O foolish people, O kings!
With us the daysprings are,
Even all the fresh daysprings;
For us, and with us, all the multitudes of things.

O sorrowing hearts of slaves,
We heard you beat from far!
We bring the light that saves,
We bring the morning star;
Freedom's good things we bring you, whence all good things are.

The strife of things and beauty,
The fire and light adored,
Truth and life-lightening duty,
Love without crown or sword,
That by his might and godhead makes man god and lord.

These have we, these are ours,
That no priests give, nor kings;
The honey of all these flowers,
The heart of all these springs;
Ours, for where freedom lives not, there live no good things.

Rise, ere the dawn be risen;
Come, and be all souls fed;
From field, and street, and prison,
Come for the feast is spread;
Live, for the truth is living; wake, for the night is dead.

A. C. Swinburne.

Some person with a turn for dismal statistics has computed that the chances of being murdered in Rome and England are as 237 to 1.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE'S THEOLOGY.

The following passages are from an article by Florence Nightingale in Fraser's Magazine in 1873. The article is headed "A 'Note' of Interrogation," and its aim is to interrogate whether the greater portion of the religious teaching of the present day is not misdirected, on the ground that it fails to inform men what is the true character of God:—

Is it not a simple impertinence for preachers and schoolmasters, literally *ex cathedra*, to be always inculcating and laying down what they call the commands of God, and never telling us what the God is who commands, often indeed representing Him as worse than a devil? "Because I am God and not man." But you represent Him as something far below man, worse than the worst man, the worst Eastern tyrant that was ever heard of.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Ah, from the mouth of him who said these words, they are indeed the "first and greatest commandment." He who went about doing good, who called all of us who are weary and heavy laden to come to Him—who towards His cruel torturers and murderers felt nothing but "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do"—He might well say, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," for he needed not to explain to us His character.

But—and what a descent is here!—for us to lay it down as a *command* to love the Lord God! Alas! poor mankind might easily answer:—"I can't love because I am ordered—least of all can I love One who seems to make me miserable here to torture me hereafter. Show me that He is good, that He is lovable, and I shall love him without being told."

But does any preacher show us this? He may say that God is good, but he shows him to be very bad. He may say that God is "Love," but he shows him to be *hate*, worse than any hate of man. As the Persian poet says—"If God punishes me for doing evil by doing me evil, how is he better than I?" And it is hard to answer. For certainly the worst man would hardly torture his enemy, if he could, for ever. And unless God has a scheme that every man is to be saved for ever, it is hard to say in what He is not worse than man. For all good men would save others if they could.

A poor man, dying in a workhouse, said to his nurse after having seen his clergyman—"It does seem hard to have suffered so much here, only to go to everlasting torments hereafter." Schopenhauer has the feeling, which must be that of half the world, been so simply expressed.

How then is it possible to teach either that God is "Love" or that God commands any duty; unless God has a plan for bringing each and all of us to perfection? How can we work at all if there be no such a plan? It is not enough that God should not be willing to punish everlastingly—to show that He is good. He must be accomplishing a *design*,—invariable and without a shadow of turning,—the desire to save every one of us everlastingly. There must be no giving the go by to searching out, as the very first condition of religion, whether there be such a plan.

Take *e.g.*, some of the most familiar instances of mistakes, arising from not understanding the character of God.

That God regards suffering as good in itself, that He pays well those who inflict it on themselves, is the basis on which was founded a very large polity in the Roman Catholic Church.

That God has so let go man as to become essentially wicked, for which he has instituted no other system of help except letting Another pay the penalty for man, was the foundation of another theory of religion sometimes called "Evangelical."

That this barbarising doctrine does not make man barbarous, at least not very, can only be because men are so much better than their God.

It is of no use saying that God is just, unless we define what justice is. In all Christian times people have said that "God is just," and have credited Him with an injustice such as transcends all human injustice; that it is possible to conceive, *e.g.*, that He condemns to "everlasting fire," for not being baptised, little babies who certainly could not get themselves baptised. What is the most horrible and wholesale infanticide compared with this? Not even that of the Frenchwoman farmer of babies who poured vitriol instead of milk down the babies' throats, and dipped their heads in boiling water. For she certainly did not mean to do this for eternity.

But would God be the more just, even though He does not damn the little babies, if He does not *save* them—if He has no scheme by which the little babies, who were never asked whether they would come into this world or not, are to be brought to perfect happiness?

Also, there is extraordinary confusion about what happiness is. Whole books have been written to prove that there is a very equal distribution of happiness all over the world in all classes and conditions of men. "Paupers are accustomed to pauperism, rich people are accustomed to emmi, savages to savagedom. All these have their pleasures." This is the argument. Do people who argue thus ever ask themselves for one moment what happiness is? Or do they really call the excitement of gin, the beastly momentary pleasure of sensuality, which alone diversify the miserable lives of hundreds of thousands of London poor, happiness? Or do they call the dead lock of carriages in Hyde Park, which minister to the emmi of the rich, happiness?

And well may they write to prove that every man in London, taking the average, has £10,000 a year, as that every man, taking the average, has happiness.

What a poor idea of happiness this is!

Is not the happiness of God, so far as we can conceive it, the only type of what happiness is? And why has God happiness? Not because He can do what He likes; but because what He likes is good.

A REPLY TO THE "PROOF OF THE DIVINE ORIGIN AND TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY."

(BY Y.)

[The editor in regretting he has not space for the whole of this admirable essay, accepts the entire responsibility for its condensation. The parts left out are more or less necessary to the continuity of the argument, and if there is any break in the sense it must be ascribed to the abbreviation which has been forced upon us. The paper was delivered at the Wanganui Freethought Association by one of its members in reply to an address by a Christian.]

The author of "Christianity before Christ" says: "The most important lesson deducible from all the religions systems commemorated in history is that all religious conceptions—whether in the shape of doctrine, precept, prophecy, prayer, religious devotion, or a belief in miracles—are a spontaneous outgrowth of the moral and religious elements of the human mind. To assign them to a higher origin is to ignore the development of modern science and insult the highest intelligence of the age." And I believe we can nowhere find this law of mental evolution more fully and scientifically explained than in "The Course of Positive Philosophy," by M. Auguste Comte. This brilliant French writer, who has been styled the Bacon of the Nineteenth Century, set forth that the intelligence of mankind passes successively through three distinct stages—the supernatural, the metaphysical, and the positive. The first he considers the lowest, or infantile, state of human society; the second, or metaphysical stage, he represents to be reject all supernatural interpositions, to bring in the idea of abstract forces, and to personify them under the one agency of Nature; and the third, or positive period, precludes all search into causes by applying itself to known phenomena, by ascertaining their relations and laws, and so to classify and generalize them. And the outcome of the recognition of this principle of intellectual progress is the important and interesting question, "What relation does Christianity bear to the ever advancing thought of mankind?" "Men's thoughts broaden with the widening of the sun," says Tennyson, and so what has been called Christianity at one period in modern history has not been acknowledged as such at another. Indeed, I experience no small difficulty to clearly define what Christianity really is. If I consider it as an ethical system which teaches the pursuit of justice, love, and truth, I am at once confronted with the fact that these virtues were enjoined and practised more or less in all ages, and must continue to exist, I believe, when Christianity takes its place with the many supernatural systems which preceded it. And if I refer to the many creeds and confessions into which the ecclesiastical world is divided to ascertain what Christianity really is, then I am perfectly bewildered, and there appears no standard of appeal whereby to decide the truth.

It is quite possible that, now-a-days, Christian evidence lecturers do not clench their arguments by reference to the Bible. Yet we certainly might have been told whether or not Christianity had its beginning at the so-called Fall of Man; that in consequence of this transgression man was cursed and a Redeemer was necessary and promised; that this Deliverer should be the offspring of the woman—that he should bruise the serpent's head and that it should bruise his heel; that holy men of old prophesied in every age concerning him the Saviour; that the long succession of the sacrificial rites of the Jews were the types, or antetypes, of the one great sacrifice on Mount Calvary, by which the grand scheme was accomplished which reconciled God and man. It would be uncharitable to suppose that the lecturer only thought these beliefs belonged to the sermon, which is protected by the pulpit and unsafe to advance where free discussion is allowed. He did not, however, once mention these essential particulars to prove the divine origin and truth of Christianity, and in like manner he steered clear of the doctrines of the incarnation, atonement, justification by faith, &c., with the simple assertion that it was not necessary to prove their truth! The result was that he proved nothing, except this—that language is sometimes meant to hide your meaning and not to express it. It was urged throughout that man is a free agent. My answer to this is short, simple, and conclusive—Man cannot be other than God intended him to be, and therefore cannot be free, that is, without control. It was urged that all religious service has for its object the reconciliation of God and man. Here it was assumed that Christianity effected this. But with it there is attached a most palpable contradiction. If, through the death of Christ, all sinners were reconciled to God, is it not unreasonable to suppose that there exists a future state of punishment? How can the reconciliation have taken place if, in what is called the great and final Judgment Day, God is to say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

It was urged as a proof of the divine origin and truth of Christianity that it is the only religion which is founded on miracles. Of course, this must be so, if Christianity is from the beginning. But I do not admit this assumption, although I should feel sorry for the foundation of Christianity if I did. Why, instead of it being true that Christianity is the only religion which is founded on miracles, the fact is that all religions have been instituted upon the alleged truth of mystery, miracle, and prophecy.

"It is the priest's strong chain
And support of the divinity."

Moses, Elijah, and Elisha are said to have performed miracles, and whilst the Jews have never disputed the miracles said to have been performed by Jesus, they have none the less rejected the claims set forth for his divinity. In regard to miracles, I think the utilitarian argument has far more force in it than any other method adopted

for their rejection. The question should be, not can miracles be proved possible, but of what use are they? There is nothing gained by reading and believing that, once upon a time, 5000 people were fed with five loaves and two small fishes, whilst now there are thousands in the world dying of slow and actual starvation. Mr. Holyoake says the English Poor Law Commissioners would make a king of the man who could perform that miracle now. And they might, I think, if they can find him. But let us for a moment or two examine the assertion that Christianity is the only religion which is founded on miracles. There is historic proof that all the miraculous incidents related in the history of Jesus Christ as a proof of his divinity were related long previously in connection with the religion and philosophy of ancient India. Owing to the difficulties attached to, and our European ignorance of, the Asiatic languages, it is only within a comparatively recent period that we have learnt anything at all reliable concerning Oriental religions. And competent authorities assert that the more that is ascertained the more certain appears the fact that both Judaism and Christianity originated in India. Take the story of the serpent, for instance, and the origin of evil. Mr. Kersey Graves quotes the very highest authorities in exposition of the serpent tradition. He points out that Christna, of India, is represented on some very ancient sculptures and stone monuments, with his heel on the head of a serpent. And, also, that 1200 years before the Christian era Christna was held to be really God incarnate, and there appears such a great resemblance between the Hindoo life of Christna and the New Testament life of Christ, that some able critics have in consequence doubted whether Jesus Christ is a historic character. More especially as Essene Buddhism existed among the Jews. In his very interesting and instructive work, Mr. Graves gives no less than 346 historical parallels in the recorded lives of Christna and Christ. It is related of Christna that he performed miracles—healed the sick, cured lepers, restored the deaf the dumb and the blind, raised the dead, and cast out devils. In fact, the history of all ancient Oriental religions entirely destroys the claims for the supernatural origin of Christianity. It is the one common thing throughout them all to relate the miraculous birth of their Gods, of their advent being foretold to the world by inspired prophets, and of their having, at last, retired to heaven. . . . Then we were invited to consider the ethical value of Christianity; that Jesus "spoke as never man spoke before." Is it not absolutely ridiculous that Jesus was the first who, by precept and example, taught the principles of charity, of compassion, of fraternal feelings. Why Strauss tells, and history confirms the assertion, that "five centuries before the Christian era, Buddhism had already inculcated gentleness and compassion, not only towards men but towards all living creatures. Among the Jews themselves, the Rabbi Hillel had already taught, a generation before Christ, that the commandment of loving one's neighbour as one's self, constituted the very essence of the law. To assist even our enemies was a maxim of the Stoics in Jesus' time. And but one generation later, although without doubt independently of him, and strictly in keeping with the principles of the Stoic school, Epictetus called all men brothers, "inasmuch as all were the children of God." It appears to me that the moral teachings of Jesus are mostly rendered impracticable through extremism. The Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, seems to me far more cogent and practical than the Sermon on the Mount, the greatest beauty of the latter being poetical. Yet I might quote sayings from the teachings of Buddha, Confucius, and the Greek and Roman sages of antiquity equal to anything Jesus is reported to have said in this respect.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF AMERICA

The Rev. Father Gleeson, of San Francisco is reported in 'The Catholic Citizen' to have spoken as follows:—

"The public school system has lost to the Catholic Church 180,000,000 of souls! . . . A large majority of Catholic children educated in the public schools have drifted into indifferentism, if not into infidelity, and that is what they desire. Those Catholics, then, with this knowledge staring them full in the face, who send their children to the public schools, with their own good schools at their doors, are traitors to their Church and a dishonor to the faith which they profess. . . . We have Catholics now-a-days who are ever trying to pare down the objectionable points of our faith. They love to be called Liberal Catholics; they are forever trying to explain away what non-Catholics most object to.—Theoretically speaking they believe in miracles, but shrug their shoulders when you ask them to believe the miracle of Lourdes. Veneration of relics, the doctrine of indulgences, and of purgatory they rarely allude to. They never want to hear a sermon on exclusive salvation. They would not be seen wearing a scapular, and don't know how to say the beads. They have no devotion to the saints, and don't care to know even the meaning of devotion to the Sacred Heart. If the Pope sounds a note of warning to any people, they say he is meddling in politics. If the Archbishop disapproves of a Society, or condemns an abuse, those very Liberal Catholics shake their very Liberal heads, and say they don't see anything wrong in it. The Church is not progressive enough for them."

This is strong testimony to the value of secular education, and an unanswerable reason against State endowments to the sects.

"Don't tell me 'you won't,'" said an Elmira father to his little daughter of six summers. "Well, but papa," said the artless little one, "what shall I say when I mean I won't?"

DIRECT IMPORTER.
R. A. ADAMS,
 WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DRAPER, TAILOR,
 AND DRESSMAKER.
P A T E A.

EDWIN J. KING,

TEACHER of Pianoforte, Violin, Cornopean, etc., etc. Music provided for BALLS, PARTIES, PICNICS, etc., in town or country.

BRASS OR STRING BANDS.

E. J. King and Sons' Unrivalled Quadrille Band.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC:
 ST. HILL STREET, WANGANUI.

JAMES THAIN & CO.,

IRON & HARDWARE MERCHANTS.

IMPORTERS OF—

American Goods, Agricultural Implements, Brushware, Lampware, Paints, Oils, &c.

Licensed Dealers under Arms Act.

VICTORIA AVENUE,
 TAUPO QUAY, AND ST. HILL STREET,
 WANGANUI.

WILLIAM MITCHELL,

CARTER & FORWARDING AGENT,
 St. Hill Street, Wanganui.

Country Orders promptly attended to.

FREEMAN R. JACKSON,

AUCTIONEER & STOCK SALESMAN,
 ANGANUI AND HAWERA.

agent for Wellington steamers—HUIA and TUI.

„ Northern S.S. Co.'s steamers—
 ROWENA and MACGREGOR.

VICTORIA AVENUE.

SPRING AND SUMMER SEASONS,
 1883-4.

J. PAUL

HAS the pleasure of advising his numerous customers that he is now opening up his first shipment of

SPRING AND SUMMER GOODS,

imported direct from the leading manufacturers of the United Kingdom and France, and bought under exceptionally favorable terms. The whole of this large shipment will be marked very low, and intending purchasers will find that, for

ECONOMY AND VARIETY
 my establishment is second to none in the colony.

J. PAUL,

DRAPER AND CLOTHIER,
 Victoria Avenue.

A. M. LOASBY & CO.,
 (Successors to Wakefield & Hogg),
 WHOLESALE AND RETAIL CHEMISTS
 AND DRUGGIST,
 VICTORIA AVENUE, WANGANUI.

A. M. LOASBY & CO. respectfully solicit the patronage of the inhabitants of Wanganui and surrounding districts. The stock has been largely increased, and, where consistent with supplying good articles, prices have been materially diminished.

Orders or Prescriptions by Post or Telegraph forwarded by first chance, without exception.

Surgical Dentistry (including Sealing, Stopping, and Extracting) a specialty.

W. H. NETTLESHIP,

(Late King & Co.),

MANUFACTURING JEWELLER.

GOLD AND SILVER SMITH.

Electro-plater and Gilder. Masonic Jeweller and Medalist.

VICTORIA AVENUE, WANGANUI.

GEORGE CALMAN,

TEA MERCHANT AND GENERAL PROVISION DEALER.

VICTORIA AVENUE,

WANGANUI.

ENCOURAGE NEW ZEALAND INDUSTRIES.

THE NEW ZEALAND CLOTHING FACTORY employs upwards of 700 hands.

23 TWENTY-THREE BRANCHES:
 now opened in New Zealand.

WANGANUI BRANCH:

CORNER OF VICTORIA AVENUE
 AND RIDGWAY STREET.

WM. AHLFELD MANAGER.

S H A R P E,

HAVING left the Corner, has removed to New Premises next Bank of New South Wales, Wanganui, where he will be happy to meet all his customers in future.

J. COBURN,

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL FRUITERER,

VICTORIA AVENUE, WANGANUI.

Fresh Oysters by every Auckland steamer.

THE CORNER BOOT SHOP.

A I N S W O R T H ' S .
 EVERYBODY KNOWS IT.

JAS. GRAHAM,

PLUMBER, GASFITTER, TINSMITH,
 Etc., Etc.

RIDGWAY STREET, WANGANUI.

TOM FERRY,

LICENSED VICTUALLER.

RESIDENCE:

OCCIDENTAL HOTEL,
 WANGANUI.

JOHN KENNEDY,

HOTELKEEPER AND GENERAL

STOREKEEPER,

K E N N E D Y ' S .

J. W. McDUFF,

COACH-BUILDER AND IMPORTER,
 WANGANUI.

BEING a thorough, practical tradesman, having a full staff of first-class mechanics, and using only the best materials, customers can rely on getting Sound, Reliable Work, with a Superior Finish.

S. MANSON,

GENERAL STOREKEEPER,

RECLAIMED LAND,

W A N G A N U I ,
 (And at Murimoto.)

W. SPRIGGENS,

BOOT AND SHOE MANUFACTURER,

VICTORIA AVENUE, WANGANUI,

Importer of every description of Ladies', Gents', and Children's Boots and Shoes.

DONALD ROSS,

CABINET-MAKER & UPHOLSTERER,

TAUPO QUAY, WANGANUI.

A large stock of

CARPETS AND FURNITURE

OF EVERY DESCRIPTION

ALWAYS ON HAND.

JAMES LAIRD

HAS much pleasure in announcing to Country Settlers that his NEW SEEDS, suitable for the season, are now to hand in fine condition—comprising Turnip, Rape, Mustard, Grass Seed, &c. All seeds carefully packed and forwarded first opportunity. Price Lists sent free, and every information on application.

JAMES LAIRD,

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL SEEDSMAN,
 Taupo Quay, Wanganui.