

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.