

THE
National Secular Society's
ALMANACK
 FOR 1880,

EDITED BY
CHARLES BRADLAUGH & ANNIE BESANT.

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THE

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4	1 0 0	0 6 8	0 1 6½	0 0 2½
5	1 5 0	0 8 4	0 1 11	0 0 3¼
6	1 10 0	0 10 0	0 2 3½	0 0 4
7	1 15 0	0 11 8	0 2 8½	0 0 4 ½
8	2 0 0	0 13 4	0 3 0½	0 0 5½
9	2 5 0	0 15 0	0 3 5½	0 0 6
10	2 10 0	0 16 8	0 3 10	0 0 6½
11	2 15 0	0 18 4	0 4 2½	0 0 7¼
12	3 0 0	0 1 0	0 4 7½	0 0 8
13	3 5 0	0 1 8	0 4 11½	0 0 8½
14	3 10 0	0 1 3 4	0 5 4½	0 0 9½
15	3 15 0	0 1 5 0	0 5 9	0 0 10½
16	4 0 0	0 1 6 8	0 6 1½	0 0 11½
17	4 5 0	0 1 8 4	0 6 6½	0 0 11¾
18	4 10 0	0 1 10 0	0 6 10	0 0 11¾
19	4 15 0	0 1 11 8	0 7 3½	0 0 1 0½
20	5 0 0	0 1 13 4	0 7 8½	0 0 1 1¼
25	6 5 0	0 2 1 8	0 9 7½	0 0 1 4½
30	7 10 0	0 2 10 0	0 11 6½	0 0 1 7½
35	8 15 0	0 2 18 4	0 13 5½	0 0 1 11
40	10 0 0	0 3 6 8	0 15 4½	0 0 2 ¼
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3	0 5	0 5½	0 7½	0 9¾
4	0 6½	0 7¼	0 10½	1 1¼
5	0 8	0 9¼	1 1	1 4¼
6	0 9¾	0 11¼	1 3¼	1 7½
7	0 11½	1 1¼	1 6¼	1 11
8	1 1	1 3¾	1 9	2 2¼
9	1 2¾	1 5½	1 11½	2 5½
10	1 4½	1 7½	2 2½	2 8¾
20	2 8¾	3 3¾	4 4½	5 5¾
25	3 5	4 1¼	5 5½	6 10
30	4 1¼	4 11	6 6¾	8 2½
40	5 5¾	6 6¾	8 9	10 11½
50	6 10	8 2½	10 11½	13 8¼
100	13 8¼	16 5¼	21 11	27 4¼
200	27 4¼	32 10½	43 10	54 9½

JANUARY.—31 DAYS.

1	TH	B. Telesio, of Cosenza, Materialist, d. 1588. Quakers of Philadelphia emancipated their slaves, 1788. John Frost, Chartist, sentenced to death, 1840. Maria Edgeworth b. 1767.
2	F	R. Franklin convicted of seditious libel, 1731. <i>Athenæum</i> established, 1828. Slaves emancipated in United States, 1863.
3	S	Cicero b. B.C. 106. The five Members impeached, 1642.
4	S	R. Ascham d. 1568. Peace declared between America and England, 1784.
5	M	J. B. Say b. 1767.
6	TU	BEN. FRANKLIN, FREETHINKER, b. 1706. Daillé, French Controversialist, b. 1594.
7	W	Fénélon d. 1715. Book of Common Prayer established, 1549.
8	TH	Baskerville, Freethinker, buried in his own garden, d. 1755. Galileo discovered Jupiter's satellites, 1610. Viscount Amberley, Freethinker, d. 1876.
9	F	First Shot from Fort Sumter, 1861. Bombardment of Paris by the Germans, 1871. Napoleon III. d. 1873. Sorcery made a capital offence by James I., 1603.
10	S	Dr. Birkbeck b. 1776. Penny post established, 1840.
11	S	Carlile sentenced for publishing <i>Prompter</i> , 1831. J. Hampden, at Great Kimble, refused to pay ship money, 1635.
12	M	A. COMTE b. 1798. A. Tennyson b. 1810. E. Burke b. 1730. Alva d. 1582. Lavater d. 1801. Mary Smith executed for witchcraft, 1616.
13	TU	Margaret transported for 14 years for advocating reform, 1794. <i>Daily Universal Register</i> , afterwards <i>Times</i> , published, 1785.
14	W	J. P. Brissot, Girondist, b. 1754. E. Halley d. 1742. Sir T. Lawrence d. 1830. Walcot d. 1819. Statue to Grattan unveiled in Dublin, 1876.
15	TH	C. Southwell sentenced for blasphemy, 1842. British Museum opened, 1759. Molière b. 1622.
16	F	Gibbon, Freethinker, d. 1794. Union sanctioned between England and Scotland, 1707.
17	S	P. Maréchal, Materialist, b. 1803. Mozart b. 1756.
18	S	Mealmaker transported for 14 years for advocating reform, 1798. Montesquieu b. 1689. Paganini b. 1784.
19	M	COPERNICUS b. 1472. Jane Carlile tried for publishing Paine's works, 1821. J. Watt b. 1736.
20	TU	First House of Commons met, 1265. Garrick d. 1789. W. Tunbridge tried for publishing "Principles of Nature," 1823. Wieland d. 1813.
21	W	D'Holbach, Materialist, d. 1789. Louis XVI. guillotined, 1793. Hallam d. 1859.
22	TH	Bacon b. 1561. Gassendi b. 1592. Byron b. 1788.
23	F	First Royal Exchange opened, 1570. French Commercial Treaty signed, 1860.
24	S	Matilda Roalfe imprisoned for blasphemy, 1844. Beaumarchais b. 1732.
25	S	ERNEST JONES b. 1819. R. Burns b. 1759. Hogg b. 1772.
26	M	Ernest Jones d. 1869. Dr. Jenner d. 1823.
27	TU	Schelling, Pantheist, b. 1775. Strauss, Freethinker, b. 1808. Woolston, Deist, d. 1733. Fichte d. 1814. Three men hanged at Bristol for rioting, 1832. T. Paterson sentenced for profane placards, 1843.
28	W	Helvetius, Atheist, b. 1715. Anti-Corn Law riots in London, 1815. Francis Deak, Hungarian Patriot, d. 1876.
29	TH	T. PAINE, Deist, b. 1737. Raspail b. 1794. Woolner's "Black Dwarf" published, 1817. Lamennais d. 1854. C. Bradlaugh and A. Besant before the Court of Appeal, 1878.
30	F	Charles I. beheaded, 1649. W. S. Landor, "Pagan," b. 1775. First lifeboat launched, 1790.
31	S	Ben Jonson b. 1574. Argument in Court of Appeal concluded, judgment reserved.

THE people of England, renowned all over the world for their great virtue and discipline, can they yet suffer an idiot without courage, without sense, nay, without ambition, to have dominion in a country of liberty?—*Henry Vane.*

FEBRUARY.—29 DAYS.

1	S	Mary Woolstonecraft Shelley d. 1851. J. Lemprière d. 1793. J. P. Kemble b. 1757. E. Truelove tried for Malthusianism, 1878.
2	M	First Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, 1801. Ledru Rollin b. 1808. Jury in Truelove case disagreed.
3	TU	Volney b. 1757. Wilkes expelled from Parliament for publishing No. 45 of the <i>North Briton</i> , 1769.
4	W	Shaftesbury, Freethinker, d. 1713.
5	TH	Galvani d. 1799. Sir R. Peel b. 1788. Garibaldi embarked to free Sicily and Naples, 1860.
6	F	JEREMY BENTHAM, UTILITARIAN, b. 1747. House of Lords abolished, 1649. A. Trevelyan, Freethinker, d. 1878.
7	S	Monarchy abolished, 1649. C. Dickens b. 1812. Royal Decree suppressing the two first volumes of French Encyclopædia as hostile to royalty and religion, 1752. Rev. R. Taylor sentenced for blasphemous libel, 1828.
8	S	S. Butler b. 1612. T. Chubb, Deist, d. 1746. R. Burton b. 1576. Crabbe d. 1832.
9	M	Roman Republic proclaimed, 1849. G. Vallée, Deist, burned for heresy, 1574.
10	TU	RICHARD CARLILE, FREETHINKER, b. 1790. Montesquieu d. 1755. Galileo imprisoned by Inquisition, 1632. Privy Council abolished the devil, 1876.
11	W	W. Shenstone d. 1763. Great reform meeting in Trafalgar Square, 1867. London University founded, 1826.
12	TH	C. DARWIN b. 1809. C. Bradlaugh and A. Besant reversed judgment against them, 1878.
13	F	H. Hunt d. 1835. C. J. Fox d. 1806. Sir R. Knightley and others fined and imprisoned for pamphlet attacking Church and Parliament, 1588.
14	S	MALTHUS b. 1766. Sir W. Blackstone d. 1780.
15	S	GALILEO b. 1564. Trial of Warren Hastings began, 1788.
16	M	Lindley Murray d. 1826.
17	TU	GIORDANO BRUNO, PANTHEIST, BURNED FOR ATHEISM, 1600. Self-government granted to Hungary, 1867.
18	W	C. Lamb b. 1775. Home Tooke d. 1812. Luther d. 1546. G. Peabody b. 1795.
19	TH	J. C. VANINI, HERETIC, BURNED FOR ATHEISM, 1619.
20	F	VOLTAIRE, DEIST, b. 1694. J. Hume d. 1855.
21	S	Peltier found guilty of libelling Napoleon, 1803.
22	S	G. WASHINGTON b. 1732. Trial of John and Leigh Hunt for seditious libel, 1811.
23	M	Handel b. 1684. Sir J. Reynolds d. 1792. Cato Street Conspiracy, 1820.
24	TU	Gutenberg d. 1468. D. I. Eaton tried for seditious libel, 1794.
25	W	C. Wren d. 1723.
26	TH	Proclamation of French Republic, 1848. V. Hugo b. 1802. W. Sautre, Heretic, condemned to death, 1600.
27	F	H. W. Longfellow b. 1807. E. Renan b. 1823.
28	S	Corn Laws repealed, 1847. Montaigne, Sceptic, b. 1533.
29	S	

IF disagreements happen between king and people, why is it a more desperate opinion to think the king should be subject to the censures of the people, than the people subject to the will of the king? Did the people make the king, or the king make the people? Is the king for the people, or the people for the king? Nations have a right to make their own laws, constitute their own magistrates, and such as are so constituted owe an account of their actions to those by whom and for whom they are appointed. No nation being justly subject to any, but such as they set up, nor in any other manner than according to such laws as they ordain, the right of choosing and making those that are to govern them must wholly depend upon their will. Whilst tyrants with their slaves, and the instruments of their cruelties, were accounted the dregs of mankind, and made the objects of detestation and scorn, those men who delivered their countries from such plagues were thought to have something of divine in them, and have been famous above all the rest of mankind to this day.—*Algernon Sydney.*

MARCH.—31 DAYS.

1	M	Williams pilloried for publishing <i>North Briton</i> , 1769. First number of <i>Spectator</i> , 1711. John Badby, Heretic, burned, 1409.
2	TU	Speaker of the House of Commons held in chair while the House passed a resolution condemning the King's policy, 1629.
3	W	W. Finlay sentenced for blasphemy, 1843. W. Godwin b. 1756.
4	TH	A. Lincoln elected President U.S.A., 1861. Jews admitted to freedom of City of London, 1828. G. Odger, Radical, d. 1877.
5	F	La Place d. 1827. Mesmer d. 1815.
6	S	D. I. Eaton tried for publishing Paine's works, 1812. Michael Angelo b. 1474.
7	S	Slave trade in negroes abolished, 1807.
8	M	Freret, Freethinker, d. 1749. Sir W. Hamilton b. 1788.
9	T	W. COBBETT b. 1762. Mirabeau, Sceptic, b. 1749. B. Leggatt and E. Wightman, Heretics, condemned to death, 1611.
10	W	J. Mazzini d. 1872. J. Gerrald transported for sedition, 1794.
11	TH	J. Toland, Freethinker, d. 1722. First committee meeting of Sunday League, 1854. Charles Sumner d. 1874.
12	F	J. Cashman hanged for treason, 1817. Bp. Berkeley b. 1684.
13	S	Dr. Priestley, Unitarian Materialist, b. 1733.
14	S	Reform Bill read a first time, 1831.
15	M	D. I. Eaton imprisoned for publishing "Age of Reason," 1812. Julius Cæsar assassinated B.C. 44.
16	TU	H. Hunt and nine others tried for conspiracy, 1820.
17	W	EBENEZER ELLIOTT b. 1781. Mdme. Roland b. 1754. Trellipath, poet, d. 1876. A. Davy and R. Cullender executed as witches, 1665.
18	TH	Commune in Paris, 1871. Completion of the Suez Canal, 1869. B. Legatt, Unitarian, burnt, 1612.
19	F	Reform Bill read third time, 1832.
20	S	Sir J. Newton d. 1727. J. Mitchell, Irish patriot, d. 1875.
21	S	J. S. Bach b. 1685. J. P. Richter b. 1763.
22	M	T. Campanella, Freethinker, d. 1639. Lambert and Perry committed to Newgate, 1779. Strafford impeached, 1641.
23	TU	Law against witchcraft repealed, 1736. Sir F. Burdett tried for protesting against Manchester massacre, 1820. Slavery abolished in Porto Rico, 1873.
24	W	First sale of "Knowlton" after police attack, 1877.
25	TH	LADY DAY. Bradshaw, English patriot, b. 1586. Republican movement in Italy, 1870.
26	F	Clarkson b. 1760.
27	S	American War of Abolition, 1861.
28	S	EASTER DAY. Condorcet d. 1794. La Place b. 1749.
29	M	E. Swedenborg d. 1772.
30	TU	Negro Suffrage in America, 1870.
31	W	C. Brontë d. 1855. Beethoven d. 1827. Haydn b. 1732.

ACCORDING to our authorised version, the world was created B.C. 4004. But:—
B.C. 12500 the Delta of the Nile was already partially formed, it having taken, at the very least, 14,400 years to reach its present state.

B.C. 12053 settled government seems to have been established in Egypt. When Herodotus visited that country, B.C. 450, the Egyptian priests told him that 345 generations, estimated at 11,340 years, had passed away between the first king and B.C. 713.

B.C. 8570 is the furthest point to which, according to Plato, the annals of the city of Sais reached back.

B.C. 7500 saw pottery used in Egypt.

B.C. 5040 is the date of the establishment in Egypt of the first dynasty of kings.

B.C. 5004 crowned the first Pharaoh.

B.C. 4455 united Upper and Lower Egypt into one empire under Menes of Abydos.

As the Bible must, of course, be true, and the above dates are certainly true, it is clear that Egypt must have been in existence for thousands of years before the world was created.

APRIL.—30 DAYS.

1	TH	W. Harvey b. 1578. Descartes b. 1596.
2	F	R. Cobden d. 1865. Mirabeau d. 1791.
3	S	Wash. Irving b. 1783.
4	S	J. Lalande, Materialist, d. 1807.
5	M	C. Desmoulins guillotined, 1794. Hobbes, Materialist, b. 1588.
6	TU	J. Mill b. 1773. Raphael b. 1483.
7	W	C. Fourier b. 1772. Wordsworth b. 1770.
8	TH	Lord Brougham d. 1868.
9	F	Rabelais d. 1553. Bacon d. 1626. Trial and acquittal of Bernard, 1858. National Gallery opened, 1838.
10	S	Grotius b. 1583. A. Holyoake d. 1874. Great Chartist Demonstration, 1848.
11	S	Canning b. 1770.
12	M	Phillips imprisoned for selling "Rights of Man," 1793. First number of <i>N. R.</i> issued, 1860.
13	TU	Handel d. 1759. Catholic Relief Bill passed, 1829. G. J. Holyoake b. 1817.
14	W	A. Lincoln assassinated, 1865.
15	TH	St. Hilaire b. 1772.
16	F	SHAKSPERE b. 1563. Slavery abolished in Columbia, 1862. Buffon d. 1788.
17	S	L. Berquin burnt for heresy, 1530.
18	S	G. H. Lewes b. 1817. Liebig, chemist, d. 1873.
19	M	Byron d. 1824. Ricardo b. 1772. Disendowment Clause of Irish Church Bill carried, 1869.
20	TU	Prudhomme d. 1830.
21	W	Cromwell proclaimed Protector, 1653. Abelard, Heretic, d. 1142.
22	TH	Kant b. 1724. Kossuth b. 1802.
23	F	Cervantes d. 1616. Shakspeare d. 1616. Declaration of war against Turkey by Russia, 1877.
24	S	J. Watson imprisoned for selling "Palmer's Principles," 1823.
25	S	OLIVER CROMWELL b. 1599. Rochdale Pioneers' Society commenced, 1844. Edinburgh University founded, 1582.
26	M	David Hume, Sceptic, b. 1711. T. Read b. 1710.
27	TU	Gibbon, Sceptic, b. 1737. Sir W. Jones d. 1794. Monarchy of England became an Empire, 1876.
28	W	Pitt b. 1759. Thistlewood and others indicted for treason, 1817.
29	TH	J. Wilkes committed to the Tower, 1763. Test Act repealed, 1829.
30	F	French attack on Rome repulsed by Garibaldi, 1849.

RELIEVE the oppressed; hear the groans of poor prisoners in England: Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions; and if there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth. . . .

Your pretended fear lest error should creep in is like the man who would keep all the wine out of the country lest men should be drunk. It will be found an unjust and unwise jealousy to deprive a man of his natural liberty upon a supposition he may abuse it. When he doth abuse it, judge.—*Cromwell*.

WHO is it that doth not know that every age hath produced some [women] very excellent in those things for which men most prize themselves? and yet these grave fools despise them. It is true that women have not those helps from study and education as men have, but in the natural powers of the mind are noways inferior . . . and unto whatsoever they apply themselves, either learning, business, domestic or public government, show themselves at least equal to our sex. . . . Let not any man, then, through a fond and impudent presumption in his own merit, despise that sex.—*Algernon Sydney*.

SINCE the evils of society flow from ignorance and inordinate desire, men will never cease to be tormented till they shall become intelligent and wise, till they shall practise the art of justice, founded on a knowledge of the various relations in which they stand, and the laws of their own organisation.—*Volney*.

JUSTICE is the cement of mankind. A nation or empire which neglects to be internally just, falls asunder by discord or decay.

ERROR of opinion may be safely tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.—*Thomas Jefferson*.

MAY.—31—DAYS.

1	S	Thistlewood and others executed, 1820. Dryden d. 1700. All Roman Catholic clergy banished from Ireland, 1698.
2	S	C. Sumner assaulted in Senate, 1856. Joan Bocher burned for denying Incarnation, 1550.
3	M	R. Cooper, Freethinker, d. 1868. Mandeveld and two others burned for denying Christ, 1539.
4	TU	Irish Rebellion, 1799. Livingstone, traveller, d. 1873.
5	W	Opening of States-General in France, 1789. Napoleon I. d. 1821.
6	TH	Reform Demonstration in Hyde Park, 1867. Humboldt d. 1859.
7	F	Septennial Bill passed, 1716. Irish Church Bill through Committee, 1869.
8	S	Paper Duty repealed, 1860. J. S. Mill d. 1873. E. Truelove tried a second time for Malthusianism, 1878.
9	S	Wedderburn, Unitarian, imprisoned for blasphemy, 1820. E. Truelove convicted and sentenced.
10	M	Turgot b. 1727. Rouget de l'Isle b. 1760.
11	TU	Landing of the Thousand at Marsala, under Garibaldi, 1860. Outbreak of
12	W	Lord Strafford beheaded, 1641. [Indian Mutiny, 1857.
13	TH	T. Cooper, Materialist, d. 1839.
14	F	R. OWEN b. 1771. H. Grattan d. 1820.
15	S	T. Taylor b. 1758. H. Hunt sentenced for presiding at a public meeting, 1820. D. O'Connell d. 1847.
16	S	WHITSUN DAY. Socinius, Heretic, d. 1562. Freethought Conference at Manchester, 1875. Vendôme Column destroyed, 1871.
17	M	Dr. Jenner b. 1749. R. Browning b. 1812.
18	TU	Bp. Butler b. 1692. Trial by Jury instituted 1270. Petition in Chancery against Mrs. Besant for Atheism and Malthusianism, 1878.
19	W	J. G. Fichte, Heretic, 1762. La Fayette d. 1834.
20	TH	J. S. MILL b. 1806. CAXTON b. 1410. Colenso censured by Convocation, 1863. Freethought Conference at Nottingham, 1877.
21	F	Plato b. B.C. 429.
22	S	Beccaria d. 1781. A. Pope, poet, b. 1688. Flax Bounties repealed, 1834
23	S	Savonarola burned 1498. Mabel E. Besant taken from her home, 1878.
24	M	D. O'Connell imprisoned, 1844. Copernicus d. 1543. Toleration Act passed, 1689.
25	TU	Paley d. 1850. R. L. Shiel d. 1851. R. W. Emerson b. 1803
26	W	Fall of the Commune, 1871.
27	TH	Danté b. 1269. Habeas Corpus Act passed, 1679.
28	F	T. Moore b. 1779.
29	S	H. T. Buckle d. 1862.
30	S	Sir H. Davy d. 1829. Voltaire d. 1778: his Centenary celebrated, 1878.
31	M	Irish Church Bill read a third time, 1869.

THOUGH a Republic be barbarous, it necessarily, by an infallible operation, gives rise to law, even before mankind have made any considerable advances in the other sciences. From law arises security; from security, curiosity; and from curiosity, knowledge. The latter steps of this progress may be more accidental, but the former are altogether necessary. A Republic without laws can never have any duration; on the contrary, in a Monarchical government, law arises not necessarily from the forms of government. Monarchy, when absolute, contains even something repugnant to law. Great wisdom and reflection can alone reconcile them; but such a degree of wisdom can never be expected before the greater refinements and improvements of human reason. These refinements require curiosity, security, and law. The first growth, therefore, of the arts and sciences can never be expected in despotic governments. Eloquence certainly springs up more naturally in popular governments. Emulation, too, in every accomplishment must there be more animated and enlivened, and genius and capacity have a fuller scope and career. All these causes render free governments the only proper nursery for the arts and sciences.—*David Hume.*

PHILOSOPHY, wisdom, and liberty support each other. He who will not reason is a bigot, he who cannot is a fool, and he who dares not is a slave.—*Sir William Drummond.*

JUNE.—30 DAYS.

1	TU	Hassell, one of Carlile's shopmen, sentenced for selling Paine's works, 1824.
2	W	Fall of the Girondists, 1793.
3	TH	R. COBDEN b. 1804. W. Harvey d. 1657. T. Finlay imprisoned for blasphemy, 1843.
4	F	Adam Smith b. 1723. Conference of N.S.S. at Leeds, 1876. A. Leighton sentenced for libelling the Episcopate, 1630.
5	S	Woolner tried for sedition, 1817. First number of <i>North Briton</i> issued, 1762.
6	S	Palermo taken by Garibaldi, 1860. Corneille b. 1606. Great meeting at St. James's Hall to demand E. Truelove's release, 1878.
7	M	Act of Union with Ireland passed, 1800. First Reform Bill passed, 1832.
8	TU	W. Champion sentenced for blasphemy, 1793. Church Rates Abolition Bill, 1858. Georges Sand d. 1876.
9	W	G. STEPHENSON b. 1781. Great Western Railway opened, 1838. T. Paine d. 1809. Conference of N.S.S. at Sheffield, 1878. First Free-thought Conference in Belgium, 1878.
10	TH	Defeat of the Irish at Arklow, 1798.
11	F	Roger Bacon d. 1292.
12	S	HARRIET MARTINEAU b. 1802.
13	S	Great Social Demonstration at Paris, 1849.
14	M	G. Leopardi, Freethinker, 1837. Sir H. Vane, Republican, beheaded, 1662.
15	TU	Campbell, poet, d. 1844.
16	W	Salvator Rosa b. 1615. Battle of Naseby, 1645. Monster Petition against Royal Grants presented, 1876.
17	TH	Trial of the suit of the "King v. John Hampden," commenced, 1637. A. Kneeland sentenced in Boston for blasphemy, 1838. Mahomet d. 681.
18	F	Titles abolished in France, 1790. Action of the Queen v. Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant commenced, 1877.
19	S	Lamennais b. 1792. Pascal b. 1623. Magna Charta signed, 1215.
20	S	Tennis Court Oath at Versailles, 1789. Louis XVI. fled from Paris, 1791. Parisians entered the Tuileries, 1792. Five Jesuits hanged for high treason, 1679.
21	M	A. Collins, Freethinker, b. 1676. C. Bradlaugh and A. Besant found guilty of publishing "Knowlton," 1877.
22	TU	J. MAZZINI b. 1805.
23	W	J. Hampden killed, 1643. [1797.
24	TH	MIDSUMMER DAY. Williams sentenced for publishing "Age of Reason."
25	F	J. H. Tooke b. 1736. Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables" added to the Index Expurgatorius, 1864.
26	S	Corn Laws repealed, 1846. Cudworth d. 1688.
27	S	Emperor Julian d. 363. Seven Protestants burnt in Smithfield, 1555. Harriet Martineau d. 1876.
28	M	C. Bradlaugh and A. Besant sentenced, 1877. P. P. Rubens b. 1557. D. Taylor, Methodist, fined for not praying for King George, 1716.
29	TU	ROUSSEAU b. 1712. Eliz. B. Browning d. 1861.
30	W	First Book printed in England, 1477. Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton pilloried, cropped, and branded for seditious libel, 1637. Pillory abolished, 1837.

A CIRCLE in a straight line is the mathematical symbol of miracle. . . . God is the mirror of man. . . . God springs out of the feeling of a want; what man is in need of, whether this be a definite and therefore conscious, or an unconscious need, that is God. . . . What yesterday was still religion is no longer such to-day; and what to-day is Atheism, to-morrow will be religion.—*Feuerbach*.

NATURE is the best posture master. An awkward man is graceful when asleep, or when hard at work, or agreeably amused. The attitudes of children are gentle, persuasive, royal, in their games and in their house-talk and in the street; before they have learned to cringe. 'Tis impossible but thought disposes the limbs and the walk, and is masterly or secondary. No art can contravene it or conceal it. Give me a thought, and my hands and legs and voice and face will all go right. And we are awkward for want of thought. The inspiration is scanty, and does not arrive at the extremities.—*Emerson*.

JULY.—31 DAYS.

1	TH	T. Pooley sentenced for blasphemy, 1857. First steamboat on the Thames, 1801.
2	F	Rousseau d. 1778. F. Huber, Naturalist, b. 1750.
3	S	Leibnitz b. 1646. First Jew returned to Parliament (but unable to sit) 1849. H. Grattan b. 1750.
4	S	Independence of U.S.A, 1776. R. Taylor imprisoned for blasphemy, 1831.
5	M	Mrs. Siddons b. 1755. Georges Sand b. 1804.
6	TU	John Huss burned, 1373. Malthusian League founded, 1877.
7	W	R. B. Sheridan d. 1816. Jacquard, inventor, b. 1752. The Parliament of Paris ordered Diderot's "Philosophical Thoughts" to be burned by the common hangman, 1746.
8	TH	Prof. Cairnes d. 1875. Trial of S. Wright for publishing Carlile, 1822. Shelley drowned, 1822.
9	F	W. Cobbett sentenced for sedition, 1810. E. Burke d. 1797.
10	S	E. Truelove prosecuted and acquitted for publishing "Tyrannicide," 1858.
11	S	Lalande, Freethinker, b. 1732. Roger Bacon d. 1294.
12	M	Erasmus d. 1536. Jewish Disabilities Removal Bill passed 1858.
13	TU	Marat assassinated, 1793. Thames Embankment opened, 1870. Treaty of Berlin signed, 1878. Papal Infallibility declared, 1870.
14	W	FALL OF THE BASTILE, 1789. Madame de Staël d. 1817.
15	TH	Patmore tried for possessing Paine's works, 1793.
16	F	The Brothers Shears sentenced for treason, 1798. Béranger d. 1857.
17	S	Payne and Waldron indicted for publishing Paine, 1793. Joidon and Johnson condemned for publishing Paine, 1798. Cobbett tried for seditious libel, 1831. Capital Punishment for forgery abolished, 1837.
18	S	Demonstration in Hyde Park against grant to Prince of Wales, 1875. Dr. Lardner d. 1768.
19	M	Petrarch d. 1374.
20	TU	J. Sterling b. 1806. H. D. Church, Freethinker, d. 1859.
21	W	V. Schœlcher, Republican, b. 1804. Great Reform Meeting in Smithfield, 1819. Execution of William, Lord Russell, for high treason, 1683.
22	TH	G. GARIBALDI b. 1807. First newspaper published in England, 1588.
23	F	People went into Hyde Park over the torn-down railings, gates being closed, 1866. Jenny Geddes threw her stool at the Dean's head, in St. Giles's, Edinburgh, 1637.
24	S	Trial of Carlile's sister for publishing Paine, 1821. Window-tax repealed, 1851.
25	S	Brothers Bandiera shot, 1844. Winterbotham sentenced for sedition, 1793.
26	M	First Jew admitted to Parliament, 1858. Irish Church Disestablishment became law, 1869. Three witches executed, 1682.
27	TU	J. Dalton d. 1844. Robespierre guillotined, 1794. Second French Revolution, 1830.
28	W	Atlantic Cable laid, 1866.
29	TH	Garibaldi entered Messina, 1860. The Marseillaise entered Paris, 1792. Wilberforce d. 1833.
30	F	W. Penn d. 1718. Diderot d. 1784. H. Redhead convicted of conspiracy, 1795.
31	S	Holt convicted for selling "Rights of Man," 1793.

ACCORDING to various editions of the Bible, the world must have been oftentimes created. The authorised English version gives B.C. 4004. The reading adopted by Josephus differs by 1684 years in excess; that followed by the Church Council of Alexandria by 1435 years; that preferred by the Oriental Church by 1505 years; that of the Septuagint version by 1386 years; that of the Samaritan text by 241 years; that fixed on by the Jews by 243 years on the other side.

THE oldest tree in the world is the great cypress of Santa Maria del Tule, in Mexico. It began to grow B.C. 4790, and in 1849 had a diameter of 40 feet.

A CYPRESS was dug up at New Orleans in 1850, which showed from 95 to 120 rings per inch, proving an age of 5,700 years at the time of its burial. Beneath its roots were human bones. Over its head were the slowly accumulated layers of soil.

AUGUST.—31 DAYS.

1	S	Slavery abolished in British Colonies, 1834. Lamarck, Evolution Naturalist, b. 1744.
2	M	<i>Bank Holiday.</i> Eugene Sue d. 1857. Carnot, Republican, d. 1823.
3	TU	Cartwright tried, 1820. Sir R. Arkwright d. 1792. Rev. S. Johnson arrested for blasphemous libel, 1683.
4	W	P. B. SHELLEY b. 1792.
5	TH	Lovett and Collins imprisoned for Chartism, 1839. Colony of Victoria established, 1850.
6	F	D. O'Connell b. 1775. Messrs. Robinson convicted of selling "Rights of Man," 1793.
7	S	Berzelius d. 1848.
8	S	G. Canning d. 1827. W. Lovett, Chartist, d. 1877.
9	M	Dryden b. 1631. Arnauld, Jansenist, d. 1694. Moleschott b. 1822. A. Combe d. 1847.
10	TU	Attack on the Tuileries, 1792.
11	W	A boy imprisoned for being follower of Paine, 1793.
12	TH	Pear and Belcher convicted of selling Paine, 1793.
13	F	Royal Proclamation suppressing Republican works of Milton and Godwin, 1660. New Poor Laws commenced, 1834.
14	S	Stamp Duty on Almanacks abolished, 1834. Street gaslights introduced in London, 1807.
15	S	G. J. Holyoake sentenced for blasphemy, 1842. G. Adams sentenced for selling the "Oracle of Reason," 1842. First Parliamentary election by ballot, 1872.
16	M	Peterloo massacre, 1819. McDowall tried for advocating Chartism, 1839. M. Tindal, Freethinker, d. 1733.
17	TU	Admiral Blake, Republican, d. 1657. Béranger b. 1780.
18	W	R. Taylor b. 1784. Declaration of the Rights of Man at Versailles, 1789.
19	TH	Nasmyth b. 1808. Pascal d. 1662.
20	F	Schelling, Idealist, d. 1854. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Deist, d. 1648.
21	S	J. Michelet b. 1798.
22	S	F. J. Gall d. 1828. Oliver Cromwell married, 1620.
23	M	Execution of W. Wallace, Patriot, 1305. Cuvier b. 1769. Growth of Tobacco in Ireland prohibited, 1831.
24	TU	H. Hetherington, Deist, d. 1849. Liberty of the French Press decreed, 1789. Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 1572.
25	W	Lepeaux, Deist, b. 1753. Chatterton d. 1770. Faraday d. 1867.
26	TH	Körner fell in battle, 1813. D. Hume, Sceptic, d. 1776.
27	F	Hegel b. 1770. Thomson d. 1748. Abner Kneeland d. 1844.
28	S	GOETHE b. 1749. Grotius d. 1645.
29	S	Locke b. 1632. Colbert b. 1619.
30	M	Muir sentenced for sedition, 1793. F. O'Connor, Chartist, M.P., d. 1855.
31	TU	John Bunyan d. 1688. Irish Peace Preservation Act passed, 1835.

GOVERNMENT has no rights ; it is a delegation from several individuals for the purpose of securing their own. It is therefore just only so far as it exists by their consent, useful only so far as it operates to their well-being. . . .

All have a right to an equal share in the benefits and burdens of Government. Any disabilities for opinion imply, by their existence, barefaced tyranny on the side of Government, ignorant slavishness on the side of the governed. . . .

A man has a right to think as his reason directs ; it is a duty he owes to himself to think with freedom that he may act from conviction. . . .

A man has a right to unrestricted liberty of discussion. Falsehood is a scorpion that will sting itself to death. . . .

A man has not only a right to express his thoughts, but it is his duty to do so. . . .

Man has no right to kill his brother. It is no excuse that he does so in uniform—he only adds the infamy of servitude to the crime of murder. . . .

A Christian, a Deist, a Turk, and a Jew, have equal rights—they are men and brethren. . . .

Every man has a right to a certain degree of leisure and liberty, because it is his duty to attain a certain degree of knowledge.—*Percy B. Shelley.*

SEPTEMBER.—30 DAYS.

1	W	Steele d. 1729. Fall of Napoleon III. at Sedan, 1870.
2	TH	J. HOWARD b. 1726. Peace between England and America signed, 1783.
3	F	Oliver Cromwell d. 1658. Victory of Worcester, 1657. A. Thiers d. 1877.
4	S	Third French Republic proclaimed, 1870. Cromwell's 1st Parliament, 1654.
5	S	First American Congress assembled, 1774. Meyerbeer b. 1791. A. Comte d. 1857.
6	M	FRANCES WRIGHT, FREETHINKER, b. 1795.
7	TU	Garibaldi entered Naples, 1860. Buffon b. 1707. Canada ceded to Great Britain, 1763.
8	W	Ariosto b. 1474. Vermingli, Reformer, b. 1500. R. Fludd, Pantheist, d. 1637.
9	TH	Mosheim d. 1755. Alabama claims settled by arbitration at Geneva, 1873.
10	F	Mary W. Godwin d. 1797. Mungo Park b. 1771.
11	S	America discovered by Columbus, 1492.
12	S	Peace Congress at Vienna, 1867. Twenty-two persons charged with high treason at York, 1820.
13	M	C. J. Fox d. 1806.
14	TU	Von Humboldt b. 1769. Dante d. 1321.
15	W	First Balloon ascent in England, 1784.
16	TH	Pomponazio, Philosopher, b. 1462. Spanish Revolution, 1868.
17	F	Condorcet, Materialist, b. 1743. W. S. Landor, "Pagan," d. 1864. Seven persons imprisoned for selling Carlile's <i>Republican</i> , 1819.
18	S	Dr. S. Johnson b. 1709. Hoche d. 1797.
19	S	Trial of R. Emmett for high treason, 1803. First printing press set up by Caxton at Westminster, 1471.
20	M	Repulse of Charles I., at Newbury, 1643. Rome declared the Capital of Italy, 1870. R. Emmett executed, 1803.
21	TU	Louis XVI. dethroned, 1792.
22	W	M. Faraday b. 1791. Six women and two men executed for witchcraft, 1692. Sir W. Scott d. 1832.
23	TH	London General Post Office opened, 1829. Körner b. 1791.
24	F	Paracelsus d. 1541. S. Butler d. 1680. Great Reform Demonstration at Manchester, 1866.
25	S	Mrs. Hemans b. 1794.
26	S	C. Bradlaugh, Atheist, b. 1833. Clarkson d. 1846.
27	M	G. Cruikshank b. 1792.
28	TU	H. Hetherington convicted of selling unstamped publications, 1831. Electric Telegraphs first used, 1851. Emancipation of Slaves in Brazil, 1871.
29	W	MICHAELMAS DAY. Richard II. dethroned, 1399. T. Chubb, Free-thinker, b. 1679.
30	TH	F. Greville, friend of Burns, d. 1628. Paper Duty repealed, 1861.

VOLTAIRE was ever in the front and centre of the fight. His life was not a mere chapter in a history of literature. He never counted truth a treasure to be discreetly hidden in a napkin. He made it a perpetual warcry and emblazoned it on a banner that was many a time rent, but was never out of the field. . . .

To Voltaire, an irrational prejudice was not the object of a polite coldness, but a real evil to be combated and overthrown at every hazard. Cruelty was not to him as a disagreeable dream of the imagination, from thought of which he could save himself by arousing to a sense of his own comfort, but a vivid flame burning into his thoughts and destroying peace. Wrong-doing and injustice were not simple words on his lips; they went as knives to the heart; he suffered with the victim, and consumed with an active rage against the oppressor. . . .

To Voltaire reason and humanity were but a single word, and love of truth and passion for justice but one emotion. None of the famous men who have fought that they themselves might think freely and speak truly have ever seen more clearly that the fundamental aim of the contest was that others might live happily. . . . Another might well have said of him what he magnanimously said of his famous contemporary Montesquieu, that humanity had lost its title-deeds, and he had recovered them.—

John Morley.

OCTOBER.—31 DAYS.

1	F	Annie Besant, Atheist, b. 1847. Lord Bolingbroke, Materialist, b. 1678.
2	S	S. Adams d. 1803. Arago d. 1853. London University opened, 1828.
3	S	G. Bancroft b. 1800. Lords rejected First Reform Bill, 1831.
4	M	First English Bible published, 1535. First part of Bishop Colenso's Pentateuch published, 1862. Hall of Science opened, 1868.
5	TU	Diderot, Materialist, b. 1713. Insurrection of women in Paris, 1789.
6	W	Jenny Lind b. 1820. Parliament raised army, 1642.
7	TH	E. A. Poe d. 1849. Archbishop Laud executed, 1645.
8	F	Emma Martin, Freethinker, d. 1851. H. Erskine d. 1817.
9	S	Cervantes b. 1547. Eddystone Lighthouse commenced, 1659. Smith O'Brien sentenced to death for high treason, 1848.
10	S	Nottingham Castle burnt, 1831. Trial of Lancashire Rioters, 1842. H. Marten, Republican, imprisoned for high treason, 1660. Sir J. Oldcastle, Heretic, hanged and burned, 1433. Twenty-nine of the Regicides condemned to death, ten executed, 1660.
11	M	Zwingle fell in battle 1531.
12	TU	Grace Darling d. 1842. H. Miller b. 1802. Elizabeth Fry d. 1845.
13	W	C. A. Sainte-Beuve, Materialist, d. 1869. Women first permitted to compete for medical degrees, 1863.
14	TH	T. Cooper tried for sedition at Stafford, 1842. Curran d. 1817.
15	F	R. Carlile convicted of blasphemy, 1819. Kosciusko d. 1817.
16	S	C. F. Dupuis b. 1742. J. Hunter d. 1793.
17	S	Saint Simon b. 1760. Four Republicans executed, 1660.
18	M	J. Day sentenced for distributing Paine's Portrait, 1793. Opening of Free Library at Liverpool, 1860.
19	TU	Leigh Hunt b. 1784. Colonels Axtell and Hacker executed for treason, 1660.
20	W	S. T. Coleridge b. 1772.
21	TH	G. Combe b. 1788.
22	F	Sir R. Murchison d. 1871. W. Woolaston, Deist, d. 1724.
23	S	First Parliament of England and Scotland, 1707. Battle of Edge Hill, 1643.
24	S	Rev. R. Taylor convicted of blasphemy, 1827. W. Prynne d. 1669.
25	M	Charge of the Six Hundred at Balaclava, 1854. Chaucer d. 1400.
26	TU	Hogarth d. 1764. Free Reference Library, Birmingham, opened, 1866.
27	W	Servetus, Unitarian, burnt, 1553. Margery Gurdemaine burnt for witchcraft, 1441.
28	TH	J. Wilkes b. 1727. L. Blanc b. 1813.
29	F	D'Alembert, Encyclopédiste, d. 1793. J. Keats b. 1796. E. Halley b. 1656.
30	S	Carra, Materialist, guillotined, 1792. J. Matthews sentenced to death for treasonable pamphlet, 1719.
31	S	J. Watts, Materialist, d. 1866.

THE importance of free inquiry extends to our whole manner of thinking and even acting. He who is accustomed to judge of truth and error without regard to external relations, either as affecting himself or others, and to hear them so discussed, is able to realise principles of action more calmly and consistently, and with more exclusive reference to loftier points of view, than one whose reflections are constantly influenced by a variety of circumstances not essential to the subject under investigation. Inquiry, as well as conviction, the result to which it leads, is spontaneity, while belief is reliance of some foreign power, some external perfection, moral or intellectual. Hence it is that firmness and self-dependence are such striking characteristics of the thoughtful inquirer, while a corresponding weakness and inaction seem to mark the confiding believer. . . . Doubt is torture to the believer only, and not to him who follows the results of his own inquiries; for to the latter results are in general far less important. During the process of inquiry he becomes conscious of his soul's activity, its inherent strength; he feels that his perfection, his happiness, depend upon this strength, and instead of being oppressed by his doubts concerning the principles he conceived to be true, he congratulates himself that his increasing force of thought enables him to see clearly through errors that had till now remained hidden.—*W. Von Humboldt.*

NOVEMBER.—30 DAYS.

1	M	<i>Lettres de cachet</i> abolished, 1789. The death of Boudin, who fell at the barricades in 1851, celebrated in Paris, 1868. Cromwell's statute unveiled at Manchester, 1875.
2	TU	Massacre of British at Cabul, 1841.
3	W	J. Huss tried for heresy, 1414. Long Parliament met, 1640; finally dissolved, March 16, 1660.
4	TH	Garibaldi defeated at Mentana, 1867. G. Peabody d. 1869.
5	F	Gunpowder Plot, 1605.
6	S	H. Hunt b. 1773. First number of <i>Oracle of Reason</i> , 1841. First number of the <i>Test</i> , 1756. J. Hampden tried for refusing to pay ship money, 1637.
7	S	First English Gazette published, 1665. Last person burned alive for witchcraft, a woman, in Spain, 1781. Ship money declared illegal, 1640. Algernon Sydney tried for high treason, 1663. Three of the Nottingham rioters hanged for high treason, 1817.
8	M	Paterson sentenced for blasphemy, 1844. Mdme. Roland guillotined, 1793. Milton d. 1674.
9	TU	Lord Mayor's day. Capo d'Istria assassinated, 1831.
10	W	Martin Luther b. 1483. O. Goldsmith b. 1728.
11	TH	Schiller b. 1759. Bichat b. 1771. Strafford impeached by Pym, 1640. La Mettrie, Atheist, b. 1751.
12	F	General Fairfax d. 1671.
13	S	Telegraph from Dover to Calais completed, 1851. William Etty, painter, d. 1849.
14	S	Leibnitz d. 1716. Sir C. Lyell b. 1797. J. de Solcia condemned for heresy, 1459.
15	M	Romney d. 1802.
16	TU	Carlile sentenced for publishing "Age of Reason," 1819. Ewald b. 1803. John Bright b. 1811.
17	W	R. Owen d. 1858. Erskine d. 1823.
18	TH	J. H. Tooke tried for treason, 1794.
19	F	Thorwaldsen b. 1770.
20	S	T. Davidson sentenced for blasphemy, 1820.
21	S	Sir T. Gresham b. 1519. Napoleon III. elected Emperor after the <i>Coup d'Etat</i> , 1852.
22	M	Rocheport, Arago, and Crémieux returned for Paris, 1869. Henry Wilson, Vice-President of United States, Abolitionist and Shoemaker, d. 1875.
23	TU	Fenians executed at Manchester, 1867. Irish Rebellion, 1641.
24	W	SPINOZA b. 1632. H. T. Buckle b. 1824. Pope fled to Gaeta, 1848.
25	TH	Rossa elected M.P., 1869, while a political prisoner.
26	F	Washington Irving d. 1859. Hall of Science reopened, doubled in size, 1869.
27	S	Sir J. Eliot died in the Tower, 1632. Trial of Redhead York for seditious libel, 1795. Baron Bunsen, philosophical Freethinker, d. 1860.
28	S	Wolsey d. 1530. C. Beccaria d. 1797.
29	M	Swift b. 1667. Republican Demonstrations at Madrid, 1868. <i>Times</i> first printed by steam, 1814.
30	TU	J. Toland, Freethinker, b. 1670. Destruction of the Turkish fleet by the Russians, at Sinope, 1853.

SISTERS and brothers—ye more especially who, knowing the least of things, believe the most in doctrines . . . on ye, more especially, do I call, to arouse the faculties which superstition may have benumbed, and to put the question to your reason, if all the doctrines of the servants of religion are not inconsistent with their own assumed first premises? Could a Being of wisdom demand of ye to spend your time and torture your faculties in imagining things which ye never saw—worlds beyond the reach of human ken, and existences of whose nature ye can form no conception? Could a Being of justice command ye to prostrate the reason he should have given, and swear credence to doctrines which they even who preach pretend not to understand? Could a Being of beneficence visit in anger the errors of the children of his hand, and delight in the torment of those whose ignorance he could enlighten, and whose sorrows he could heal?—*Frances Wright.*

DECEMBER.—31 DAYS.

1	W	Ebenezer Elliott d. 1849. Rev. S. Johnson whipped from Newgate to Tyburn, and pilloried for blasphemy, 1683.
2	TH	<i>Coup d'Etat</i> in France, 1851.
3	F	John Brown, Abolitionist, hanged, 1859.
4	S	Hoobes, Materialist, d. 1671. T. Carlyle b. 1795.
5	S	Morgagni b. 1682. Mozart d. 1792. Thelwall acquitted 1794. Rome declared capital of Italy, 1870.
6	M	Slave trade prohibited by French Convention, 1794.
7	TU	Cicero killed, B.C. 43. Algernon Sydney, Republican, beheaded, 1683. Father Matthew, the great teetotal advocate, d. 1856.
8	W	R. CARLILE b. 1790. T. de Quincey d. 1859. Hetherington imprisoned for publishing Haslam's Letters, 1840.
9	TH	JOHN MILTON b. 1608. John Pym d. 1658. J. and Leigh Hunt convicted of writing against Regent, 1812.
10	F	Luther burned the Pope's Bull, 1520. Royal Academy founded, 1768.
11	S	Flight of James II., 1688.
12	S	Averroës, Philosopher, d. 1198.
13	M	H. Heine, Freethinker, b. 1799. Ireland permitted by England to export woollens, 1779.
14	TU	Tycho Brahé b. 1546. Lord Cobham burned for heresy, 1417.
15	W	J. B. Carrier executed, 1794. I. Walton d. 1683.
16	TH	J. Selden b. 1584. Cromwell first styled "Lord Protector," 1653.
17	F	Beethoven b. 1770. Sir H. Davy b. 1778. Home tried for publishing Wilkes' "Catechism," 1817. J. Nayler convicted of blasphemy, 1656.
18	S	Thomas Paine found guilty of writing "Rights of Man," 1792.
19	S	Hone tried for publishing "Political Litany," 1817.
20	M	Hone tried for publishing "Sinecurist's Creed," 1817. La Rochefoucault b. 1613.
21	TU	Boccaccio b. 1313. Kepler b. 1571. Ranke b. 1795. Lord Beaconsfield, Prime Minister and Empress Maker, b. 1805.
22	W	Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in America, 1620.
23	TH	Arkwright b. 1732. J. Bronterre O'Brien, Chartist, d. 1864.
24	F	W. M. Thackeray d. 1863. Hugh Miller, Geologist, author of the "Testimony of the Rocks," d. 1856. T. Aikenhead condemned to death for blasphemy, 1595.
25	S	CHRISTMAS DAY. Sir I. Newton b. 1642. Completion of Mont Cenis Tunnel, 1870.
26	S	Helvetius, Atheist, d. 1771.
27	M	Boxing Day. J. Wilkes d. 1797. Charles Lamb d. 1834.
28	TU	P. Bayle d. 1706. Lord Macaulay d. 1859.
29	W	T. R. Malthus d. 1834. W. E. Gladstone b. 1809.
30	TH	Royal Society instituted, 1660.
31	F	Spurzheim b. 1776. D. Forbes d. 1868. Wycliffe d. 1384.

IF there were not a secret pleasure in embracing a good cause, when it seems utterly lost, to take a stand against all-powerful authority, to exhaust, without perceptible advantage, all the resources of one's mind, and all the energies of one's soul, would history have been crowded with men who have preferred to submission and to silence exile, persecution, death, and, worse than all these, the indifference of the multitude and the contempt of pretended sages, always disposed to say, "What use is there in it?" and, "Why not resign yourself?" But to be able to resign oneself, to be sensible to something else besides that which one may touch, and to consent to yield to an inexplicable charm for a struggle on unequal terms, for efforts long barren, these all tell us of the nobility of our nature, and if we lose them what remains to distinguish us from the vile? But we experience in maintaining these titles a deep and sufficient satisfaction.

Be persuaded that when we speak to you of liberty we are recompensed for our pain by that very pain itself, and it is for others rather than for ourselves that we so ardently desire to convince you.—*Prévost Paradol.*

INTESTATES' ESTATES:

Rules by which the Personal Estates of Persons Dying without Wills are Distributed, pursuant to the Statute 22 and 23 Charles II., Cap. 10.

If the Intestate die, leaving *His representatives take in the proportion following.*

Wife and child, or children	One-third to wife, rest to child or children; and if children are dead, then to the representatives (that is, their lineal descendants), except such child or children, not heirs-at-law, who had estate by settlement of intestate, or were advanced by him in his lifetime, equal to other shares.
Wife only, no blood relations	Half to wife, other half to the Crown.
Wife, no near relations	Half to wife, rest to next of kin in equal degree to intestate, or their legal representatives.
No wife or child	All to next of kin and their legal representatives.
No wife, but child, children, or representatives of them, whether such child or children by one or more wives	All to him, her, or them.
Children by two wives	Equally to all.
If no child, children, or representatives of them	All to next of kin in equal degree to intestate.
Child, and grandchild by deceased child	Half to child, half to grandchild, who takes by representation.
Husband	Whole to him.
Father, and brother or sister	Whole to father.
Mother, and brother or sister	Whole to them equally.
Wife, mother, brothers, sisters and nieces	Half to wife, residue to mother, brothers, sisters, and nieces.
Wife, and father	Half to wife, and half to father.
Wife, mother, nephews, and nieces	Half to wife, one-fourth to mother, and other fourth to nephews and nieces.
Wife, brothers, or sisters, and mother	Half to wife, half to brothers or sisters, and mother.
Mother, but no wife, child, father, brother, sister, nephew, or niece	The whole to mother.
Wife, and mother	Half to wife, half to mother.
Brother or sister of whole blood, and brother or sister of half blood	Equally to both.
Posthumous brother or sister, and mother	Equally to both.
Posthumous brother or sister, and brother or sister born in lifetime of father	Equally to both.
Father's father, and mother's mother	Equally to both.
Uncle or aunt's children, and brother's or sister's grandchildren	Equally to all.
Grandmother, uncle, or aunt	All to grandmother.
Two aunts, nephew, and niece	Equally to all.
Uncle, and deceased uncle's child	All to uncle.
Uncle by mother's side, and deceased uncle or aunt's child	All to uncle.
Nephew by brother, and nephew by half-sister	Equally <i>per capita</i> .*

* That is, taking individually and not by representation. Thus, if A die, leaving three brothers or sisters, they each take an equal part of his effects in his or her own right. But if either of them die, leaving children, his children would take his share *per stirpes*—that is, *through him*, and not in their own rights.

Nephew by deceased brother, and nephews and nieces by deceased sister	Each in equal shares <i>per capita</i> , and not <i>per stirpes</i> .
Brother and grandfather	Whole to brother.
Brother's grandson, and brother or sister's daughter	All to daughter.
Brother, and two aunts	All to brother.
Brother, and wife	Half to brother, half to wife.
Mother, and brother	Equally.
Wife, mother, and children of a deceased brother (or sister)	{ Half to wife, a fourth to mother, and a fourth <i>per stirpes</i> to deceased brother's or sister's children.
Wife, brother, or sister, and children of a deceased brother or sister	{ Half to wife, one-fourth to brother or sister <i>per capita</i> , one-fourth to deceased brother's or sister's children <i>per stirpes</i> .
Brother or sister, and children of a de- ceased brother or sister... ..	{ Half to brother or sister <i>per capita</i> , half to children of deceased brother or sister <i>per stirpes</i> .
Grandfather, no nearer relation	All to grandfather.

By the Act 19 and 20 Vict. all special *local* customs relating to intestates' estates are abolished.

ANTHROPOMETRICAL MEASUREMENTS.

THE department of Anthropometry, of so much importance to the science of anthropology, has recently been carried to great perfection and its method extensively applied. Some very curious and very interesting results have thus been obtained; some of the most interesting of these have been recently published by Dr. A. Weisbach, chief physician to the Austro-Hungarian Hospital in Constantinople, who, Dr. von Scherzer tells us, has probably taken more measurements of living men than any other anthropologist. Dr. Weisbach's measurements refer to 19 different peoples and more than 200 individuals from the most various parts of the earth. As to height, the smallest among the various peoples measured are the Hottentots (1,286 millimètres); this is far behind any other people, as the next, the Tagals, are 1,562. Then follow the Japanese (1,569), the Amboinese (1,594), Jews (1,599), Zingani (1,609), Australians (1,617), Siamese (1,622), Madurese (1,628), South Chinese, (1,630), Nikobars (1,631), Roumanians (1,643), Sundanese (1,646), Javanese (1,657), Magyars (1,658), Bugis (1,661), North Sclaves (1,671); North Chinese (1,675), and Congo Negroes (1,676). The longest measurements, however, are found among the Sandwich Islanders and Kanaks (1,700 millimètres), Caffres (1,753), and the Maoris of New Zealand (1,757). To compare these with the stature of European peoples, we find that that of the English and Irish is 1,690 millimètres; the Scotch, 1,708; Swedes, 1,700; Norwegians, 1,728; Danes, 1,685; Germans, 1,680; French, 1,667; Italians, 1,668; and lastly Spaniards and Portuguese, 1,658. The greatest circumference of the head is found among the Patagonians (614 millimètres) and Maoris (600). Following these are the Caffres (575), Nikobars (567), North Sclaves (554), Congo Negroes, South Chinese, and Kanaks (553), Tagals, Sundanese, and Roumanians (552), Japanese (550), Bugis and Jews (545), Amboinese (544), Javanese (542), Hottentots (540), and, lastly, the Zinganis and Siamese (529). Stature and circumference of head generally stand to each other in opposite relations, although there are exceptions, as in the case of the Siamese with small stature and small head, and the Patagonians with great height and large head.

THE STORY OF 1879.

THE progress made in this country in previous years has—notwithstanding the depression of trade and general hard times—been more than maintained during the past twelve months. There have been each week steady additions to the ranks of the National Secular Society, and as this Almanack is being prepared for the Press the organised societies of Freethinkers of America, known as Liberal Leagues, and those of Belgium, described as Federated Rationalist Societies, are taking steps, in conjunction with the Executive of the National Secular Society, towards mutual affiliation, with the view to ensure ultimately the international federation of Freethinkers throughout the civilised world. Two debates in which Mr. Bradlaugh has taken part, one with a Unitarian minister at Nottingham, the other with a Congregational minister at Burnley, have been very widely reported and extensively read. More work has been done in lecturing than in 1878; Mrs. Besant, Messrs. Bradlaugh, Parris, Slater and Symes, have all been very active, and a new name of great promise, that of Edward B. Aveling, D.Sc., is now added to the list of our platform workers. In Edinburgh a step in advance has been taken by securing a respectable and permanent place of meeting. Professor Flint, of the University of Edinburgh, has published a thick volume in attack on the Atheistic position, to which reply is now being made by Mr. Bradlaugh.

Since the publication of the Almanack for 1879, the Lords Justices of Appeal have, despite a most eloquent pleading for Freethought, confirmed the decree of the Master of the Rolls depriving Mrs. Besant of the custody of her infant daughter, but an order has been made in a collateral suit by which much-extended access has been gained by Mrs. Besant to both her children. In the prosecution by the Vice Society against Mr. Edward Truelove, an appeal is now pending to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice. Mr. Bradlaugh having succeeded in rescuing the seized copies of the Knowlton pamphlet from the custody of the Vice Society, Mr. Collette, as appears by his own letter, applied to the Treasury to again prosecute Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bradlaugh for their continued sale of the pamphlet, but the Government refused to repeat what the Lord Chief Justice had previously characterised as a "most ill-advised prosecution." The right to sell being thus vindicated, the Knowlton pamphlet will, when the present edition is exhausted, be superseded by "The Law of Population," so far as Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant are concerned.

A new step in the enfranchisement of women has been taken by the London University in throwing its degrees open to all qualified persons without regard to sex, and taking advantage of this, Mrs. Annie Besant in July matriculated in the first class, after a preparation of less than six months, interrupted alike by litigation and by her lecturing and literary duties. We hope in our next year's Almanack to record further distinction of this kind won for the cause, and to be able to add other names of Freethought women in this most honorable endeavour.

The Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund is now entirely under the direction and responsibility of the National Secular Society, and by the additional

subscriptions which are being paid into the hands of the treasurer we believe that this change meets with general approval.

The reports of Freethought progress from the colonies are most encouraging, and there is great hope that the proposed international Freethought federation may find active and organised assistance in New Zealand and Australia.

As we are now on the eve of a great political struggle in connection with a general election it is specially necessary to call the attention of Freethinkers to the influence they possess and ought to use as a political organisation. With its many branches and increased strength the National Secular Society ought to make itself felt in the contest, giving its support to such candidates as are likely to promote the growth of civil and religious liberty. 1880 will, we trust, see a Criminal Code enacted which shall sweep away the present barbarous blasphemy laws, replacing these by more liberal legislation; but to ensure this the presence of wide-minded and Liberal members will be needed in the House of Commons.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

HUMANITY AND ITS TEACHERS.

A LITTLE child lay on the shore of an island in a mighty ocean, an ocean which stretched far away towards the east, and into whose arms the sun sank nightly for his rest. The child was very young, and she was all alone; in her eyes was a look of wonder, of inquiry, of fear; her unclosed lips were bent in a curve that was half smile, half droop; she was gazing over the vast plain of shimmering water, where the waves were chasing each other, and where the foam-flakes were kissed by the sun. And presently the child turned from the sea to the land behind her, and she saw the pine forests dark in the distance, and the blue mountain ranges beyond to the north, snow-tipped against the bluer sky; but nearer to her stretched meadows studded with flowers, and groves whose shady alleys were sweet with scent-laden blossoms and musical with song of birds, and the child laughed as she looked, and the wistful wonder left her hazel eyes, and she sprang to her feet and ran to the flowers that beckoned her, and played till she was weary, and sank to sleep on the turf in the sunlight.

As she slept the weather changed, dark clouds rolled out from behind the snow-tipped mountains, and sullen rolls of thunder growled from the northern sky; the clouds spread till they hid the blue heavens and blotted out the sun, and the sea grew black in sympathy, and grey waves scolded away the blue ripples and broke surlily on the shore; soon the storm broke over the island, and lightning flashed and thunder rolled, and angry leaping sea met angry scowling sky. The child woke, and her eyes were wild with fear, and she screamed aloud in her terror; so she fell on her knees and cried to the bright sun to come back and to send away the storm to the dark mountains, and as she prayed there was a rift in the clouds, and a sun-ray broke through them; and the child thought the great sun had heard her, and was living like herself. And ever after, when the sun sank to rest at evening, she prayed him to

return, and in the dawning she thanked him that he had heard her prayer, and she thought that he sent the moon and the stars to lighten her darkness while he was compelled to journey round beneath the sea from west to east.

As the child grew a little older, not sun and moon and stars alone, but all things fair and strange and terrible, were to her living friends or foes; she loved or feared them all. As she lay in the shade of the trees, sweet human faces bent over her from the branches, and soft voices whispered her to sleep; she would garland the trees for love of the wood-nymphs, and she learned to reverence all life around her, lest her woodland goddesses should be angered. And she gave names to these dream-friends, and called her beloved sun Apollo, and her moon Diana, and the rolling sea was Neptune her father, and the earth was Ceres her mother; so the child was no longer lonely, for all nature lived to her. And the child grew, and new forms gathered around her: Athene made wisdom divine to her, and Aphrodite moulded her limbs to beauty, and she became strong, and wise, and lovely, but yet was proud and oft cruel and selfish in her strength.

One day a new teacher came to her, and taught her strange new things; grey he was, and dull and unbeautiful; he scorned her pleasant dreams and trampled on her garlands of flowers; he wreathed thorns instead of roses for a crown, and chased away wisdom, and beauty, and love. True, he promised beauty and joy hereafter, but told her they could only be won by suffering and sacrifice here; and the child, who was now almost a woman, grew pale, and sad, and stern, and secretly, from time to time, bewailed her lost friends of sea, and earth, and sky. Yet she learned some useful lessons of work and sacrifice, and grew strong in endurance of pain, learning obedience to a will mightier than her own.

Gradually this master also faded away, and took his place with the older teachers, for the child was now a woman, and had outgrown her time of pupilage; but she was lonely at first, and stretched her hands backward to their fading forms, crying: "Leave me not alone, alone in the world!" From the shadows came back answering voices, from which she learned, as their last lesson, that she had lost nothing in them that was good; for Athene said: "Wisdom is ever with you;" and Aphrodite: "I was love and beauty, and leave you not;" and Christ: "I was God in man to teach you that Man is god."

And the woman stood by the sea where the child had played; the wonder, the awe in her eyes had deepened, but the fear had passed away.

ANNIE BESANT.

A HOLIDAY MUSING.

THERE is a quaint old stone bridge in North Wales. It was built in the fifteenth century, across a wild, turbulent stream. For half a thousand years the water has thronged through its arches with a voice as of thunderings. The stream, in its tossing and struggle at this point in its career, reminds one of the time of turmoil through which all true

hearts pass in their striving after that which is right, and here also, as in the mind-contest, there is a fierce delight in the struggle. If you look up towards the mountains whose union with the clouds has given birth to this fair stream-child, you will see the silver thread upon the dark mountain side, and know that there the water is slipping down between the pine trees, with a longing to know what there is in the world beneath; and looking up the glen close to you, you can see little waves of white foam tossing up into the air, and peering over the heads of their fellows to see what means that roar beyond, growing louder and louder every moment; and when the fall is near, with what a wild joy the river rushes, hurrying onwards, swirling round rocks or dashing impetuously over them; wave on wave sweeps along clattering to its fellow, "See, the fall is near;" then with a headlong swing the last rock is cleared, and down the water leaps from ledge to ledge into the depths below. Some miss the track, and go eddying out into quiet little pools at the side, where they find long, green grasses waiting to be bathed by them. And there they lie still and make a calm little water-nook, wherein the grasses sway lazily to and fro, and the tiny hands of children dip, while their voices make a music in the air.

In one place the water has found a new way, and some of the quieter waves come trickling down in more sedate fashion than the riotous main body, and stealing soberly over the slanting rocks, slip into the main stream far below. In the midst of the stream, at its wildest, stands a little island of bright green, with a few bronze-stemmed pines, that look in dignified wonderment at the noisy water rushing past them, and intensify its wild uproar by their stately calm. One leafy tree on the edge of the green isle leans out over the rushing water and says: "Kiss me."

Beneath the water as it falls you can see the rocks washed smooth by countless generations of waves, and in some parts there is an underfoam half seen under the pellucid wave, as a maiden's love half reveals itself under her pure glance. A ceaseless shower of diamond drops and spray rises into the air, and therein the sunlight makes delicate rainbows. Over the stream flutters a detached fragment of exquisite color that is a butterfly, and birds sweep backwards and forwards, cooling their hot wings in the wave crests. When the time of struggle, with its toil and its tumult, is over, and the river has crashed down its many feet into the bed below, it flows on serene and strong. For a little while there may be a toss here and an eddy there, that are memories of the time of strife, but even they pass, and the free, deep stream moves in its majestic strength towards the sea. And lo! from hills far asunder from those that had given it birth, another stream has been struggling its way to meet this. It also has had its seasons of wild fighting, with for comfort and support, none but divine nature. It also has triumphed. For both the season of doubt and struggle is over now, and these twain, the stronger and the more beautiful for the difficulties they have vanquished, flow into each other—as two noble lives—and move onwards to the sea, making a new gladness and beauty in the earth.

EDWARD B. AVELING.

THE PATH OF PROGRESS.

HUMAN progress is the passage from a state of complete bondage to an ever increasing state of freedom. All men, individually and collectively, are spending life in preserving or bursting the bonds of servitude. If the former, its secret spring is personal or class interest in some monopoly. If the latter, it arises either from a condition no longer bearable, leading to wild and often useless attempts at redress, or being guided by knowledge, inspirited with the unselfish enthusiasm of grand ideas, and embodied in organised endeavours, it quietly and surely clears the path of progress.

In the necessities and helplessness of childhood we find the reasons and causes of all governments; and in the physical and intellectual development of man we find the source of increasing repugnance to autocratic rule; thence the germ and growing love of liberty, inducing a constant and ever more increasing strife against all forms of paternal domination.

The first all-absorbing question of life is the attainment of a sufficient and constant supply for the demands of the stomach. And this continues even now, and seems likely to remain for a very long period, the sum and substance of the hopes and fears of by far the largest number of bipeds, whose development, through some untoward circumstance, seems to have been arrested just at this point. If so, all hope of further development for them is entirely out of the question. But there are some to whom, when the certainty of physical life is well assured, comes the opportunity for mental development, for the generating and fructifying of noble and far-reaching ideas. Then it is that the true use of the arts and sciences is manifest, in lifting thought and mind out of the coarser selfish elements of being on to a higher plane. For we must not suppose the essential difference between vulgarity and refinement is that the one is common and the other rare, though this is too true, but that the former looks at everything from the selfish point of view—what shall *we* gain in food or drink, in clothes or position? what power shall we wield?—whilst refinement is unobtrusively manifest in self-forgetfulness. The special glory of the arts and sciences, therefore, is, not that they are instruments for making money or position, but for taking us unconsciously, for only thus can it be done, out of self, and filling us with delight in the study or work itself in which we may be engaged. There are others who, having got beyond the first stage and the first question of existence, have developed mentally just sufficiently to be absorbed in the next dominant question, which widely obtains in this world, “How they may save their own souls?” These, though undoubtedly in a more advanced and hopeful stage, still retain in a large measure the selfish elements of the lowest life. Nevertheless, such persons may, and frequently are, lifted out of the narrowness of a selfish religion in varying degree by the diviner truths and beauties with which the arts and sciences permeate the minds of their votaries. Thus, in fact, do truth and beauty acquire dominion; thus alone has selfishness been conquered, or will be conquered; and thus is indicated to us the only possible path of progress. Not for one moment would we disparage self-knowledge, but merely guard against the false notion current that it can be acquired alone by

constant introspection, and would place by contrast in the strongest light the greater truth, that the completed self-knowledge can only be attained from the standpoint of other and the widest knowledge possible. The habit of seeing all things only with our own eyes, through our own spectacles, must give place to the contemplation of self from other standpoints, from that of the race and the world.

The nature of this progress of the race is shadowed forth in the change from entire absorption in the search of food to unbounded delight in ideas. A passage from the concrete to the abstract. See how men will lie, steal, and kill for food for the belly, to satisfy the more selfish elements of their nature. But when they are filled with love of truth, they pass to the acme of self-forgetfulness, and will even die for the same.

The essence of all tyrannies is selfishness. And it might be thoughtlessly affirmed that all resistance to tyranny springs from self-love at least, if not selfishness. But whenever this is so, and it is successful, you will always find an attempt to enthrone some other tyranny in the place of the one destroyed. For the resistance which tends to liberty, being absorbed in some grand idea, is self-forgetful, seeks only otherness, the greater truths, the diviner beauties, held not in one, but in all. Whatever the amount of freedom won in past ages, in Persia, Egypt, Greece, or Italy, it was won under the inspiration of great ideas, embodied either in art or philosophy, lifting their disciples out of the valley of the customary into the fuller and clearer vision of the mountain top. Art, science, and philosophy may at first only attempt to expound and illustrate the religious and political life of the past and present, but ere long they begin to question, then develop, and at last remodel these into better forms, which gradually supplant the old.

Freedom of thought ever precedes freedom of action. Fresh thought, new ideas, press forward to ultimate embodiment. To counteract this tendency of human nature, those who tyrannised over the outward life sought to carry their rule to the inmost recesses of the mind, sought to make their dominion absolute. Religious imperialism was allied to political imperialism. And for ages men never for a moment doubted their absolute necessity to society. Even now the bulk of mankind are under the twin delusion that kings and gods are necessary to prevent a return to primitive chaos, hating with all the intensity that ignorance and prejudice can yield any and every attempt at change which seeks to put these on one side. Our work is clearly to diffuse artistic, scientific, and philosophic ideas, thus to liberate the mind, so that men, rising superior to superstition and prejudice, may become so imbued with thoughts of freedom that they cannot rest till they enjoy their fullest realisation.

In conclusion, we must not forget that all collective progress lies incipiently in individual development. Not that any one individual, any particular government, any special code of laws, can yield us immediate liberty. Only as individual progress is multiplied into the whole race, is true, universal, and complete progress possible. Liberty cannot be bestowed; only as it is wrought out in us can we enjoy it. Only as each individual cultivates the love of truth, the enjoyment of the beautiful, does he really help to free others, does he desire the freedom of others, does he participate in this, the highest aspiration, individual freedom by universal liberty.

TOUZEAU PARRIS.

LAWS OF NATURE.

Was ever a more useful and at the same time more unfortunate combination of words? Most civilised people have some conception of a municipal law—that is, a law of a state—and few persons are altogether wrong in that conception. A law, thus regarded, is an enactment, an order, a wish or determination, promulgated by the legislative power for the guidance of the people. But there is no conceivable resemblance between a law of this sort and a law of nature.

“Laws of Nature” is a phrase used by some writers to denote the unwritten, unformulated principles that govern human actions before any really formal laws have been laid down. But such a use of the phrase is very incorrect. An Act of Parliament is a “Law of Nature” as much as any merely understood principle that regulates human life. No sooner does man become a society, be it family, clan, tribe, or nation, than he needs municipal law, formally expressed or tacitly agreed upon. No matter how rude, how instinctive, how unreasoning, how merely elementary such laws may be, they exist and sway human conduct wherever society exists.

The phrase “Laws of Nature” is also used to denote natural phenomena and their changes, and very often, among unphilosophical persons, to express their conceptions of the *causes* of the phenomena of nature. Here it is that we find many otherwise sensible people falling into most egregious blunders. Speak to the next man you meet respecting a law of nature; and at once there starts up before his vision the idea of government, subjects, and the whole apparatus, more or less distinct, of a legislative power. “A Law of Nature!” he soliloquises; “that implies a law-giver; and this law regulates unerringly the particular branch of nature on which it has been imposed. Here, then, is positive proof of a divine ruler. The whole of nature is governed by unalterable laws, and they were given and must be executed by a God. How blind, then, the atheist must be to admit that there are Laws of Nature, and yet to doubt the existence of him who framed them!”

If we admit the premisses the reasoning is good enough. If nature has laws, in the same sense as society has them, then they must have been given, or formulated, or imposed by some one.

But, in truth, nature has no *laws*, obeys no orders; is not restrained by any prohibitions; nor does she recognise any ruling authority. To do so, nature must be everywhere alive and intelligent, and her aptitude for submission must be perfect. Where is the man who really believes that the river flows because commanded to do so; that the tree grows for similar reasons; that a wave breaks in obedience to an order from high quarters; or that a planet moves in an elliptical orbit in conscious submission to the will of a mathematical superior? To talk of nature's materials and forces *obeying laws* is to confess that as yet you have not passed beyond fetishism or childhood. The fetish worshipper ascribes consciousness and will to the clod, the stone, or bit of wood he fears and serves. The child attributes thought and conscious action to his ball, his stool, or doll; and so the grown-up child, the greatest of all babies, the theologian, ascribes to the changing phenomena of nature an obedience to *laws*.

The "Laws of Nature" do not exist except in human brains and books. They form part of the sum and substance of human knowledge, not the external objects of our knowledge. They are purely subjective, not objective. A Law of Nature is merely the statement of an ascertained natural fact, or, better, the knowledge of the fact expressed in words. When such a statement is exact, it becomes a formula which for ever secures to posterity the results of a given discovery, and helps to lead us in many cases to other facts previously unknown. A Law of Nature, that is, an exact statement of fact, shows also the relation between two or more events. The flow of a river, for example, is due to excess of water at its fount, and the rapid or gradual slope of the ground forming the river bed. Given the quantity of water in a measured space of time at the fount, given the breadth of the river bed and its rate of decline, we can calculate how deep the water will be at a given spot and how fast it will flow; and the process of reasoning may easily be reversed, for the Laws of Nature will guide us to correct conclusions.

So, again, if I am told that a stone is let fall from a balloon a mile above the earth, I can calculate the time of its descent, how long it will take to fall 20 feet, a quarter of a mile, &c. If I also know its weight, I can calculate, too, the momentum with which it will strike the earth. Further, it is easy to calculate, on the same grounds, how great a force would be needed to hurl that stone a mile high, how long it would take it to rise to that height, and how fast it must travel when leaving the earth in order to mount so high. But this calculation was an utter impossibility until experiments had been made, and the results formulated; and the formulæ in question are "Laws of Nature."

Many people use the phrase "Laws of Nature" to denote the *causes* of physical phenomena. They speak of the laws of gravitation causing the revolutions of planets; of the laws of chemical combination uniting different elements into new compounds, &c. But they speak as unphilosophically as a man would who should ascribe the formation of an island to a scientific map of it; for a natural law is but the image of a physical fact, as the map is of the island. And just as a correct map of any country is a good guide for an educated traveller, so is a law in physical science a guide to the student in his investigations of nature. As no correct map can be made without a survey—that is, one or more men must first explore a region, then chartographically describe it—so must one or more men ascertain the facts of physical science and their invariable relations before there can be any natural laws; for natural laws are but verbal maps of recurrent and fixed phenomena.

All the talk, therefore, about nature's laws having an author is mere wind, unless that authorship be ascribed to men who have discovered nature's phenomena and formulated the facts. The phrase I criticise is exceedingly convenient; but there is none that requires greater care in the using.

J. SYMES.

A TRAVELLER, going to bed, was surprised to see a ghost, which—or who—in a sepulchral tone, began: "I am the spirit of one who was foully murdered here." "That's no business of mine," said the traveller, turning round on his pillow. "Apply to the proper quarter. Good night."

MARK TWAIN IN THE "HOLY LAND."

SAMUEL L. CLEMENS, popularly known by his pseudonym of "Mark Twain," is one of the most delightful humorists that America—land of freedom and of wit—has produced. His works are well known in this country, and the exuberant drollery which abounds in their pages has secured for them a wide-spread popularity. When the fit is upon him, Mark does not hesitate to satirize and ridicule religious matters: not "blasphemously," as Dod Grile occasionally treats them, but in a spirit of pure, irresistible fun and "cussedness." In proof whereof, witness the wonderful dialogue between the rough miner and the "gospel sharp" (*Anglicé* parson) anent the burial of Buck Fanshawe.

Some few years ago, Mark Twain, in company with a large number of excursionists, journeyed over the greater part of the globe. His experiences during the trip are narrated in his happiest style in two volumes, "The Innocents Abroad" and "The New Pilgrim's Progress." In the latter occur the chapters describing his impressions of the "Holy Land," and it is with some incidents in connection with this that I propose to bore the gentle reader.

The follies and stupidities of the guides and sight-mongers of the "Holy Land" are dwelt upon with good-humoured exaggeration by this genial author, who is never weary of laughing at the simple credulity of the believers. For example, he mentions that near Calvary a large stone, built into the wall of a house, was exhibited to the party as "one of the very stones of Jerusalem" which Christ mentioned when he was reprov'd for allowing the people to shout "Hosannah," on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. One of the pilgrims said: "But there is no evidence that the stones *did* cry out. Christ said that if the people stopped from shouting 'Hosannah,' the very stones *would* do it." The guide was perfectly serene. He said, calmly, "This is one of the stones that *would* have cried out." "It was of little use," adds Mark, "to try to shake this fellow's simple faith—it was easy to see that."

Many instances of a similar nature might be quoted. The colossal credulity, the "simple" stupidity of these out-and-out believers, Mark Twain lashes with unsparing hand. But when his own less powerful and less grotesque religious sympathies are touched, when he approaches any object recalling to his mind the pious teachings of his childhood, Mark himself becomes a maudlin sentimentalist, and gushes about the "holy places" like a romantic school-girl. He can laugh at the believers in St. Veronica's handkerchief or the blood of St. Januarius; but set him down in front of the "Holy Sepulchre," and he twaddles forthwith of "the most sacred locality on earth to millions and millions of men and women and children; the noble and the humble, bond and free," and so on, *ad nauseam*. He ridicules the story of Helena finding the crown of thorns, the nails, and the copper plate with the inscription which was affixed to the cross; but when he stands in front of Galilee he feels impressed, and gushes religiously.

This may be inconsistent, but it is only natural. The Protestant sneers at the "mummery" of the Roman Catholic; and, on returning to his own conventicle, he goes with solemn visage through a slightly modified version of the same "mummery." The superstition of our

neighbours is repulsive and degrading ; our own superstition is a sweet and holy thing ; and, if any philanthropist endeavours to reason it out of us, we indignantly ask, "What will you put in its place?" Mark Twain should cease to laugh at the superstitious follies of others, or he should rise above his own weaknesses in that way, and poke his delightful fun at all creeds alike!

GEORGE STANDRING.

PROSPECTS OF FREETHOUGHT IN FRANCE.

If it be true, as is asserted by Ernest Renan in his "Histoire Générale et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitiques," that Monotheism, theocracy, and intolerance are the distinctive marks of the Semitic nations, whilst the spirit of individual search after truth, Freethought, and tolerance are the no less distinctive marks of the Indo-European race, I dare affirm that actually the most intensely Indo-European nation in the world is the French, and the most intensely French are France's philosophers and their disciples the French Republicans.

This does not suit our Catholics, who would gladly shut every one's eyes to a fact so inglorious, in their opinion, for the nation they liked to style the eldest daughter of the Church. If the world would only believe that the Church's statistics are the expression of the reality, and that out of 36 millions of French some 34 or 35, having been born and baptised in the Catholic religion, are to be reckoned among the faithful, they would be pleased enough. Every one, however, knows this is not the case, and it was not necessary that so high a functionary as the Prefect of the Seine, M. Senator Hérold, should lose a son of his and give him a secular burial, for every one, in and out of France, to be convinced that very large numbers of Frenchmen have long ago parted with the Church, never to return to it. The *enterrement civil* of the Préfet de la Seine's son was nevertheless a capital example; for there are, among the thousands of *employés de la ville*, a great number of families that till now seldom or never dared allow their inmost feelings full play, from fear of ruining their worldly interests and prospects of advancement. And so it is through all France. But now that the Préfet de la Seine has given the example, who is the unbeliever among the civil servants of the Seine who will not feel emboldened to go and do likewise? In this respect the faithfulness of the Prefect to his own anti-clerical opinions cannot be over-praised. He has, so to speak, taken the clerical yoke off the necks of all his *subordonnés*, which was the more to be desired, as the Prefect himself, it is true, has been changed, M. Hérold having replaced M. Ferdinand Duval, who, though a sceptic, was a tool in the hands of Churchmen; but the heads of the various administrative offices have not been removed, and though they, to pay their court to M. Hérold, just now affect not to blame him, but, on the contrary, paraded their presence at his son's funeral, as if they too had been consistent Freethinkers, they are not at all to be relied upon, and would gladly avenge themselves and their former masters on the heads of the poor *employés* under them. You see what the situation is, and all over France it is more or less the

same. What will the end of it be? I don't think I am mistaken in foreboding that the end of it shall be the triumph of Freethought. The strength of the theocratic spirit is apparently very great. It shows itself able to keep at bay the powers that be, and has been lately so successful as to enlist the services of such a man as Jules Simon, who has undertaken to prevent the passing of Article 7 of the Ferry Bill before the Senate. But this enlisting of Jules Simon is perhaps a proof of weakness rather than strength, for it shows that the clericals had nobody in their own ranks to oppose to Jules Ferry, Paul Bert, and their numerous friends. There is, besides, an enormous difference between enlisting soldiers and enlisting a chief. Soldiers do your bidding, you do the bidding of the chief; and be sure that such a chief as Jules Simon has aims of his own that he will consider before everything else. I don't think the clericals have struck a very good bargain in allying themselves with Jules Simon, and as regards the latter, I think he is very actively engaged in undoing himself and ruining his own prospects. He, no doubt, is a believer in his own skill and good luck; but as the proverb says, "*Tant va la cruche à l'eau qu'à la fin elle se casse*," and M. Jules Simon has so often brought his pitcher to the fountain of popular favour, that the day is not distant when he may find, to his intense and very disagreeable surprise, that he went to it once too often.

The battle, besides, is not to be won by one man, but by the whole nation, for the field of battle is everywhere; in every family, in every home, in every school, in every club or café, in every municipal or departmental council, the struggle is going on, and every one, from the President of the Republic to the last beadle and gamekeeper, from the oldest to the youngest, is engaged in it.

It is true none of us is to be broken on the wheel, or beheaded by the hangman, or burnt on the pile, but if the Church could not conquer its enemies when it had at its service the wheel, the axe, the pile, and all the instruments of torture it long relied upon, is it likely to conquer them now that it has been disarmed, and is compelled to fight a nearly equal, though still very unfair, fight?

Often has the tide turned, it is true, but when a nation has been able to recover from such wholesale massacres as were perpetrated after the days of June, 1848, and the Commune of 1871, it can safely be predicted that even if they kept united, the army, the magistracy, and the clergy would have much to do to keep such a nation in fetters. What is it to be when the army, the magistracy, and the clergy are divided, as they are now, and are likely to be still more in times to come?

The note of interrogation at the end of the foregoing sentence might, I think, be dispensed with.

Is there then no threatening cloud to be taken notice of in the rose-coloured sky of French Freethought? Far be it from me to indulge in such a fanciful dream, or to under-estimate the strength of the Catholic spirit. The battle of Freethought against Jesuitism is one ever to be fought, ever to be won again. The Church of Rome, both led and served as it is by the Jesuits, has lost none of its gigantic powers, and our Opportunist friends are, I am afraid, unwittingly, and very foolishly, playing into the Jesuits' hands, by endeavouring to set up a kind of Gallican against the Ultramontane Church. Nothing in this respect is

more curious and instructive than the discussion on the *budget des cultes* that has just taken place in the Chamber of Deputies. The question was about bringing down the salaries of archbishops and bishops from 20,000frs. and 15,000frs. respectively to 15,000frs. and 10,000frs., on one side, and on the other increasing the salaries of 2,000 poor curates by 100frs., which entails a charge of 200,000frs. on the budget of the next and following years. It is plain that the bishops and archbishops are irreconcilable enemies of the Republic, and that it is very absurd to give them larger salaries than they are entitled to by the very letter of the *Concordat*. This is simply paying for the rod we are to be beaten with. On the other side it is quite true that the *low clergy*, as the poor vicars and curates are called, though they are generally bound body and soul to the modern doctrines of the Church of Rome, precisely because they are fearfully lorded over by the bishops, are much less hostile to the Republic than their lords and masters; and nothing could be more to the point than the letter of a poor curate, of a village of the Tarn, that was read to the Chamber by a deputy of that department, M. Bernard Navergne. "I have the honour, M. Député," wrote the poor curate, "to send you a copy of the decree just levelled at me by my bishop. As you will see, the cause of my troubles is my denying the legitimacy of the Vatican Council, and my not believing in the infallibility of the Pope. I used to keep these sentiments to myself, but on seeing the consequences that are being drawn from the dogma of Papal infallibility, on seeing that the aim pursued was the temporal domination by means of Ultramontanised youth, in the same way that this very end has been already attained in the Church by the Ultramontanising of our young clergy in our seminaries, I could no longer stand it, and I gave vent to my sentiments. I refused to contribute for the universities called Catholic; I refused to sign the petitions against the Jules Ferry laws. *Inde ira, &c.*"

To sum it up, the poor curate was deprived of his humble functions by a decree of his lord, † Etienne Emile, Archbishop of Albi. There is little doubt the number of vicars and curates thus treated by their bishops is legion, and it might not be very difficult to set up a kind of schism between the low and the high clergy. But what is the result of such a policy likely to be?

According to our Opportunists, nothing more clever could be done. They don't want to disestablish the Catholic Church, they want to lay their hands upon it and make it a tool, *un moyen de gouvernement*.

I cannot conceive of a more dangerous policy. There never was a really Gallican Church in France, and I hope there never will be a French national Church. It has from time to time been the dream of a few statesmen. Napoleon I., at the very time he drew up the *Concordat*, thought he could with a stroke of his pen have turned France Protestant. This idea, if I am not mistaken, has been mostly entertained by English Protestants, but it is all bosh, and it proves only that neither the Napoleons nor the English know the nation that gave birth to Rabelais, Voltaire, Diderot, and our modern Freethinkers. With very few exceptions, like Father Hyacinthe, and the poor curate just spoken of, the whole clergy of France, high and low, are equally pledged to the most absolute Ultramontanism. Even M. de Pressensé, a Protestant of note,

avers that "from this doctrinal point of view all difference between the secular and regular clergy is obliterated." Why should we not profit by the advantage thus given us to part with the Church, high and low, cut off their supplies, and once and for ever make a reality of the French Revolution's governing idea, the secular opposed to the religious state?

Suppose our moderate and bamboozled friends succeed in investing, through a feud between bishops and curates, the low clergy with a new prestige, the war between Freethought and religion shall simply be postponed, and our forces scattered.

Is it not a queer way to conquer one's foe to refuse him a little money to gild the coronets of a few princes of the Church, and supply him largely with funds to feed the ranks of his army? Yet such is the policy that has just prevailed in the Chamber of Deputies, and I can't help seeing the danger, and calling your attention to it. This danger, besides, has been clearly pointed out in the Chamber by my good friend Maigne, but I am sorry to say he was not listened to, and his amendment was lost.

You see that, as regards the Church, the policy of the Opportunists and that of the Intransigents are as fundamentally different as it is possible to be.

Ours is the policy of complete disestablishment, and our friend M. Boysset has just laid down on the table of the House a Bill, signed by most of the Extreme Left deputies, and a few of the *Union Républicaine*, to carry out the repeal of the *Concordat*, and the abolition of the *budget des cultes*. This is the truly Republican policy; for suppose the *Concordat* repealed and the Church disestablished, we can then safely enter on the policy of full liberty to all. We, however, have not the slightest hope of seeing our Bill voted by the Chamber; but it must be discussed in order that it should become the main plank in our platform at the general election of 1881. We have, as you well know, to fight against tremendous odds. Only remember what Macaulay said of our enemies in his fine essay on Ranke's "History of the Popes:" "With what vehemence, with what policy, with what exact discipline, with what dauntless courage, with what self-denial, with what forgetfulness of the dearest private ties, with what intense and stubborn devotion to a single end, with what unscrupulous laxity and versatility in the choice of means, the Jesuits fought the battle of their Church, is written in every page of the annals of Europe during several generations." We know it, and we know too that we should not deserve the victory if we were not able to show as much vehemence, policy, discipline, courage, self-denial, all the qualities just enumerated, except the unscrupulous laxity in the choice of means that has made the name of Jesuit a synonymous term with social immorality, political depravity, and religious hypocrisy. The struggle is much harder for us. We are not associated. When we succumb, either for a time or for ever, our wives and children are not provided for, raised up again, and this makes an awful difference between the clerical and the Freethinker, as regards the virtue necessary to forget the dearest private ties.

This reminds me of another great mistake of Gambetta. He more than once said that *heroic times were over*, and made a sort of contempt

for heroism part of his policy. This is, both in fact and theory, a great error. Struggling against poverty, and against that sort of social excommunication under which the well-to-do and respectable classes hold those who dare to attack their interests and prejudices, require as much courage and self-denial as a fight on a field of battle; and only such as have gone through it can know what a fiery ordeal this is, and what kind of heroism it calls for. The number of those who dare to have an opinion of their own, and dauntlessly stand by it, grows larger and larger every day. Heroic times are not over at all, and let us hope won't soon be over; for it is a moral revolution we want. Old ideas and lax morals will never carry us over the fearful crisis, Freethought must go through. If we rightly value the strength of our enemies, I think they are greatly mistaken in the way they undervalue ours. They do not believe in morality. They think we are as lax and as corrupt as they are, and would have us be. In this, I think, they are deceived, and this too is what makes me believe we shall, in the long run, get the better of them. Our immediate prospects, however, are not, though fair, exceedingly pleasant, and what makes them the more unpleasant is that our greatest difficulties are due to our Opportunists' lack of vigour and decision at a moment when the decisive battle of disfranchisement might have been won, if they had only remained faithful to their own principles.

A. TALANDIER.

AN EPISODE OF THE "CINQUE GIORNATE."

"The artificial noble shrinks into a dwarf before the noble of nature."—THOMAS PAINE.

THE "Five Glorious Days" were drawing towards their close; the people of Milan, after a death-struggle in which men, women, and children—armed, for the most part, with such weapons as clubs, stones, and household implements—had all borne their part, began to hope for victory; for the trained soldiers of Austria, though at least twenty thousand in number, and provided with cannon and all other appurtenances of modern war, gave way everywhere, yielding street after street, position after position, whilst barricades arose as if by enchantment in all directions, and the citizens—whose numbers and daring increased at every moment—rained a deadly fire from behind them and from their windows and roofs upon the hated *Tedeschi*, who now saw themselves made the target of their own abandoned weapons. Women who had never fired a gun in their lives might now be seen loading those of their fathers, husbands, and brothers, or assisting in the work of hurling down furniture and stones upon the soldiery. In many and many a house delicate ladies and women of the people might be seen working together at the manufacture of cartridges, or casting their plate into bullets. From time to time the door of one of these houses would open to admit men bearing a bleeding human form; some of the workers would then leave their task to help that of the surgeon. The rest of these women—worthy descendants of the matrons of old Rome—would continue as before; from a hundred steeples the clang of the tocsin bell might be heard, and mingled with cannon-

thunder, that sound pealed far away across the level plains of Lombardy, summoning peasants from their labour to the aid of the struggling city.

Oh ! it was a glorious time—a time of wild, fierce enthusiasm—a time of triumph and vengeance, of hope and despair, of exultation and mourning ; when a down-trodden people rose at last upon its oppressors, and showed an astonished world that noblest courage could still dwell within an Italian breast. For centuries the world had mocked and spat upon captive Italy ; but now not one son of Italy worthy the name but would show that world how—

“ L'antico valore.
Negli italisi cor non è ancor morto.”

For the cannon of the “ Cinque Giornate ” will be echoed from Alp to sea, and Italia's sons will awake at that voice of thunder from the sleep of ages, and drive forth the crowned and cowed oppressor.

And whilst the people were thus fighting the battle of freedom, what were the deeds of the aristocracy ? That chivalrous body had, with few honourable exceptions, fled away into Piedmont, or was hiding in holes and dens within its palaces. And it is this same aristocracy, allied with the worse half of the middle class, that now pretends to govern the people who were the liberators of Italy !

* * * * *

The greater portion of the city has been won, but the ramparts on its eastern side are still held by the Teuton. So also are many buildings adjoining them. The cannon and the musket continue to belch forth death, a dim cloud of sulphurous smoke broods above the city ; beneath that cloud a thousand tragedies are taking place at once—wild charges, despairing rallies, deeds of noblest personal daring.

Before the vast *Palazzo del Genio*, or Engineers' Barrack, a surging crowd has assembled, and dashes itself repeatedly against the massive gate. In vain ! the place has been strongly fortified, and from window and loophole a deadly fire rains upon the assailants, who at length withdraw behind the shelter of their barricades.

But look ! a halting, crooked form—a form so uncouth as at any other moment to excite aversion—steps forward bearing a faggot upon its crooked shoulders, and advancing to the door of the palace, there deposits its burthen. Again and yet again the scene is repeated ; slowly, painfully, the cripple toils on, unmindful of the shower of balls ; the blood flows from more than one wound, but he seems not to heed it. The people look on with stupid wonder at first, then divining his object, they rush to the pile of firewood from which the first faggots had been taken, and pile others up against the door, which is soon burned down ; they rush in, putting to the sword or making prisoner the whole of the defenders. A leader demands the name of the hero to whom the victory is due. “ Pasquale Gottocorno, the Hunchback,” answer a number of voices in the crowd.

Yes, reader, the man whose heroism caused the fall of one of the most important positions in Milan, thereby hastening the triumph of his fellow-citizens, was a poor, ignorant, despised hunchback, who, too infirm for hard work, gained a scanty living as a sweeper. That poor,

suffering creature was willing to lay down his life for his country, and yet, what had been the gifts of that country?—Brutal insult, the jests and mockery daily heaped upon him by the thoughtless and unfeeling!

For some years after the events above narrated, Pasquale Gottocorno dragged on a wretched existence, his wounds rendering him still less capable of exertion than nature had already made him. A small pension was, it is true, assigned him by the municipality; this was of course stopped on the return of the Austrians, though it was, I believe, renewed after the revolution of 1858.

The noblest mind may dwell within the rudest body, and it is to hearts like that of the poor Milanese cripple that Italy owes her partial regeneration. I say *partial*, for, alas! into what hands has she not fallen?

“ But time at last sets all things even.
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

R. H. DYAS.

NATURA NATURANS AND NATURA NATURATA.

THE NATURE OF THINGS AND CAUSE.

“ Philosophy is not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose, but musical as is Apollo's lute.”—MILTON.

“ Truth is the body of God, as light is his shadow.”—PLATO.

THAT is, when truly discerned and logically followed out; but there is nothing so unreasonable as reason, out of season, or reason misapplied, and nothing more often misleading than reasoning from analogy, except in the case of ascertained truth in a general application, as when Newton, by the law of gravitation which he had discovered, was enabled to give an explanation of the motion of the tides. But the fundamental reason of the motion of gravitation, or of any motion, must be referred to first principles, seeing that the cause or nature of a thing is in what it does, and there is nothing more to know about it; or you must press on and enquire the reason or cause of the supposed cause or nature, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Professor Blackie, of Edinburgh, has written a very clever and learned work, “The Natural History of Atheism,” referring chiefly to Mr. Bradlaugh, the late Harriet Martineau, Professor Tyndall, and myself. Not content with our asserting that as a matter of course there *must* be a sufficient cause or reason in nature, or in the nature of the material, for all that occurs in an eternal chain and sequence of action and events, in which perpetual flow and interaction are involved, we must act in accordance therewith and accept the consequences, though knowledge is power and gives us a certain command over nature and over ourselves. Hence, the uniformity of law and the sense of being in all things the creatures of circumstances, is not fatalism in a philosophical sense, but allows the ability to choose and act for the best as determined by knowledge and reason. Now, Professor Blackie in his restless mind wants a

cause for the first principles of nature, and supposes a somebody, or some unintelligible abstract mind in nature designing and working the designs out like a common carpenter, and this assumed "intelligence" he calls God, and Professor Blackie does me the honour to quote largely from my "Letters" to Miss Martineau. Now Professor Tyndall, in a reply in an article in the *Contemporary Review*, refers to his boyhood, when he would lie awake in the night puzzling his inquisitive brains as to "Who then made God?" And if you omit the personality, as Dr. Carpenter and Professor Blackie seem to do, and refer to an "intelligence" in all natural action, we must press on the question what caused the intelligence, since all we know of or can conceive as intelligence is an educated function of a complex intesselated organism in its relation to external circumstances, in one aspect as a mirror, in another aspect as an instrument working by imitation with an application, which is Bacon's definition of design. And Professor Fowler, of Oxford, in his new work on "Bacon's Novum Organum," in a note p. 218, says: "The restless ambition of the intellect is one of the impediments to the attainment of truth. The mind ever desires to penetrate further and further into the nature and causes of things, but in vain. And hence, feeling its helplessness, it falls back upon itself, and supposes the processes of nature to be carried on with the same ends and in the same manner as the works of man." Now, art must be acquired by the observation of what is, and the works of art may be termed a second nature, just as habit is so called, using conditions in placing matter beside matter, but matter doing all the work, as Professor Playfair well said. Hence, to refer the primary cause to mind is simply absurd. The real analogy from animate to inanimate nature is in instinct, the blind action to an end or "purpose" without acquired knowledge or education, as when the spider weaves that marvellous and most symmetrical web in order to get its living in catching flies, as we throw out nets to catch fish and birds. We all allow that there must be some such blind formative principle at work, so to speak, throughout nature, either for the development of the spider's body or the beautiful crystalline formations on the frosted windows. The cause, or nature, is exhibited in the effect, and to suppose a somebody or a something acting with conscious, determining intelligence behind and besides the substance itself is only making a mystery of plain facts, and uttering transcendental nonsense—the sort of stuff dreams are made of.

Then after what I have written, I can hardly be misunderstood in saying that true philosophy, in an emotional or poetic sense, may be termed an affection of the mind, obedient to the highest reason of enlightened and educated intellect, as the basis of pure and natural emotions. But this can hardly be entertained, or even comprehended, by those who, as Plutarch says, "retain the foolish and frightful opinions they received in infancy." My opinion then is, that philosophy rightly felt and understood is deeply reverential, as in the words of Plato and Milton, and, in fact, a profoundly pure and elevating religion—if we must retain that word—indeed, the only high and effective religion, the only religion completely discarding idol-worship and selfish principles. It seems to me that nothing can be higher or more "spiritual" than philosophy founded on true science, and united with

emotion and poetic aspirations and sentiments, which each must be inspired with according to his genius and character. But we must learn philosophy in "the garden of the Muses and the house of charity," and discard all superstitious notions and anthropomorphisms for realities; let Apollo take the place of Pan in making all things more musical and beautiful, and more in conformity with our highest sentiments, needs, and desires, but ever yielding to the inevitable, for, as in "Julius Cæsar," "of your philosophy you make no use if you give place to accidental evils." In a word, take things philosophically, courage, fortitude, and true magnanimity crowning the edifice.

HENRY G. ATKINSON.

FALSE WITNESS.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.

"Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

THE above words contain the very nucleus and kernel of the Christian faith. The Divinity of Christ, the Resurrection, the Judgment, the Immortality of the human race, all these cardinal doctrines are accepted and declared in a few verses translated from an ancient Chaldean poem, written ages before the occurrence of the events chronicled in the New Testament, ages before the ideas embodied in this outburst of Oriental eloquence had been conceived by the Jewish mind.

With reference to a rising from the dead and a living again, it may truly be said that all Christendom has rested with more confidence upon the declarations of Job than upon the narrative of the Gospels or the exhortations of the Epistles.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth!" How swells and peals the Easter music, proclaiming the victory of the risen Saviour over death and the grave!

"I know that my Redeemer liveth!" How solemnly triumphant rings out that undaunted prophecy over the cofined remains of "this our brother," or "this our sister," committed to the earth in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection!

And yet Job, or whoever was the author of the Chaldean epic, never wrote any such words, never had any such ideas. The whole of that beautiful structure of belief, so far, at least, as the above quotation has to do with its building up, is founded upon an ignorant misinterpretation of a series of very simple and natural expressions. The suffering philosopher mourns over the blindness of his accusers and would-be counsellors, and appeals to posterity for his justification. It is the same complaint which every man whose words or deeds are in advance of his generation has been obliged to make ever since Job's day, and will be obliged to make for ages to come. It is Galileo's irrepressible whisper, *"And yet it moves!"* it is Garrison's bold cry, *"I will speak, AND I WILL BE HEARD!"*

This, "in plain English," is what Job really meant:—

"My enemies are many; my friends do not understand me. I am sick and miserable. My experience of pain and trouble has deepened my

insight as to the real meaning of life ; but when I wish to tell what I have learned nobody will listen to me. Oh, that my words were written in a book, that they were engraved upon a rock? For I know that by-and-by, long after I am dead, perhaps, some one will rise up who will say successfully what I am now saying in vain. That man will be my vindicator, and posterity will reverse the sentence of my persecutors. I am sure of this, although for me nothing remains but death and corruption. I know better than any one else how diseased and wretched I am. But why do you reproach me for my sufferings? Am I to blame for them? Be careful how you take it upon you to judge me, lest in doing so you should condemn yourselves !”

This simple and rational interpretation is to be found in a recently published Italian translation of the book of Job, by Signor Benjamin Consolo, a learned Jew, of Florence, one of the most profound Hebrew scholars of this or any age.

And the discovery raises an important question concerning Christian scholarship and Christian morals. How is it that this egregious blunder in the translation of so familiar a passage has been suffered to go so long uncorrected? Are there in Christendom no students of Hebrew sufficiently conversant with that language to correct the mistake? Or is it thought a dangerous thing for “the people” to know that Job did *not* bear testimony to the truth of doctrines devised ages after worms had destroyed his body?

The error, no doubt, arose at first in a misunderstanding of the Hebrew word which means redeemer, saviour, or vindicator. Job meant that he hoped a man would eventually rise up who would vindicate his memory by the means which Germans call a *Rettung*—that is, by writings which redeem or deliver the character of a deceased person from misapprehension or calumny. But the Christian translators, catching at the word *redeemer*, straightway conferred upon it Divine Personality and a capital initial, and then altered (ignorantly and unconsciously, let us hope) the sense of the ensuing passages to suit the supposed prophetic allusion to the revelation of the New Testament.

The only approach to a correct rendering of the verses is in the French translation by L. Segond, where the word *vengeur* with a little *v* is substituted for *Rédempteur* with a great *R*, and neither hint nor promise of the resurrection of the body is held out. So far as the change goes, it substantiates Signor Consolo’s interpretation; but the whole idea has not been grasped by the French translator, and, therefore, the result is not in all respects satisfactory. Monsieur Segond retains the “*I shall see God* ;” but does not claim that it will be in the flesh; on the contrary, he says it will be after the body is destroyed. But in the Italian translation there is no mention whatever of God; the expression having reference solely to the deplorable physical condition of the man.

Now that accurate knowledge and unbiassed judgment have been brought to bear upon this bit of ancient literature, it is to be hoped that Chaldean poetry will no longer be employed as a bulwark of Christian theology, and that the eloquent heathen who really *did* say that if a man die he shall *not* live again, may no longer be made to teach the Christian doctrine of immortality.

ELIZABETH E. EVANS.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

OFFICES :

Hall of Science, 142, Old Street, London, E.C.

1879—1880.

PRESIDENT :

CHARLES BRADLAUGH, 20, Circus Road, St. John's Wood, London, N.W.

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 „ (South-West) : W. Sadler, 112, Manor Street, Clapham, S. W.
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 Newcastle-on-Tyne : J. Sewell, 35, Kent Street, Shieldfield.
 Newport (Mon.) : F. Gillman, 133, Commercial Street.
 Normanton : J. D. Stones, Stone's Buildings, Altofts.
 Northampton : R. S. Johnson, 11, Pychley Street.
 Nottingham : W. Coppock, 9, Hockley.
 Oldham : R. Butterworth, 34, St. Thomas Street, North Coppice.
 Paisley : F. McLean, 9, School Wynd.
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 Rossendale and Haslingden : W. Paul, St. John's Buildings, Waterfoot.
 Rotherham : C. Young, Ferham House.
 Seghill : G. Dixon.
 Sheffield : A. Davies, Bridge's Buildings, Greystock Street.
 Shipley : A. Cryer, 17, Hall Lane, Wilmer Road.
 Southampton : C. T. Caplin, Adelaide Road, St. Denys.
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 Stockton : T. Mullen, 11, West Street.
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 Swinton : W. Hulse, 53, Middleton's Villas.
 Todmorden : Thos. Bancroft, 46, Knowlwood.
 Tow Law : J. Robinson, 43, Gladstone Terrace, Sunnyside.
 Wakefield and Normanton : J. D. Stones, Stones Buildings, Altofts, near Normanton.
 Washington : R. Ord, Poplar Cottage, Unsworth Colliery, Durham.
 Wigan : V. Lowe, 38, Lord Street, Wigan Lane.
 York : W. Button, 2, Piccadilly.

RULES.

NAME.

This Society is called "The National Secular Society."

PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTS.

The National Secular Society has been formed to maintain the principles and rights of Freethought, and to direct their application to the Secular improvement of this life.

By the principle of Freethought is meant the exercise of the understanding upon relevant facts, and independently of penal or priestly intimidation.

By the rights of Freethought are meant the liberty of free criticism for the security of truth, and the liberty of free publicity for the extension of truth.

Secularism relates to the present existence of man, and to actions the issue of which can be tested by experience.

It declares that the promotion of human improvement and happiness is the highest duty, and that morality is to be tested by utility.

That in order to promote effectually the improvement and happiness of mankind, every individual of the human family ought to be well placed and

well instructed, and that all who are of a suitable age ought to be usefully employed for their own and the general good.

That human improvement and happiness cannot be effectually promoted without civil and religious liberty; and that, therefore, it is the duty of every individual to actively attack all barriers to equal freedom of thought and utterance for all, upon political, theological, and social subjects.

A Secularist is one who deduces his moral duties from considerations which pertain to this life, and who, practically recognising the above duties, devotes himself to the promotion of the general good.

The object of the National Secular Society is to disseminate the above principles by every legitimate means in its power.

MEMBERSHIP.

Any person may, in the discretion of the Executive, be admitted a member of this Society who shall sign a form of Declaration as follows:—

“I am desirous of joining the National Secular Society, in order to extend its principles; and I pledge myself to do my best, if admitted as a member, to co-operate with my fellow-members to attain the object of this Association.”

Name

Address

Occupation

Active or Passive

Dated this.....day of.....18

This Declaration, signed by the candidate, shall be transmitted to the Secretary, with one shilling for a quarter's subscription; and, if the Executive accept the candidate, a certificate of membership will be issued, the total subscription being four shillings per year. Persons being unable to pay this subscription may be enrolled free on satisfying the Executive that they do good Secular work. Affiliated Societies whose members join the National Secular Society shall only pay one-third of the above subscription.

If the person desirous of joining the Society be already an enrolled member of some local Secular Society, he can, on that local Society becoming affiliated as a branch of the National Secular Society, join and pay his subscription through the local Secretary. In this case the branch will remit fourpence per quarter per member to the parent Society. In all cases the local organisation is of the highest importance. Without efficient district organisation the National Secular Society can effect little good.

The members are either active or passive.

The active list consists of those who do not object to the publication of their names as members of the National Secular Society. An active member's duty is to send as often as possible reliable reports to the President or Secretary of the doings of the local clergy, of special events, sermons, lectures, or publications affecting Secular progress. He should also aid in the circulation of Secular literature, and generally in the Freethought propaganda of his neighbourhood. Where a local Society exists, he ought to belong to it, whether or not it be a branch of this Society.

The passive list consists of those whose position does not permit the publication of their names, except at risk of serious injury. The knowledge of these names is confined to the Executive, and the members are only referred to by initials. It is earnestly requested that persons in an independent position will enrol themselves only as active members.

Members' subscriptions are payable quarterly, on December 25th, March 25th, June 24th, and September 29th.

Any member more than six months in arrears may—provided due notice of his default shall have been sent to him, and disregarded by him—be erased from the roll of members.

The Executive shall have power to expel any member, but the member so expelled shall have power to appeal to the next general meeting of members of the Society.

EXECUTIVE.

The Executive shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and members of the Council, who shall hold office for a term of one year—*i.e.*, from one annual Conference until the Conference next succeeding—all members of such Executive to be eligible for re-election.

All propositions, touching the business of the Society, for decision at the Conference, shall be forwarded to the Executive at least one month before each Conference; and shall be printed in the *National Reformer* fourteen days prior to the meeting of the said Conference; and such business shall take precedence of everything else.

The President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, and Auditors shall be elected by a majority of votes at the general annual meeting of members.

The members of the Council shall be severally elected within twenty-one days after each such annual general meeting, by the several branches and affiliated Societies, one member for each branch or Society. All members of the Council so elected, and resident more than twenty miles from the place of meeting of the Executive, shall be termed Corresponding Members, and all business of which notice has been given, shall be printed and sent to the Corresponding Members, who shall be allowed to vote upon it by letter.

Once, at least, in each year—and, if possible, to be held on the day of, and immediately after the general annual meeting of the members of this Society—the Executive shall convene a Conference of all-Freethinkers in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

BRANCHES OF THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

ENGLAND:

METROPOLITAN.

(M.C. signifies Member of the Council.)

Central Offices:—Hall of Science, 142, Old Street, City Road, E.C. Secretary, R. Forder, 37, Taylor Street, Woolwich, S.E. Secretary to Hall of Science Club and Institute, R. O. Smith. Summer lectures, Sunday evenings, at 7.30; winter lectures, Sundays, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m. Science Classes on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, 8.30 to 10. Admission to Club to members of the National Secular Society by ticket, free on application to Mr. Forder.

Central London Branch.—Hall of Science, 142, Old Street, E.C. Secretaries, Ernest G. Wells, 29, Cross Street, Islington, N., and W. J. Ramsey, 20, Brownlow Street, Dalston, E.; M.C., George Wells. Bible class, every Sunday afternoon during winter months, at 3.30. Open-air lectures every Sunday during summer months at Gibraltar Walk, E., and Harrow Green, Leytonstone, at 11.15 a.m., and in Victoria Park at 3.30 p.m. Membership, One Shilling per quarter, which includes free admission to the Hall of Science Club and Institute.

Deptford.—Secular Institute, Union Street. Lectures, Sundays, at 7.30 p.m. Singing class, Sundays, at 3 p.m. Social meetings, Saturdays, at 7 p.m., all free. Social gatherings of members and friends, first Monday in each month, at 7 p.m.; music, dancing, singing, recitation, until 1 p.m. Secretary and M.C., W. Feltham, 9A, Royal Hill, Greenwich.

East London.—Phoenix Temperance Hall, 85, Commercial Road. Lectures and discussions, Mondays, at 8.30 p.m. Secretary, W. J. Wadham, Bow Common Lane, E.; M.C., J. F. Haines, 212, Mile End Road, E.

North London.—Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville. Summer lectures, Sundays, 7.30 p.m. Winter lectures, Sundays, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Quarterly meetings, first Sunday in March, June, September, and December. Secretary J. R. Cobham, 136 Hertford Road, Kingsland; M.C., A. Hilditch, 7, Cromer Street, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.

South-West London.—Secretary and M.C., W. Sadler, 112, Manor Street, Clapham, S.W.

Stratford.—Leyton Hall, Leyton Road. Lectures, Sundays, 7 p.m. Debating class, Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Committee meetings, alternate Tuesdays. Quarterly meetings, last Tuesday in March, June, September, and December. Secretary and M.C., O. Trumper, 32, Albert Road, Forest Gate, E.

Walworth.—Freethought Institute, 28, York Street, Walworth Road. Lectures, Sunday and Tuesday evenings. Secretary, Babbs; M.C., T. Errington, 30, Hayles Street, St. George's Road, Southwark, S.E.

OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

Carried on during the summer months at regular stations, under direction of a sub-committee of Executive.

Blackheath.

Clapham Common.

Clerkenwell Green.

Gibraltar Walk, Bethnal Green Road.

Midland Arches, St. Pancras Station.

Mile End Road, near the Gate.

Stratford, Harrow Green.

Tower Hill.

Victoria Park.

PROVINCIAL.

Barnsley.—Meetings at Mr. Ibberson's, Sheffield Road, first Monday in every month at 7.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., F. H. Hart, 49, Dodworth Road.

Barrow and Dalton-in-Furness.—Secretary and M.C., E. C. Penny, Ulverston Road, Barrow.

Bailey.—Secular and Eclectic Society. Meetings occasionally at Lees' Temperance Hotel, Wilton Street. Secretary and M.C., T. Jessop, Hume Street.

Bedlington.—Howard Arms. Financial meeting every fourth Sunday, dating from January 11. Secretary and M.C., H. Ternent, Doctor Pit.

Bingley.—Secretary and M.C., S. Holmes, 22, Regent Street.

Blackburn.—Meetings at Mr. G. Adcroft's, 8, Cort Street, every Sunday, at 7 p.m. Committee meeting on the first Thursday of every month, at 7.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., J. Hopper, Jun., 39, Audley Range.

Bolton.—Secretary and M.C., T. Hornby, 5, Longworth Lane, Egerton.

Bradford.—Secretary and M.C., G. A. Gaskell, 25, Lumb Lane. Meetings, second Tuesday in each month, at 8 p.m.

Brighton.—Secretary and M.C., W. H. Halliwell, 19, North Road.

Burnley.—Chaffer's Yard. Meetings, Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., S. Berry, 32, Crowther Street.

Bury.—Secretary and M.C., T. Woodcock, 140, Wash Lane.

Cardiff.—Secretary and M.C., S. Jones, Hatherley House, Ellen Street.

Congleton and Buglawton.—Secretary and M.C., Mrs. E. Wolstenholme Elmy.

Crewe.—Meetings, first Sunday of the month during summer, and every alternate Sunday during winter, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., C. Lewis, 1, Bridge Street.

Darlington.—Lectures, discussions, &c., in the Livingstone Hall, Sundays, at 6 p.m. Secretary and M.C., G. T. Forster, 85, Bondgate.

Darwen.—Secular Institute, Foundry Street. Meetings during winter, every Sunday at 6.30, and once a month during summer. Secretary and M.C., Geo. Hargreaves, 3, Willow Street.

Dewsbury.—Secretary and M.C., J. Brook, Wellington Terrace, Eightlands.

Guisborough and District.—Secretary and M.C., T. Easby, 36, Bolckrow Street.

Halifax.—Broad Street Lecture Hall. Meetings, Sundays, 6.30 p.m. Sunday School, 10 a.m. Committee meetings first Sunday in every month. Secretary, J. W. Crowther, 33, Baker Street, Mount Pleasant; M.C., W. Kay, 46, Moorfield Terrace.

Hartlepool.—New Hall, Lower Road Street, West Hartlepool. Meetings, Sundays, at 10.30 a.m. from May to end of August, and at 6.30 p.m. from September to end of April. Secretary and M.C., J. Moor, 1 Lower Surtees Street, West Hartlepool.

Heckmondwike.—Secular and Eclectic Society. Gledhill's Temperance Hotel. Meetings, Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., H. Hewson, West Battye St.

Huddersfield.—Secretary and M.C., R. Tabrum, 60, Commercial Road.

Hull.—Secretary and M.C., N. B. Billany, 46, Raikes Street.

Jarrow.—Meetings at Mr. Pratt's, 17, Alfred Street, alternate Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., J. Skelton, 17, Alfred Street.

Leeds.—Crampton's Temperance Hotel, Briggate. Committee meetings, Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Meetings, at 7 p.m. Monthly meeting of members, first Sunday in every month. Secretary and M.C., A. B. Cromack, 39, Jack Lane, Hunslet.

Leicester.—Organized Freethought Association, British Workman, Charles Street. Meetings every Wednesday at 8 p.m. Secretary and M.C., J. Clarke, 13, Andrew Street, King Richard's Road.

Leigh.—Secretary and M.C., W. Dawson, Warrington Road.

Lincoln.—Secretary and M.C., J. Pruett, 126, Ripon Street.

Liverpool.—Assembly Rooms, 110, Islington. Meetings, Sunday morning, 11 o'clock. Secretary and M.C., C. Stocker, 34, Upper Hope Place.

Manchester.—123, Grosvenor Street. Meetings, Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., W. Carroll, 95, Gorton Lane, West Gorton.

Merthyr Tydfil.—Secretary and M.C., W. Davies, 34, George Street, George Town.

Middlesbro'.—Secretary and M.C., S. Meir, 36, Black Street.

Mossley.—Secretary and M.C., W. Beaumont, Quick View.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Sons of Temperance Hall, 76, Pilgrim Street. Debates, Sundays, at 7 p.m. Monthly meeting, last Sunday in the month, at 3 p.m. Secretary and M.C., J. Sewell, 35, Kent Street, Shieldfield.

Northampton.—Secretary and M.C., R. S. Johnson, 11, Pytchley Street.

Nottingham.—London Hall, London Road. Meetings, Sunday evenings. Secretary and M.C., W. Coppock, 9, Hockley.

Oldham.—Hall of Science. Secretary and M.C., R. Butterworth, 34, St. Thomas Street, North Coppice.

Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse.—St. James's Hall, Union Street. Meetings, Sundays, at 7 p.m. Secretary and M.C., C. Goodanew, 42, Vauxhall Street.

Portsmouth.—Sun Tavern, Church Street, Landport. Meetings, Sundays, at 7 p.m. Secretary, C. Harding, 18, Sydenham Terrace, Fratton; M.C., J. E. Brummage, 6, Brompton Road, Mile End, Landport.

Queensbury.—Secretary and M.C., J. Wilson, Wellington Street.

Rochdale.—Secretary and M.C., G. Priestley, 12, Whitworth Road.

Rosendale and Haslingden.—Secretary and M.C., W. Paul, St. John's Buildings, Waterfoot.

Rotherham.—Secretary and M.C., C. Young, Ferham House.

Seghill and District.—Secretary and M.C., G. Dixon.

Sheffield.—Hall of Science, Rockingham Street. Meetings, Sundays, at 7 p.m. Members' meeting, the first Wednesday in every month. Secretary, H. Richardson, 11, Charles Lane; M.C., A. Davies, Bridges' Buildings, Greystock Street.

Shipley.—Secular Club, Briggate, Windhill. Sundays, 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Committee meetings first Sunday in every month. Secretary, A. Cryer, 17, Hall Lane, Wilmer Road.

Southampton.—Secretary and M.C., C. T. Caplin, Adelaide Road, St. Denys.

Spennymoor.—Meetings at Mr. Smith's, Low Spennymoor, Sundays, at 6 p.m. Secretary, J. Varly, Hope Street, Mount Pleasant; M.C., B. Dawson, Low Spennymoor.

Stalybridge, Ashton, and Dukinfield.—Hall, Sand Street, Cheetham Hill Road, Stalybridge. Meetings, Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., J. Scott, 11, Albert Street, Dukinfield.

Stockton.—Secretary and M.C., T. H. Mullen, 11, West Street.

Stourbridge.—Secretary and M.C., R. Cartwright, Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill

Todmorden.—Secretary and M.C., T. Bancroft, 46, Knowlwood.

Wakefield and Normanton.—Secretary and M.C., J. D. Stones, Stone's Buildings, Altofts.

Washington.—Miners' Rest. Meetings for reading and discussion first Sunday in every month. Secretary and M.C., R. Ord, Poplar Cottage, Unsworth Colliery.

Wigan.—Secretary and M.C., V. Lowe, 38, Lord Street, Wigan Lane.

York.—Meetings, Sundays, at 2, Piccadilly. Secretary and M.C., W. Button, 2, Piccadilly.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL IN PLACES WHERE NO SOCIETY EXISTS.

Bristol.—J. Thomas, 15, Albany Crescent, Trinity Street.

Cheltenham.—E. H. Rogers, Turf Tavern, Albion Street.

Gainsborough.—F. King, Mart Yard.

Kidderminster.—W. Blewen, Church Fields.

Newport.—F. Gillman, 133, Commercial Street.

Swinton.—W. Hulse, 53, Middleton's Villas.

Tow Law.—J. Robinson, 43, Gladstone Terrace, Sunnyside.

SCOTLAND.

Edinburgh.—11, Chambers Street. Meetings, Sundays, at 6.30 p.m. Secretary and M.C., A. Orr, 8, North Pitt Street.

Glasgow.—Eclectic and Secular Institute, 20, King Street, City. Summer lectures, Sundays, at 11.30 a.m. Winter lectures, Sundays, at 11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. Secretary, J. Terris, 196, Rotton Row; M.C., J. Allan, 53, McNeil Street.

Hawick.—Secretary and M.C., J. R. Laurie, 4, Albion Place.

Paisley.—Secretary and M.C., F. McLean, 9, School Wynd.

Perth.—Secretary and M.C., C. Stratton, 87, High Street.

FREETHOUGHT AND RADICAL ASSOCIATIONS UNCONNECTED WITH THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

Athenæum.—Camden Road, London, N. M. D. Conway. Sunday evenings, at 7. Reading, singing, and lecture.

Birmingham Secular Club and Institute.—Baskerville Hall, Crescent, Cambridge Street. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Lectures every Sunday evening at 7. Singing Class every Wednesday evening at 8. Resident Manager, E. Burns.

Brentford Discussion Society.—Literary Institute, High Street. Discussions at 8 p.m. every Monday from October to March, both inclusive.

Hull Radical Club.—Oddfellows' Hall, Lowgate. Meetings, alternate Tuesdays, at 8 p.m. Secretary, W. H. Savage, Horsham Terrace, West Parade.

South Place Chapel, Finsbury, London, E.C.—M. D. Conway. Reading, singing, and lecture.

Thetford Working Men's Liberal Association.—Discussions on political and social questions, Saturdays, at 7.30 p.m.

Tower Hamlets Radical Club and Institute.—5, Cannon Place, Mile End, London, E. —Lectures every Sunday, at 11.30 a.m. and 8.30 p.m. Open every evening for discussion and recreation.

WORK OF THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

IN addition to the Sunday and week-night lectures delivered throughout the year in various halls, under the auspices of the branches of the National Secular Society, there are other departments of work which deserve a word of notice.

In conformity with a resolution passed at the Conference at Newcastle, in June, 1879, a Benevolent Fund has been established in connection with the National Secular Society, "to render assistance to Freethinkers in distress, and to make grants to meet expenses in the burial of deceased Freethinkers." Any Freethinker in need, whether or not a member of the National Secular Society, is eligible for assistance. The following is the Committee for 1879-80:—

G. and Mrs. BURTON, 27, Fairbank Street, Hoxton.

Mrs. GROUT, 86, Herbert Street, Hoxton.

C. WILLIAMS, 22, Noble Street, Wilmington Square.

W. RAMSEY, 20, Brownlow Street, Dalston.

W. REYNOLDS, 23, Amersham Vale, New Cross.

There is a Special Lecturing Fund, out of which grants are made to Societies engaging certificated lecturers when the receipts at the lectures do not suffice to pay expenses, and leave a certain fee for the lecturer.

There is also an Open-air Propagandist Fund, the committee of which superintends the open-air lecturing in the Metropolis, and which supports a

large number of stations. A large amount of admirable propagandist work is done by the younger men of the party throughout the summer months.

Two Science Classes have been arranged for, to meet weekly from October, 1879, to May, 1880, at the Minor Hall, 142, Old Street. They are under the direction of Edward B. Aveling, D.Sc., F.L.S., Fellow of University College, London. The Executive has offered a prize of £5 5s., to be divided equally between the two most successful pupils.

The London Secular Choral Union meets for weekly practice in the Minor Hall, under the direction of Herr Trousselle, and gives a quarterly entertainment in the Large Hall. Miss Bradlaugh is the Hon. Secretary, and the Union—which has been in existence for a year and a half—is in a most flourishing condition.

A Class for the study of the Bible meets every Sunday afternoon during the winter months at the Hall.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

NATIONAL LIBERAL LEAGUE.

OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 1878—1879.

PRESIDENT :

ELIZUR WRIGHT, Boston, Massachusetts.

VICE-PRESIDENTS :

NATHANIEL HOLMES, St. Louis, Missouri.

HENRY BOOTH, Chicago, Illinois.

PARKER PILLSBURY, Concord, New Hampshire.

JAMES PARTON, Newburyport, Massachusetts.

F. SCHUENEMANN POTT, San Francisco, California.

ABRAHAM PAYNE, Providence, Rhode Island.

B. FELSETHAL, Chicago, Illinois.

W. H. SPENCER, Sparta, Wisconsin.

SAMUEL L. HILL, Florence, Massachusetts.

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FEDERATED RATIONALISTIC SOCIETIES OF BELGIUM.

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LES LIBRES-PENSEURS (3 Societies).

LES RATIONALISTES (3 Societies.)

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OBJECTS.

The union in one of those who struggle for the enfranchisement of reason, for political equality, and for social justice.

The search for, and the affirmation of, the true and the just, guided by materialism—or the experimental method—and scientific atheism.

The resistance of error in every shape, the propagation of truth and justice by active work, by means of discussion, meetings, and the press.

Co-operation with all Societies founded on the same principles.

The Belgian Confederation in August, 1879, delegated Dr. De Paepe to confer with the President of the National Secular Society of Great Britain; and it is hoped that a definite International Confederation may soon become possible. Dr. De Paepe is the Member of the Council of the N. S. S. accredited to Belgium.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF FREETHINKERS.

FROM time to time efforts have been made to unite into one grand society the Freethinkers of various nationalities, so that the brotherhood of thought may spread over the world, and Freethinkers of differing tongues may find a common tie in their common faith in man and common hatred of tyranny. There is now good hope that the long dreamed of hope may take active shape, and that the Freethought Societies of Great Britain, America, Belgium, and the British Colonies, may federate themselves into a strong union, and that societies may shortly be formed in France and in Italy, which will also affiliate themselves to the central body. The Roman Catholic Church has its world-wide organisation bent on subduing man's mind and on chaining man's actions; why should not Liberty have also her world-wide organisation to strengthen and to free humanity, body and mind? "No distance breaks the tie of brotherhood" between the soldiers of liberty, and it would be well if, travelling in foreign lands, the Freethinker struck down by sickness or in need, should know of a brotherly hand whose clasp might be claimed in right of common faith.

Steps are being taken by the National Secular Society (England), the National Liberal League (America), and the Federated Rationalistic Societies (Belgium), to bring about this useful union, and before another Almanack sees the light we may hope that the International Union of Freethinkers will have become an accomplished fact, full of hope for all lovers of freedom, full of menace to all the tyrants of the world.

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CHRISTIANS! shake off the supineness which your priests have created in you; dare to think for yourselves, nor suppose your God can be pleased with the sacrifice of your reason. The bended knee is not the attitude for study. Read the Bible with the eye of criticism, not of faith. Suspend your devotions, and reflect on the reception of your past petitions. *Ask no more till they are granted.*—*Emma Martin.*

LIST OF PREMIERS AND CHIEF MINISTERS OF STATE, FROM 1702 TO 1879,
WITH DATES OF ACCESSION, RESIGNATION, AND DISSOLUTION.

	FIRST LORDS OF TREASURY.	LORD CHANCELLORS.	CHANCELLORS OF THE EXCHEQUER.	HOME.*	FOREIGN.*
May 8, 1702	Lord Godolphin	William Cowper	Henry Boyle	Sir Charles Hodges and Lord Nottingham	
June 1, 1711	Rt. Harley, Earl of Oxford...	Lord Harcourt	Robert Benson (aft'wds Lord Bingley)	Henry St. John (aft'wds Lord Bolingbroke) and Lord Dartmouth	
July 29, 1714	Earl of Shrewsbury	Lord Cowper	Sir Richard Onslow	Earl Stanhope	Viscount Townshend
Oct. 5, 1714	Earl of Halifax	Earl Cowper	Robert Walpole	Earl of Sunderland and Joseph Addison	Mr. Craggs
Oct. 10, 1715	Mr. (aft'wds Sir) R. Walpole	"	Earl Stanhope	Earl Stanhope	Viscount Townshend and Lord Carteret
April, 1717	Earl Stanhope	"	Mr. Aislabie	Viscount Townshend and Lord Carteret	
March, 1718	Earl of Sunderland	"	Sir Robert Walpole		
—	Sir R. Walpole (afterwards Earl of Macclesfield Earl of Orford)				
Feb., 1742	Earl of Wilmington	Lord Hardwicke	Mr. Sandys	Lord Carteret and Duke of Newcastle	
July 26, 1743	Henry Pelham	"	Henry Pelham	Duke of Newcastle and Earl of Harrington	
Nov., 1744	"	"	"	"	"
April, 1754	Duke of Newcastle...	"	H. Bilson Legge	Earl of Holderness and Lord Grantham	
Nov. 16, 1756	Duke of Devonshire	In Commission	"	William Pitt (afterwards Earl of Chatham) and Lord Holderness	
June, 1757	Duke of Newcastle...	Lord Henley (aft'wds Lord Northampton)	"	William Pitt (afterwards Earl of Chatham) and George Grenville	
May, 1762	Earl of Bute	"	Sir Francis Dashwood...	Earl of Egremont and Lord Sand wich	
April, 1763	George Grenville	"	George Grenville	Earl of Halifax and Duke of Grafton	
July, 1765	Marquis of Rockingham	"	W. Dowdeswell	H. S. Conway and General Conway	
Aug., 1766	Earl of Chatham	Lord Camden	C. Townshend	Lord Shelburne and Viscount Weymouth	
Dec., 1767	Duke of Grafton	"	Lord North	Earl of Rochford and Earl Hillsborough	
Jan., 1770	Lord North	Lord Mordan	Lord J. Cavendish	Lord Shelburne and Charles James Fox	
March, 1782	Marquis of Rockingham	Lord Thurlow	William Pitt	Lord Grantham and Thomas Townshend	
July, 1782	Earl of Shelburne (aft'wds Marquis of Lansdowne)	"	"		
April 5, 1783	Duke of Portland	"	Lord J. Cavendish	Lord North	Charles James Fox (Earl Temple)
Dec., 1783	William Pitt	"	William Pitt	Marquis of Carmarthen	Lord Sydney
March, 1801	Henry Addington (afterwards Lord Eldon Lord Sidmouth)	Lord Eldon	Henry Addington	Lord Pelham	R. B. Jenkinson (aft'wds Lord Hawkesbury and Earl of Liverpool)
May 12, 1804	William Pitt	"	William Pitt	Lord Hawkesbury	Lord Harrowby (Lord Musgrave)

Jan. 23, 1806	Lord Grenville	...	Lord Erskine	...	Lord Hen. Petty (aft'wds Marquis of Lansdowne)	Earl Spencer	...	Charles James Fox
Mar. 25, 1807	Duke of Portland	...	Lord Eldon	...	Spencer Perceval	Spencer Perceval	...	Lord Hawkesbury
Oct. 30, 1809	Spencer Perceval	...	"	...	"	Richard Ryder...	...	Marquis of Wellesley
May 11, 1812	Earl of Liverpool	...	"	...	{ N. Vansittart	Viscount Sidmouth	...	Viscount Castlereagh
April 24, 1827	George Canning	...	Lord Lyndhurst	...	{ F. J. Robinson	Robert Peel	...	George Canning
Aug. 8, 1827	Viscount Goderich (aft'wds Earl of Ripon)	...	"	...	George Canning	{ Stourges Bourne	...	Viscount Dudley
Jan., 1828	Duke of Wellington	...	"	...	J. C. Herries	{ Marquis of Lansdowne	...	Viscount Dudley
Nov., 1830	Earl Grey	...	Lord Brougham	...	H. Goulburn	Mr. (aft'wds Sir) R. Peel	...	Earl of Aberdeen
July 9, 1834	Viscount Melbourne	...	"	...	Viscount Althorp	Viscount Melbourne	...	Viscount Palmerston
Dec., 1834	Sir Robert Peel	...	Lord Lyndhurst	...	Sir Robert Peel	Viscount Duncannon	...	Duke of Wellington
April, 1835	Viscount Melbourne	...	Sir C. Peyps (afterwards Lord Cottenham)	...	{ T. Spring Rice (aft'wds Lord Monteaigle)	Lord J. Russell	...	Viscount Palmerston
Sept., 1841	Sir Robert Peel	...	Lord Lyndhurst	...	{ F. T. Baring	Marquis of Normanby	...	Earl of Aberdeen
July, 1846	Lord John Russell	...	{ Lord Cottenham	...	H. Goulburn	Sir J. Graham	...	{ Lord Palmerston
Feb. 27, 1852	Earl of Derby	...	{ Lord Truro	...	Mr. (afterwards Sir) C. Wood	Sir J. Gray	...	{ Earl Granville
Dec. 28, 1852	Earl of Aberdeen	...	Lord St. Leonards	...	Benjamin Disraeli	S. H. Walpole	...	Earl of Malmesbury
Feb. 3, 1855	Viscount Palmerston	...	Lord Cranworth	...	{ W. Ewart Gladstone	Viscount Palmerston	...	{ Lord J. Russell
Feb. 25, 1858	Earl of Derby	...	Lord Chelmsford	...	{ Sir G. C. Lewis	Earl of Clarendon	...	{ Earl of Clarendon
June 18, 1859	Viscount Palmerston	...	{ Lord Campbell	...	{ W. E. Gladstone	Sir G. Grey	...	Earl of Clarendon
Oct., 1865	Earl Russell	...	{ Lord Westbury	...	"	{ S. H. Walpole	...	Earl of Malmesbury
July 6, 1866	Earl of Derby	...	{ Lord Cranworth	...	Benjamin Disraeli	T. S. Estcourt	...	Earl Russell
Feb. 29, 1868	Benjamin Disraeli	...	Lord Chelmsford	...	"	Sir G. Grey	...	Earl of Clarendon
Dec. 9, 1868	W. Ewart Gladstone	...	Lord Cairns	...	G. Ward Hunt	{ S. H. Walpole	...	Lord Stanley
Feb. 21, 1874	Benjamin Disraeli (aft'wds Earl of Beaconsfield)	...	{ Lord Hatherley	...	Robert Lowe	Gathorne Hardy	...	Earl of Clarendon
		...	{ Lord Selborne.	...	W. E. Gladstone	H. Austin Bruce	...	Earl Granville
		...	Earl Cairns	...	Sir S. H. Northcote	R. Lowe	...	Earl of Derby
		...	Earl Cairns	...	Richard Asheton Cross	Richard Asheton Cross	...	{ M. of Salisbury, 1878

* Up to 1782, Foreign and Colonial Affairs were divided between two Secretaries, one for the Northern, the other for the Southern Division; the elder attending to Irish business, and both having equal direction in Home Affairs. (For Colonial Secretaries, see pp. 54-5.)

	COLONIAL.*	WAR.	INDIAN DEPARTMENT.	FIRST LORDS ADMIRALTY.	TRADE DEPARTMENT.
May 8, 1702	...	...	...	...	...
June 1, 1711	...	Robert Walpole	...	...	Resigned Aug. 8, 1710
July 29, 1714	...	...	...	...	July 30, 1714
Oct. 5, 1714	...	...	...	Earl of Oxford	Oct. 29, 1714
Oct. 10, 1715	...	...	...	...	Death of Premier, May 19, 1715
April, 1717	...	...	...	...	Expelled and committed to the Tower, Jan. 17, 1782
March, 1718	...	...	...	...	Resigned March, 1718
— 1721	...	George Treceby	...	...	1721
Feb., 1742	...	Henry Pelham	...	Earl of Berkeley	1742
July 26, 1743	...	Duke of Argyle	...	Earl of Winchilsea	Death of Premier, July 26, 1743
Nov., 1744	...	Duke of Montagu	...	Duke of Bedford	Death of Premier, Mar. [6, 1754
April, 1754	...	...	...	Lord Anson	Resigned Nov., 1756
Nov. 16, 1756	...	...	...	...	...
June, 1757	...	D. of Marlborough	...	Lord Anson	May, 1762
May, 1762	...	Lord Ligonier	...	Earl of Halifax	April, 1763
April, 1763	...	Marq. of Granby	...	Earl of Egmont	July, 1765
July, 1765	...	Welbore Ellis	...	...	August, 1766
Aug., 1766	...	Viscnt. Barrington	...	...	...
Dec., 1767	...	...	...	Styled Lords of Trade.	...
Jan., 1770	...	Marquis of Granby	...	Sir Chs. Saunders	Dec., 1767
March, 1782	...	Thos. Townshend	...	Sir Edwd. Hawke	Jan., 1770
July, 1782	...	...	...	Sir Edwd. Hawke	March, 1782
April 5, 1783	...	Viscnt. Townshend	...	Viscount Keppel	Death of Premier, July 2, 1782
Dec., 1783	...	Duke of Richmond	...	...	Resigned April, 1783
March, 1801	Lord Hobart	Charles Yorke	...	Viscount Howe	Dec., 1783
May 12, 1804	Earl Camden	...	...	...	1801
Jan. 23, 1806	Visct. Castlereagh	Lord Moira	Lord Minto	(Viscount Melville Presidents of the Board of Trade	May 11, 1804
Mar. 25, 1807	Visct. Windham	...	...	Lord Barham	Death of Premier, Jan. 23, 1806
Oct. 30, 1809	George Canning	Earl of Chatham	Mr. Dundas	Sir Chas. Grey (aft. Visct. Howick and Earl Grey)	Resigned Mar. 25, 1807
	Visct. Castlereagh	...	...	Lord Mulgrave	...
	Earl of Liverpool	...	...	Earl Bathurst	...
		...	...	...	Dissolved on death of the Duke, Oct. 30, 1809
		...	...	...	Premier shot, May 11, 1812

May 11, 1812	Earl Bathurst ...	Earl of Mulgrave ...	Viscount Melville...	{ F. J. Robinson ... William Huskisson... }	Death of Premier, Feb. 17, 1827 [8, 1827
April 24, 1827	Viscount Goderich.	Lord Palmerston ...	W. W. Wynn ...	William Huskisson ...	Death of Premier, Aug. 8, 1827
Aug. 8, 1827	W. Huskisson ...	"	C. W. Wynn ...	Charles Grant (afterwards Lord Glenelg)	Resigned Jan. 8, 1828
Jan., 1828	{ W. Huskisson ... Sir G. Murray ... }	{ Lord Palmerston. Sir H. Hardinge. }	{ Viscount Melville Vesey Fitzgerald. }	Charles Grant...	Nov. 16, 1830
Nov., 1830	{ Viscont. Goderich. E. G. S. Stanley... }	...	Lord Glenelg ...	Sir James Graham. Lord Auckland	July, 1834
July 9, 1834	T. Spring Rice ...	...	"	Lord Auckland ...	Nov. 1834
Dec., 1834	Earl of Aberdeen ...	J. C. Herries ...	Lord Ellenborough	Earl de Grey ...	April, 1835
April, 1835	{ Lord Glenelg ... Marq. Normanby Lord J. Russell... }	{ Viscount Howick T. B. Macaulay... }	Sir J. C. Hobhouse	{ Lord Auckland... Earl of Minto ... }	Aug. 30, 1841
Sept., 1841	Lord Stanley ...	Sir Hy. Hardinge.	{ Ld. Ellenborough Lord Fitzgerald... Earl of Ripon ... }	{ Earl of Ripon ... W. E. Gladstone ... }	June 29, 1846
July, 1846	Earl Grey ...	Fox Maule (afterw. Lord Panmure)	Sir J. C. Hobhouse (aft. Ld. Broughton)	{ Earl of Auckland Sir F. T. Baring }	{ Feb. 21, 1851 Resumed Mar. 3, 1851 Resigned Feb. 21, 1852
Feb. 27, 1852	{ Sir J. S. Pakington Sir George Grey. }	William Beresford.	John Chas. Herries	Duke of Northumberland	Resigned Dec. 17, 1852
Dec. 28, 1852	{ Sidney Herbert... Lord J. Russell... Sir W. Molesworth ... }	{ D. of Newcastle. Hn. Syd. Herbert }	Sir Charles Wood.	Sir Jas. R. Graham	Jan. 30, 1855
Feb. 3, 1855	{ H. Labouchere... Lord Hanley ... Sir E. B. Lytton. }	Lord Panmure ...	{ Sir Charles Wood R. Vernon Smith }	{ Sir J. R. Graham Sir Charles Wood }	Feb. 20, 1858
Feb. 25, 1858	Col. Jonathan Peel	{ Ld. Ellenborough Lord Stanley ... }	Sir J. S. Pakington	{ J. W. Henley ... El. of Donoughmore }	June 11, 1859
June 18, 1859	{ D. of Newcastle. Edward Cardwell }	Sir G. C. Lewis... { Earl de Grey ... }	Sir Charles Wood.	Duke of Somerset.	Death of Premier, Oct. 18, 1865
Oct., 1865	Edward Cardwell..	General Peel ...	Lord Cranbourne	Sir J. S. Pakington	Resigned Feb. 6, 1868
July 6, 1866	{ Earl of Carnarvon D. of Buckingham }	{ Sir J. S. Pakington Sir S. H. Northcote }	{ Sir S. H. Northcote H. T. L. Corry ... }	{ Duke of Richmond.. Duke of Richmond ... }	Dec. 2, 1868
Feb. 29, 1868	D. of Buckingham.	Edward Cardwell..	Duke of Argyle ...	{ H. C. E. Childers G. J. Goschen ... Geo. Ward Hunt }	Resigned Feb. 17, 1874
Dec. 9, 1868	{ Earl Kimberley.. Earl of Carnarvon }	{ Gathorne Hardy. Fredk. A. Stanley }	{ Marq. of Salisbury Lord Cranbrook, 1878 }	{ John Bright C. S. Fortescue ... Sir C. B. Adderley.. Viscount Sandon, 1878 }	
Feb. 21, 1874	Sir M. Hicks-Beach, 1878 ...	1878	1878	1878	

* See note to pp. 52-3.

EMMA MARTIN ON PRAYER.

Can Prayer Change God?

UNLESS prayer could change the determination of God it would seem useless to offer it, yet there are many reasons why this is impossible.

1. God is said to be immutable, "that in him there is no variableness or shadow of turning," yet he must be continually changing if he suffered himself to be guided by the prayers of changeful man, who to-day longs for the rose, and to-morrow weeps over the wound of the thorn.

Succeeding generations, from a change of tastes and habits, make opposite requests, and "grant us peace in our time, O Lord," succeeds to "prosper thou our righteous cause, O Lord," and "subdue the king's enemies under his feet."

Is this immutable one a vane, to be veered about by the breath of prayer from whatsoever quarter it may blow?

2. It is impossible that *any* God *could* grant the various and contradictory prayers which even saints may present. The favourable answer to one prayer often involves the disappointment of an antagonistic request. "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," said Christ, but many had prayed for salvation for Israel, and if their salvation was to be won by His tasting death for every man (strange that every man is obliged to taste death for himself also), it was not in the power of God himself to answer both prayers favourably.

3. If God is the moral ruler of the universe, as great events often depend upon those which appear trifling, and as every one is necessary to connect the great chain of cause and effect, if he has determined *anything* of all that has, or shall happen, he has determined *all*, and it must be as useless to ask him to alter any part of the arrangement, as to ask him to undo the whole.

Christians seem to be pretty well aware of this, for the usual addenda to all their prayers is "nevertheless not my will but thine be done," and, "if it please thee," or, "unless in thy infinite wisdom thou hast otherwise determined"; which is very much like saying, You may give it me if you please, but I know that you will not give any more for asking, so let it alone if you prefer to do so. *Supple Christianity!*

Does Prayer invigorate the Mind?

On the contrary prayer is the palsy of effort. The person much inclined to ask God's assistance, learns to repose on the hope of its obtainment, instead of actively seeking the good desired by his own labour. They wait to see the "leadings of Providence." They pause "lest they should seem to be troubled about many things," and neglect "the one thing needful."

They think it necessary to "seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," and they expect that all other things shall be added to them.

If then prayer does not produce the blessings sought by it, and if its effect on the mind of the individual is not of an improving character, then

What are its Uses?

The priest knows them well, and applies them to the continuance of his nefarious power. Does any member of the flock occasionally have "hard thoughts of God," doubts respecting the divinity of his religion, or suspicions of the righteousness of some "dispensation of Providence," the priest declares him sinful and convinces him of the necessity for urgent prayer, that the "devil thus resisted may flee from him." Does a sermon appear to be, what it really is, a dry, profitless discourse, it is the fault of the hearer, he must *pray* that God will bless the word spoken, and render it profitable. The man who believes it a duty to pray for faith, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief," has lost, for the time, the power to use his understanding on any matters of religion. He is the tame slave of the priest, his spiritual guide, who, over his creed, his morals, and his estate, exercises an almost unlimited sway.

TWO HUNDRED AND NINETIETH THOUSAND.]

April, 1879.

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Conclamat vates, totoque absistite luco.*’

Nor is it wonderful that it has become an established principle with critics to lose sight of the book they are professedly reviewing, and to launch out into matters and things in general. Having conscientiously read The ‘Prophet,’ I shall endeavour to convey to the reader some idea of the work, and my own views thereon. In the first place, I must express my astonishment, and, to say the truth my disappointment, that this book—a Prize Essay, of closely printed demy 8vo. of 650 pages, price 12s. 6d. (which was published in 1864, and has already reached its second thousand)—has called forth no orthodox expression of opinion from Lord Shaftesbury. Possibly his Lordship finds it difficult to improve on his allocution respecting ‘*Ecce Homo* ;’ for if *that* book be ‘the worse book ever vomitted forth from the jaws of hell,’ (see *N. R.* Oct. 13th. 1867) what words in the orthodox vocabulary are sufficiently sulphurous to define ‘The Prophet?’ Mr. Francklin’s expressions—‘horrible and blasphemous production,’ ‘pestilent doctrines,’ &c., are tame and feeble, when compared with the truly diabolical imagery of Lord Shaftesbury. It is frightful to think what fearful figures of rhetoric may be fulminated against Mr. Meredith’s book. It has been my pleasure and my pride to review this writer hitherto in the character of a literary *tirailleur*, an unerring marksman, stalking a bishop, or firing a heavy charge of swan shot into the retreating Lincolnshire Vicar, who, after commencing the fray took the earliest opportunity of showing his back to the enemy. Mr. Meredith now appears in a far grander capacity, as captain of a magnificent iron-clad man-of-war, which with true *British* pluck, he steers right into the midst of the theological squadron, laying his vessel alongside of the largest ships, and challenging a heavy fire from all quarters. And the theological squadron seem in no haste to return the raking broadside which he pours in. They appear inclined to sheer off and give him a wide berth. They seem to argue—logically enough—if the rattle of his musketry has put to flight a bishop and a vicar, what will become of us when he opens fire from his heavy guns! And so, the word is passed to the orthodox captains—(*id est*, the editors of the religious papers)—‘Do not return the fire of that strange vessel. Belay there my hearties;’ the powder monkeys (printer’s devils) are all ready to hand up ammunition, and curses, not loud, but deep, are muttered on ‘the Infidel.’ But the horrible theological carnage is delayed, and ink, shed for a time, ceases to flow. The smoke from Mr. Meredith’s guns clears away, and, as the parsons behold the black hull and muzzles of the guns protruding from the open port-holes, most devoutly do they hope that it will all end in smoke. Truly, it may

be said, 'the boldest hold their breath for a time.' The pause is ominous, but it cannot last. The conflict between priestism and what priests call infidelity must go on, and the theological policy of a 'masterly inaction' will be found as futile as it is inglorious. To drop metaphor: the orthodox papers, the *Guardian*, *Record*, *John Bull*, *Christian World*, &c. of every genus, pursue the worldly-wise policy of ignoring this book, which is a magnificent addition to the literature of Freethought, and a powerful effort to substitute *terra firma* in lieu of the pestiferous bogs of superstition, and theological sloughs of despond. I have the more pleasure in stating this, as it is not my intention to plaster the volume or its author with unqualified praise; but all candid persons, orthodox or heterodox, will admit that there cannot be two opinions as to the erudition, the patient industry, and the great moral courage manifested by Mr. Meredith. The writer of this elaborate work manifests great scholarship and great patience; and Buffon has said, '*Le Génie, c'est la Patience.*' The judicial spirit of impartiality is also strikingly manifested in the arguments for and against the orthodox view of the character of Jesus. 'The prefixed advertisement will show the conditions under which the work was written, and will explain the cause that considerable portions of it are written on the Christian side of the argument. The portions of the work devoted exclusively to the advocacy of Christianity are from page 9 to 50, and from 245 to 258. Should any Christian reader be so conscious of the weakness of his faith as to desire to know only what can be said in favour of his religion, he is recommended to confine himself exclusively to the perusal of these pages, and, when he has read them, to shut the book, lest his prejudice be irritated, or his mind roused to critical inquiry.' On first reading the above, I was irresistibly reminded of the polished irony of Gibbon, as displayed particularly in the 15th and 16th chapters of his immortal work. Indeed, there is a good deal, both in the literary style and in the position of this brave Meredith attacking superstition from his philosophic retreat in Monmouth, which recalls those noble lines of Byron, where, after depicting the philosopher of Ferney, he refers to the philosopher of Lausanne. But on reading the portions referred to, it will be found that our author has fully borne out this statement in his preface. 'These portions which are strictly orthodox are enforced with every possible fidelity and strength of reasoning that the writer could command when he was a sincere believer in the truth of the Christian religion,' &c. On reading Mr. Baillie's advertisement, the reader will see that the Prize Essay is not a desultory discussion of Christianity, but a most pertinent and important inquiry as to whether certain definite prophecies attributed to Jesus have or have not been fulfilled. 'Did Jesus Christ predict the Last Day of Judgment and Destruction of the World as events inevitable during the then existent generation of men?' If this question can be answered in the affirmative, then the non-fulfilment of such a clear and distinct prophecy effectually disposes of the divinity of Jesus. 'For although to utter true prophecies is no proof that the prophet is a deity, or that he has any preternatural communication with deity, yet to utter false prophecies is, in the very nature of things, a positive proof that the prophet is not a deity, and is not in any manner supernaturally influenced by the Supreme Being.'"—AUTONOMOS, in the *National Reformer* of July 12th, 1868.

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