

And another ran: "There is no House to-day; I will call after the levee, about four or half-past. If you wish it later let me hear from you. I will then explain to you about going to Vauxhall.—Yours, &c., Melbourne."

Sir William described these letters as "the most important the most tell-tale, the most damnatory." That they failed of their effect is proved by the fact that Lord Melbourne was triumphantly acquitted by the jury. It is now generally believed that Charles Dickens who, at that very time, was writing the *Pickwick Papers* modelled himself upon these letters when he made Mr. Pickwick write to Mrs. Bardell: "Garraway's twelve o'clock. Dear Mrs. B, chops and tomato sauce, Yours Pickwick," and again, "Dear Mrs. B., I shall not be at home till to-morrow. Slow coach. Don't trouble yourself about the warming pan." Who, even writing fiction, would have dared to make his imaginary counsel put forward such evidence? But Dickens was merely ridiculing what Follett had done in solemn earnest! It will be remembered that the *Pickwick Papers* were dedicated to Mr. Serjeant Talfourd. He was counsel for the defendant in the Norton case. It was the Serjeant who indirectly contributed the germ of the joke which so greatly entertained the friends of Mr. Peter Magnus. Serjeants junior to Thomas Noon Talfourd, whose name was last on a particular list of the members of the order, were known in the Common Pleas as "Afternoons."

Temple, June 30, 1917.

W. VALENTINE DALL.

THE LAW OF ENGLAND AND CHRISTIANITY.

A judgment of far-reaching and historic importance was delivered in the House of Lords on Monday, the 14th inst. The appeal to the Lords was that of *Bowman v. Secular Society Limited*. The question raised was whether a bequest of residue to the respondent society, having regard to its declared objects, was good in law. The society is a company limited by guarantee, and duly registered as such under the Companies Acts. The memorandum of association defines the objects of the society, the first