Contributors and Correspondents. A PERITERT INFIDEL.

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Our leisure memouts during the last wesk have been employed in reading the life of Thomas Cooper, well known in Eng land as Chartist Agitator and Jufidel Leeturer for a period of thirty years. For the last twenty years Mr. Cooper has done dissinguished service to the couse of truth by his lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, which have now been published in London. Travelling over England, Ireland and Scotland, and addressing crowded audiences of working men, and confronting eminent reepties-m some instances the companions and friends of other years-ho has done all that possibly can be done to atone for his past erroneous teaching, and prove the genuineness of his conversion to the fuith of Christ. Now at the age of sixty-seven, he has given to the world his strange and eventful biography, with all its exciting details of political and religious life. Here we have not only what Henry Rogers would call "the Ecilpse of Faith," but, subsequently, the full clear shining of the sun upon a soul shrouded for years by doubts and unbelief.

Mr. Cooper was born at Leciester, in England, on the 20th March, 1805. From childhood he seems to have been precocious to a degree all but incredible. At the age of 8 years he reads fluently and is set to teach a boy of 7 his alphabet. At the same period he could repeat many of Æson's Fables from memory, and gave promise in many ways of the highest eminence in the world of letters. His father died when he was but four years old, leaving him entirely dependent upon his mother, who nobly struggled to support her boy without the aid of charity, and prepare him for a useful and virtuous manhood. Tired of attending school and eager to do something for himself, young Cooper resolved at the age of 15 to try the sen, as "the easist way to go round the world and see all its foreign countries," like Captain Cook. His mother opposed the proposal for a time, but finally yielded, and so he left her almost broken-hearted, and went down to Hull, where he began life as a cabin-boy, on board of a brig that was soon to put to sea. After 9 days' experience of the coarse language, swearing and brutality, which was daily heard and witnessed, he became so utterly wretched and home-sick that he told the captain he wanted back to Leicester, and home he went, reproached and laughed at "as one who would never be fit to be a sailor." His next venture was that of apprentice to a shoemaker. His mother, he tells us, who had witnessed all his tendencies from infancy, and had fostered and cherished all the buddings of intelligence, and had formed a very different ideal of her child's future than that of his becoming a lowly laborer with the awl, was pained at the idea, but at last yielded, saying, "The Lord's will be done! I don't think he intends thee to spend thy life at shoemaking. I have kept thee at school and worked hard to get thee bread, and to let thee have thy own wish in learning, and never imagined that thou was to be a shoemaker. But the Lord's will be done!-He'll bring it all right in time."

During his shoemaking life he studied with intensity, and filled up every leisure moment of his time in literary pursuits and in mastering languages living and dead. He began to write poetry—wrote newspaper articles—organized and took part in debuting societies and formed many friendships with men who have since arrived at unportant positions in the political and religious world. His example in this respect is well worthy the attention of young men of the present day, many of whom waste precious hours in questionable and demonstraing pleasures. "I resolved, he say, "to lead a strictly moral life—to pray at least ence in the day-time as well as at morn and evo-and to enquire diligently into the truth of both natural and revealed religion. I thought it possible that by the time I reached the ago of twenty-four I might be able to master the elements of Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French; might det well through Euclid, and through a course of Algebra; might commit the entire "Paradise Lost" and seven of the best plays of Shakspeare to memory; and might read a large and solid course of History and of religious evidences; and be well acquainted with the current literature of the day." Noble resolutions certainly-however imperfectly realized-in the case of any young man, but specially so in the case of a poor shoemaker, who never could earn more than ten shillings a week! And yet he who never could earn more adds. "what glorious years were those years of self-denial and earnest mental toil, from the age of nearly nucteen to nearly three and twenty, when I gat and worked in the corner of my poor mother's lonely home! Now I wish I could begin life anew, just at the end of them, and spend the after years more wisely !"

It is not our purpose, however, in this brief notice, to follow Mr. Cooper through his long and eventful career, and dwell at length upon his religious difficulties. His wonderfully checkered life as class leaderlocal preacher and Methodist preacher (from which he was suspended through the apparent jealousy of his superintendent)—as schoolmaster—newspaper writer and newspaper oditor; the ups and downs of London life; his sympathies with the working classes, which evoked all the strong

their oppressors and subsequently brought him into conflict with the Government of the day, and left him a prisoner for years in Stafford jail, bitterly to repent—not per-laps of his Chartist principles—but of his imprudent and more ignorant associates, who adopted wrong measures to secure the redress of social wrongs;—all these and many other topics are graphically described in the Biography before us, with a simplicity and truthfulness which command our admiration, and sustain the interest to the close. We prefer in a few centences to look at one phase of his character, and try to account for the sad departure from the truth, which so terribly nurred and blighted the best portion of his years. It is very true Mr. Cooper refuses to be classed with the more violent of infidels and atheists of the present day, but, judged by his own language, we know not where him before his return to the faith once de-livered to the saints. The deep sorrow felt in later years, "when he came to himself" and reviewed his strange and melancholy unbelief, warrants us in naming him "a penitent Infidel."

As to the sincerity of Mr. Cooper's re-conversion, if we may so term it; there can be no doubt. His change from infidelity to faith in Christ and Christianity he thus des-

"My heart and mind were deeply uneasy and I could hardly define the uneasiness. I felt sure my life for years had been wrong. I had taught morals, and taught them strictly; but the questioning within that would arise, day by day, and hour by hour, made my heart ache. Why should man be Why cannot he quench the sense of accountability? and why have you not taught your fellow men that they are answerable to the Divine Moral Governor, and must appear before him in a future state, and receive their reward or punishment. It was not a conviction of the truth of Christianity, of the reality of the miracles and resurrection, or of the Divinity of Christ, that had worked the change in me. I was overwhelmed with a sense of guilt in having omitted to teach the right foundation of I had taught morals as a means of securing and increasing men's happiness here—but had left them without God and without hope in the world.

I had been twelve years a scoptic; and it was not until fully two years had been devoted to hard reading and thinking that I could conscientiously and truly say Tamagain a Christian.' The deep conviction which first arose within me, that I had been very guilty, as a public teacher, in not courageously and faithfully presenting the great truth of God's existence as the Moral Governor before men, gradually merged in-to the deeper and more distressful conviction of my own personal life of sin; the re-membrance that I—I myself—had been living without God and without hope in the world :-without the God-that I had loved in my early manhood, and who had then given me to feel his love day by day and hour by hour." Finally, he was graciously led by the Holy Spirit out of all his tormenting doubts to say, "O, take my life which thou hast graciously kept and let it be devoted to thee. I have again entered thy service; let me never more leave it but live only to spread thy truth." "I have kept my vow feebly," he adds, "but thank God, I have kept it."

Mr. Cooper's lapse into infidelity may be traced to several causes. He speaks of it as a penalty for my great sin in deserting God, because I thought men ill used me. The ill usage referred to is doubtless the alleged persecutions received at the hands of his co-religionists in the Methodist church He speaks of repeated efforts made by his superiors to get him out of the Society, in revenge for his exposing certain things in the conduct and administration of local superintendents. Finally, when exasperated beyond measure, he determined on severing his connection with the denomination, "I was suspended once; but I will not be hung a second time. Take my name out of the class-book—I am no longer a member of your Society." And he adds, "My beof your Society." And he adds, "My being thus driven to cut myself off from Methodism was a source of the bitterest agony to my dear wife for years afterwards; I know it caused bitter grief and truest friend I have ever had in the world (Dr. Jolson); and it soured my own mind against religious professors, and raised within me a wrong rebellious spirit My mind grew angry whenever I thought of my ill-treatment; and I soon left off my habit of attendance on public worship. In a later period of my life I fell into an awful alienation from the faith of Christ; but I cannot help tracing that alienation to its root in these marsh dealines from ministers and professors of religion." taught Mr. Cooper how foolish his own conduct was at this juncture, and how irrational it was to expect every man to be perfect in a Ministerial body of a thousand members. It is, however, repeated in the present day by members of churches, who caunot separate the conduct of inconsistent professors of religion from religion itself.

Religious indifference soon became positive middlity, and the infidelity was confirmed by nie subsequent Chartist life, and the influers of the men who gathered around him a this period. It would be a libel on the working classes of Great Britain to say of them, then or now, that as a body, they are either atheistical or sceptical in their opinions; but it is only the truth when we say, that in many cases, their so called leaders have been deeply tainted with such opinions. Cooper was head and shoulders above his co-agitators, but not be-yond the infection of their coarse and vulgar blasphemies. The treat-ment also that he received from men who could easily have helped him in his pecuniary difficulties, and by a small amount of kindness and sympathy inspired him with better feelings towards employers and the higher classes, deepened his antagonism to creeds, covenants and churches. The terrible sufferings of the poor at this period, and the heartless indifference manifested by men in power, to their cry for bread made a deep impression upon a sensitive and reflecting mind like his. The feeling and language of the oppressed operatives will be better understood by the response made by eno of the stronger and coarser spirits to a brother workman who said,"Let

no more about thy God Almighty," was the succring rejoinder, "there isn't one; if there was one, he would not let us suffer as wo de." "My heart," he says, "would often burn with indignation I knew not how to express. Nay, there was something worse; I began-from sheer sympathy—to feel a tendency to glide to the depraved way of thinking of some of the stronger but coarser spirits of the men. It is horrible for me to tell such a truth. But I must tell it." We are not then much curroused to We are not then much surprised to find him after his prison life a construct sceptio, lecturing from night to night against the evidences of the being of a God, and suggesting doubts "which the Priests of no religion have over solved ;"-telling his crowded audiences that the very fact that there are in the world adaptations for pain and misery makes one doubt that it had any Designer at all 11
Cooper's mind, it should also be said, was

of a sceptical turn from his youth upward. The spiritual powers had not been developed in due proportion with the mental. He demanded the evidence of sense or the certainty of mathematical demonstration is regard to subjects, where faith alone can give assurance. Doubts arose as he proceeded with his enquiry into the Evidences. "I said within myself, I ought to he ashamed to have a doubt with." ed to have a doubt while Henry Martyn believed, and resolved I should never dwell on a doubt in the future, but pray instead." But in spite of his efforts, doubt prevailed. Re read much it is true, and studied earnestly, but not always wisely. It is indeed hard to say on what principle he selected the books that were so greedily devoured in his earlier years. Byron and James Montgomery; Volney and Voltaire; Coleridge and Burns; Paley and Butler; Shelley and Southey; Gibbon's Decline and Fall and Nocte's Ambrosianae, are but a few of the names gathered at random from whole li-braries, read by the humble shoemaker. Under competent teachers to superintend his studies and remove disculties which many of these works must of necessity suggest to a young and ardent mind, no permanent evil might have followed. But such a heterogeneous mass of indigested Philosophy, Poetry and Metaphysics was perilous to any one not well grounded in the faith.

Finally, it seems to us, that he was de-ceived as to his real state in his first public profession of religion. His entrance into the church was more a matter of feeling and impulse than the result of satisfactory evidence that any radical change had taken place in his inner life. After a sickness which well nigh brought him to the grave, there followed a period of declension, when he left unfulfilled certain vows that he made in his time of wearness. There was, he tells us, a sense of increasing sinfulness and his heart became less and less devotional. Then he was seized with feelings of anxiety and a sincere desire to lead a different life, and resolved to go and join the Methodists, "whom he knew from a child professed to have the secret of true piety and true hap-piness." His interviews with leading membors of the denomination were apparently anything but satisfactory to himself, although ultimately resulting in his uniting with the church. Nor indeed, so far as they are chronicled in the volume before us, does it seem strange that they were so Such a mind as Cooper's required careful handling. The ordizary treatment which in too many cases is adopted with anxious enquirers did not satisfy him, and the doctrine of entire sauctification and perfect sm-lessness, which he was taught was perfectly possible of attainment, was to him an insur mountable obstacle to an intelligent faith. The consequence was that Cooper entered the Church but a half-converted man, if we may use the expression; far from satisfied as to what constituted faith in Christ and acceptance of the truth, and with no satisfactory evidences that the step he took was the result of anything more than mere transient impulses. His subsequent fruitless endeavels to regain what he calls "lost holiness;" his repeated declensions from 'perfect sanctification," and his toilsome offorts to gain "perfect peace of mind" leave no doubt upon the mind that though per-haps "not far from the Kingdom," he was not in it.

the volume we feel on i to think that such a man should for to long a period have wandered from the faith, and done so much to moculate others with the virus of infidelity. To him it must be a lasting sorrow. What might he not have lasting sorrow. What might he not have accomplished had all his life been what it is now? "I have no doubt," he says, "but I shall be with my Saviour in Heaven. never harbour the fear for a moment that I shall not be with him. I love Christ. I have accepted of him as my Saviour, and through faith in him and his atonement for sin, and in the everlesting love of the Fath-., I feel God has accepted me. Living or dying I am his; and trust to have this confidence until he shall call me home." prayers of a loving mother have doubtless been answered in the final reclamation of her son:—that mother of whom he writes-

"No gilded verse Tells how she toiled to win her child a crust, And fasting still toiled on : no rhymes rahears. How tendorly she strove to be the nurse Of truth and nobleness in her loved boy Spite of his rags."

The church is never purer, on the whole never more devout, and never increases more rapidly than when she enjoys the oad opinion of society; but when we begin to be thought very excellent people, and our church is honored, esteemed and respected, and corruption sets in, we get away f.om Christ, and prove again that the friendship of this world is enmity with God.—Spurgeon.

If one should give me a dish of sand, and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my clumsy fingers and be unable to detect them; but let me take a magnet and sweep through it, and how it would draw to itself the most invisible particles by the mere power of attraction! The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies; but let the thankful heart sweep through the day, as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find in every hour some heavenly ing classes, which evoked all the strong as he patient a little longer, lads. Surely bessings; only the iron in God's sand is passions of the impactor against God Alexandry with help as soon." "Talk god.—II. W. Coccine. THE TOMB OF ESTHER.

In the present famine-stricken city of Ham adan, in Persia, stands a plain brick structure, raising its dome above the bouses of the Jews. This place is regarded by all the Jews of Persia as peculiarly sacred. Hither they come up on pilgrimage with something of the spirit in which their fathers sought the gates of Jerusalem. They fully believe that here are buried their heroic Queen, Esther, and her uncle, Mordecal. The tomb-edifice consists of a square 100m, with projections on its side, the whole between thirty and forty feet square, or nearly square, and surmounted by a cylindrical tower and dome near forty feet in height. On the summit of the dome is a very common crown of ruins in the East, a stork's nest. The oppearance from without is of a square brick mausoleum, built for strength rather than beauty, and slowly falling to decay. The open midan, or ground about the tomb, is equally uninviting. It is used by the Mussulmans as a wood and timber market, and on the day we visited it was piled with newly-cut trees, Iranches, and fuel. There is not a spear of grass or leaf, or flower near the tomb, but much that is offensive and filthy.

But can it be that this is really the rest

ing-place of Esther and Mordccai? In reply it may be said, undoubtedly the building is of modern construction. The lews say the old mausoleum was nearly destroyed by Timourleng, and the present one erected since, and the inscriptions within confirm with the statement.

As to the actual tomb, there is no inherent improbability in the case. The courts of the Persian kings made this Median capital—Echatana—their summer residence. Inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes were found in the adjoining mountain of Elwend or Orontes. The weak and voluptuous Xerxes was probably the same person as Ahasuerus, who made Esther his queen. The Hebrew word for Ahasuerus is the natural Semitic equivalent of the Persian khshayarsha of the inscriptions out of which the Greeks formed the word Xerxes. There is much similarity of character in the Xerxes of history and the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther.

It is probable that while Xerxes indulged his pleasures with the grossest sensuality and his vanity by making silly rock inscriptions, Esther, the queen, and Mordecai, the Jew, were welcomed by their countrymen and that here one or both of them died, beloved and honored. It would be a natural desire to be buried together. "Lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death not divided.

There is no other place claiming the honor of their burial. The traditions of the Jews, it should also be remarked, do not make such demand on our blind credulity as do the relics and sacred places shown by the monks. With something of the same calous care that makes their preservation of he Scriptures remarkable they have presen ved the tombs of their illustrious dead.

Above all, we have the evidence this colony lived on the grounds since, the days of Esther. Hamadan, unlike Jerusaem, has never been wholly destroyed, and the Jews have never been driven from it; and this colony, now the oldest one in the world, has never ceased since they were carried here by the Assyrian kings. Hence curried here by the Assyrian kings. they can truly bear witness, and their testi-mony is strong. They have kept the feast of Purim, and they have guarded the tomb of Esther through all ages. Here are facts to be accounted for, and they point to historical events just as truly as the fourtrh of July and the tomb of Washington are historical monuments. To my mind at least the evidence is as strong as can be found to identify an ancient sepulchro, that Mordecai and Esther were buried here Hence it was a feeling of solemnity that I entered beneath the dome which covers the real grave of Bible characters.

The old Israelite who has charge of the pl ace swings back the low, but heavy do to, much rubbish fill up the room.

Er tering another door, so low and narrow one is obliged to stoop almost upon hands and knees, and creep in, we stand in the tomb chamber. The floor is paved with glazed tiles, and a recess opening on one side is used as a place of prayer. This re-cess is so situated that the worshipper has the double advantage of facing the tomb before him and Jerusalem, the Jewish Kibla. To pray in such a spot is counted a greatperivilege. High over head, in the centreof the dome, hangs on estrich egg, an article that figures largely in religious edifices in the East. Under the dome stand two chests or arks shaped as a reophagi.made of very hard black wood, and curiously carved in relief, in Habrew letters, and apparently very ancient. Some of the youg rabbis make rough Sdrafts of different colors, representing the tombs. They pre-tend to furnish all the inscriptions, but in the copy I obtained only part is found.

The larger sarcophagus is Esther's Upon it is written or carved in relief, "This is the Sarcophagus of Esther, the right-coust" and men the a smaller on a straight and upon the e smaller one "This is the Sarcophagus of Mordecai, the right-

On both tombs is the beautiful passage from Psalm xvi. 2 and 10-"Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth. My flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption."—Our Monthly.

No man can influence his fellows with any power who reties into his own selfishness; and gives himself to a self-culture which has no further object. It is not an unreasonable demand of the majority, that the few who have the advantages of the training of college and university should exhibit the breadth and sweetness of generous culture, and should shed everywhere that light which ennobles common things, and without which life is like one of the old landscapes in which the artist forgot to put sunlight.—Harner.

Scientific and Alseful.

POTATO SALAD.

Take four large Trish potatocs, boll sof and mealy; much with a tork until entirely free from lumps; season with salt and pepper quite strong, boil three eggs hard, mash the yolks to a paste with a little vine-gar, and mix it in the potatoes thoroughly. Slice the whites over the top when the saind is placed in a dish, and you will have an article of food with which you will be much pleased.—Miss L. T. D, Griffith, in Rural New Yorker.

SALT YOUR CHOINCYS.

In building a chimney put a quantity of salt into the mortar with which the interstices of brick are to be laid. The effect will be that there will never be any ac-cumulation of soot in the chinney. The philosophy is thus stated: The sait in the portion of mortar which is exposed absorbs moisture every damp day. The soot thus becoming damp falls down to the fire place. This appears to be an English discovery. It is used with success in Canada.

DIRT ON FLIL'S PRET.

A curious and perhaps important discovery is stated to have been made recently by M. Kletzu sky, a Viennese professor. Noticing that persons sick with the smallpox were often visited by flies, he placed near an open window of the hospital a saucer filled with glycerine. Soon the flies gathered and were caught like birds with glue. In their endeavors to free them-selves, all the foreign matter which had adhered to them was left in the glycerine. which was at once submitted to observation with the microscope. It was found that the glycerine, which was chemically pure when offered to the flies, was full of strange cells very similar to those seen on persons attacked by small-pox, but never on fliesa discovery which proves conclusively that these insects are not only filthy, but can be a dangerous means of spreading contagious

WASHING FLUID.

Three tablespoonfuls of soda, the same quantity of dissolved camphor (the same as kept for family use) to a quart of soft water, bottle it up and shake it well before using For a large washing take four
tablespoonfuls of the fluid to a pint of soap, make a warm suds and soak the clothes half an hour; then make another sude, using the same quantity of soap and fluid, and boil them just fifteen minutes, then rinse in two waters.

MUD HOLES

Very recently, says an exchange, we read a recommendation to farmers to fill the mud holes about their homesteads with leaves. A more shiftless resource could not well be thought of. The fact that such mud holes are tolerated, is sufficient proof that the owner of the place is careless or shiftless and to encourage him in the idea that patching them with leaves would be proper does not strike us as the best of teaching. Neat walks around the farm and good roads and dry yards should be inculcated as absolute necessities. They give an appearance of comfort much to be desired. Gravel is the very best material. It is porous, cleanly, dry and agreeable underfoot in all conditions of weather, and in summer forms a pleasing contrast to the surrounding vegetation.

A TEST OF THE EXTINCTION OF LIFE.

In view of the uncertainty regarding the final extinction of life that occasionally arises, Dr. Magnus proposes the following test for the decision of the matter. If a limb of the body (a finger is best for the purpose) be constricted by a strong ligature quite tightly, there will, if the subject is yet alive, be a reddening of the constricted member. First the part in question becomes red, and then the red color becomes darker and darker, and deeper in hue, until it is finally converted into a bluish-red, the whole limb being from its tip to the ligature which encheles it of a un form color, except that at the cogion immediately round the ligature is self there is to be seen and we stand in the outer apartment. In it are buried 'several rabbis of di finction Stone slabs, gathered for future repairs, and white. Though five may be a light discolar to the first death, the death of the death of the death of the death. coloration after death, the doctor has satisfied himself by experiment that this cannot be confounded with the complete discoloration that attends the performance of the test on a living limb.—Scribner's fer Leb-

THE RINGS OF SATURN.

The rings of Saturn have always been an enigma to a tronomers. La Place showed that if they were solid and of the same thickness throughout, they would soon fall down on the planet and be destroyed. Ho therefore supposed them of irregular density. Not many years ago Professor Peirco found that the same catastrophe would occur even in this case, and he and Bond have concluded that they were fluid. It soon became doudful whether a fluid ring would be any more stable, and Professor Peirco honce conceived the idea that it was held up by the attractions of the satellites. Mr. Hirn, a French physicist, has lately presented a paper to the French Academy, in which he tanintains that the ring is neither solid nor fluid, but is a swarm of small particles, which looks solid owing to the great distance at which we see it. The idea is not new, as it was developed mathematically more than ten years ago by Mr. J. C. Maxwell, of England; but Mr. Hirn adduces some new arguments to its support. One of these is that when the ring is seen on its dark side, which is presented to us on very rare occasions, it does not seem absolutely black, a little light shining through.—Editon's Scientific Ricord, in Harper's Magazine for February.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR CHICKENS.

The diseases of poultry are caused by close confinement, filth, impure air and water, and lack of gravel, more than by any other causes. All poultry houses should be warm for winter, but not warm at the expense of vantilation. Arrange for a free circulation of pure air, keep well cleansed, change diet frequently, supply with new gravel occasionally, and see that they have pure water, and plenty of so doing, you will have a vigorous, healthy flock. The hens will lay all winter, and furnish healthy his sla in the spring.