

920
BRA

“THE WAR-PATH OF OPINION.”

A REPLY

BY

HYPATIA BRADLAUGH BONNER.

LONDON:

A. & H. B. BONNER, 1 & 2 TOOK'S COURT,
CHANCERY LANE, E.C.

APRIL, 1902.

G4339

926 BRA

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION

500 N. 5TH ST. NEW YORK, N. Y.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY A. BONNER, 1 & 2 TOOK'S COURT,
CHANCERY LANE, E.C.

TO FREETHINKERS.

"Your duty lies not in petty personal strife, but in the diffusion of the great and mighty truths for which our predecessors have risked stake and dungeon. Your duty is not to take part in disputes whether John or Thomas is the better leader, but rather so to live as to need no leaders. A public man's life is composed of strange phases. If successful, he wins his success with hard struggling. As he struggles, the little great ones before him, who envy him his hope, block up his path. His ignorance is exposed, his incapability made manifest; and then when he has won the victory and made a place for standing, each envious, cowardly caviller, who dares not meet him face to face, stabs him with base innuendo in the back. I do not envy any statesman's character in the hands of his political antagonists, still less do I envy when I hear him dissected behind his back by his pseudo friends."

CHARLES BRADLAUGH, *National Reformer*, Feb. 28th, 1863.

A limited number of copies of this "REPLY" can be obtained from the publishers on payment of postage. (One copy ½d.)

‘ THE WARPATH OF OPINION.’

A REPLY.

INTRODUCTORY.

IF it were in my power I would restrict the circulation of this “reply” to those who have already read Mr. George Jacob Holyoake’s pamphlet “The Warpath of Opinion”, but as that is obviously impossible, I must let it go out in the ordinary way, appealing to those into whose hands it may fall to look upon it as a semi-private matter and not to use these pages to pander to the taste of those who take pleasure in personal disputes. Of the two men chiefly concerned, the one has been in his grave these eleven years, the other’s life journey is drawing to a close. Short of sacrificing my father’s good name, I would have done anything rather than write this pamphlet.

Instead of simply commenting on Mr. Holyoake’s allegations and denying them, I have refrained from comment wherever consistent with definiteness and have allowed Mr. Holyoake himself to disprove Mr. Holyoake. For this purpose I have been compelled to quote his words very fully in order not to appear to do him an injustice by omitting any qualifying context. I have studied clearness and conclusiveness even at the risk of wearying.

Mr. Holyoake informs Mr. H. P. Ward (March, 1902) in reference to myself, that his “feelings towards her and her eminent Father are those of friendship”. Yet he writes and sells “The Warpath of Opinion”.

For my part, I have no enmity towards Mr. Holyoake, but I can make no profession of friendship, for I feel none. Nor could I feel friendship towards a man who rakes over the ashes of forty years and, with memory already defective by age rendered still more defective by bitter brooding over fancied wrongs or misunderstandings, publishes to the curious world

such a series of defamatory stories as are found in his pamphlet. And for what purpose? Not to elevate his own character—for there is not a line in "The Warpath of Opinion" which will raise Mr. Holyoake in the esteem of high-minded men—but to drag through the dirt the memory of a defenceless dead man, for whom and for whose only surviving child he professes "friendship". I should have been more convinced of his sincerity had Mr. Holyoake openly avowed his enmity—that at least would have had no empty sound.

At the end of 1896 I was told that Mr. George Jacob Holyoake had written a pamphlet containing very serious allegations against my father. This pamphlet was actually in the press and its publication advertised, but through the good offices of a very old friend of Mr. Holyoake's—one who had also held Mr. Bradlaugh in the highest esteem—Mr. Holyoake so I was told, was induced to withdraw the book from publication. While expressing to this friend my gratitude for the kindness of his intention, I intimated that I feared his efforts to stop the book were useless, that it was only putting off the day, and that for my own part I would rather have answered the charges against my father at once than have it to do later on. It is a heartbreaking business, this continual need for defending the dead against the aspersions of the living, and putting it off makes it no less bitter. Recently I have heard that within a very few months after withdrawing his book, Mr. Holyoake was again considering the question of its publication, but again his closest friends endeavored to dissuade him from this course. I was given to understand that the pamphlet was very calumnious, but I did not see a copy, or even a line of it. Indeed the impression conveyed to my mind was that the printing was not completed and that the sheets which had gone to press had been destroyed with Mr. Holyoake's reluctant consent.

Hence it came as a surprise to me when a completed copy was put into my hands in the March or April of last year and I was told it was being freely circulated. This pamphlet of 74 pages was marked "One shilling", but it bore no publisher's name. I took some days for reflection as to the

wisest course I could pursue, and came to the conclusion that my best and most straightforward plan was to write to Mr. Holyoake himself as to where the pamphlet could be purchased. The correspondence which ensued was as follows:—

23 STREATHBOURNE ROAD,
UPPER TOOTING, LONDON, S.W.
April 19th, 1901.

DEAR SIR,—I have had put into my hands, as a loan, a pamphlet written by you, entitled "The Warpath of Opinion", price 1s. The copy lent me bears no publisher's name. I should therefore be obliged if you would inform me where I may purchase it so that I may deal with its contents so far as they relate to my dead father.

Yours truly,

H. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

Stamped and directed envelope enclosed.

G. J. HOLYOAKE, Esq.

EASTERN LODGE, BRIGHTON.

DEAR MRS. BONNER,—*20/4/01.*—"The Warpath" has no publisher. The printer, by a breach of printer faith, made many persons acquainted with it without my knowledge or consent. I had reason to believe that it came into your hands and I thought it would look like obtruding it upon you to send a second copy. My first impulse was to send it to you, it being due to you. For that reason I sent it to Mr. Linton and also to Dr. Conway.

Very truly yours,

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

23 STREATHBOURNE ROAD,
UPPER TOOTING, LONDON, S.W.,
24th April, 1901.

DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE,—Thank you for sending me a copy of your pamphlet. I am not quite clear as to publication: you say it has no publisher; does that mean that it is not on sale to the public? If the book is not for general circulation I do not want to say anything about it; but if it is, I must. My dear father's memory is my charge.

I have only seen a copy of the book within this last few weeks. Some years ago I heard that you intended to bring out such a book, but I understood that you had withdrawn it, and that the sheets were destroyed by the printer. I have been told

just recently that you have left instructions that the book should be circulated after your death, but that I am altogether unwilling to believe.

Yours truly,

H. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

G. J. HOLYOAKE, Esq.

EASTERN LODGE, BRIGHTON.

2nd May, 1901.

DEAR MRS. BONNER,—It is impossible for me to reply as promptly as I wish. By the book having no publisher you are to understand that the book is not on sale, and never was, for reasons given in the book. I reluctantly withheld its publication, but I reserve the right of issuing it at will. There are three persons against whom I vindicate myself. If I do not publish it those who come after me will have the same right to do it which you rightfully have to vindicate your Father's memory. The printer who was a party to its issue undertook to destroy it, which was the greatest outrage I ever experienced at the hands of a printer.

Very truly yours,

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

In February this year, I was informed that Mr. H. Percy Ward was selling some copies of Mr. Holyoake's pamphlet. Although I knew that Mr. Holyoake, in defiance of his letter to me of May 2nd, had been selling single copies even to strangers, I did not wish to think that he set so little value upon his word that he would give them out for sale in a general way. I therefore wrote Mr. Ward the following letter:—

23 STREATHBOURNE ROAD,

UPPER TOOTING, LONDON, S.W.,

February 19th, 1902.

DEAR MR. WARD,—I am informed that you have on sale a number of copies of Mr. G. J. Holyoake's pamphlet, "On the Warpath". If this is so, I should be glad if you would kindly inform me where you got them from. I have Mr. Holyoake's word—written word—that these pamphlets, calumniating my dead father, are not on sale.

Yours truly,

H. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

I had not long written to Mr. Ward when an early copy of the *March Secularist* was sent to me advertising the "War-

path" as a book which "has never been published; but we are able to supply a few copies to curious readers". Under these circumstances I thought I ought to communicate with Mr. Holyoake direct.

23 STREATHBOURNE ROAD,
UPPER TOOTING, LONDON, S.W.,

February 26th, 1902.

DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE,—I enclose a page from the March issue of the *Secularist*, containing an advertisement of "The Warpath of Opinion". May I ask whether this advertisement appears, and whether the copies of the pamphlet are being sold, with your knowledge and consent? An answer at your convenience will oblige.

Yours truly,

H. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

Mr. Percy Ward replied to me on March 1st that he had only recently seen the pamphlet, and having read it he wrote Mr. Holyoake offering to advertise it in the *Secularist*, as he thought that it contained statements which ought to be known to the newer generation of Secularists! Mr. Holyoake accepted his offer and sent him copies for sale. A few days later I received the following reply to my letter from Mr. Holyoake:—

EASTERN LODGE, BRIGHTON.

February 27th, 1902.

DEAR MRS. BONNER,—I have not seen the *Secularist*. Mr. Ward said some readers in his district would like to see the "Warpath", or words to that effect, and I had sent him half-a-dozen. The book contains an historical defence of Mazzini which ought to have been published when I wrote it. The reply to Linton and to Adams concerned more persons than myself. When I have time I will publish the "Warpath" as you seem to wish it from asking frequently about it. It has seldom been refused to any one who applied for it.

March 5th.

I took this note with me to Leicester but was too busy to sign it; since, the death of a daughter-in-law has put it further out of my mind.

Yours very truly,

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

Readers will please note that I wrote to Mr. Holyoake in

reference to this subject on two occasions only, viz., two letters in 1901, and one in 1902. This he calls "frequently," and hence deduces a desire on my part for publication! I should think less of this letter had it been written and sent off in a moment of peevish irritation. But after keeping the letter by him for six days, Mr. Holyoake sends it to me in cold blood. I desire also to call attention to the contradictory statements contained in the letters of 1901 and that of 1902:—

April 20th, 1901.

"The 'Warpath' has no publisher."

May 2nd, 1901.

"By the book having no publisher you are to understand that the book is not on sale, and never was, for reasons given in the book."

February 27th, 1902.

"It has seldom been refused to any one who applied for it."

"The Warpath of Opinion" is ostensibly an answer (p. 9)* to my biography of my father, but many of the subjects referred to do not arise out of anything said either by Mr. J. M. Robertson or myself.

THE FLEET STREET HOUSE.

The first charges Mr. Holyoake brings against Mr. Bradlaugh are in reference to the "Fleet Street House" established in 1853. He speaks of the foundation of the business and refers to "Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life, Chapter 58" for fuller particulars. I quote these accounts below in the left hand column; with these may be compared other accounts in the right hand column from the pages of the *Reasoner* (Mr. Holyoake's own paper) and the *National Reformer*. Readers familiar with my biography of my father will not require to be reminded that there was no allusion there to the Fleet Street House to "occasion" this reply from Mr. Holyoake. An inquiry into the matter however serves to show how little reliance can be placed upon the

* Where the page only is given "The Warpath of Opinion" is referred to.

accuracy of Mr. Holyoake's memory. His recollections, in fact, vary from one year to another.

G. J. H. in "*The Warpath of Opinion*", p. 10.

"The only money I had—the £250 presented to me after the Brewin Grant Debate—I gave with £100 more, to Mr. Watson, that he might not suffer from my opening a new shop which might diminish his custom. I was under no business obligations to give Mr. Watson £350, which nobody ever did by me in like circumstances."

In "*Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life*" (pubd. 1893), p. 161.

"As the new house in Fleet Street would necessarily affect his business, I asked him what would compensate him for loss of trade thus caused. He said, £350, which with what he had, would provide for him in the future. . . . My solicitor who advanced me purchase-money on the lease, asked me what I was to have for the money paid to Mr. Watson. He thought me imprudent. I had nothing to produce, save the right of selling his books, which never yielded £50. Nevertheless I kept my promise. My brother Austin was as solicitous as I was to do it. Seeing Mr. Watson on the opposite side of the street, looking in his wistful way at the house, I sent my brother with the only £60 in hand to go over and pay him the final instalment. The transaction was in every way unfortunate to me, but I never regretted it. The curious thing was that no one respected me for it, or believed it, and no one ever made any acknowledgment of it, not even Mr. Watson. Mr. W. J. Linton in his 'Life of Watson' omits it, although it made the end of

G. J. HOLYOAKE, in "*Reasoner*", November 16th, 1853.

"Our friend and publisher will at the close of the present year retire from business. We have accepted terms for the purchase of his business. Our relative positions will now change. In future we shall publish for Mr. Watson as he has hitherto published for us. Henceforth his entire publishing trade will be in our hands. . . . All Mr. Watson's works will from January, 1854, be issued from No. 147 Fleet Street. The publication of works of free enquiry which Mr. Watson has for so long a period maintained with so much personal integrity, with so much credit to the party whom he has recommended, with so much service to political liberty and freethought, he will do us the honor to entrust to ourselves."

"*Reasoner*", November 30th, 1853.

"The steps are taken—an adequate establishment is secured. The literature of free-thinking is collected into one centre, and judging from the past, there can be no doubt that such an accredited publishing house will succeed."

"*Reasoner*", December 21st, 1853.

"Our central depôt now begins to wear an air of completeness. . . . This hall, thrown open for the convenience of visitors and flanked with glass cases from Mr. Watson's, imparts a wholesome finish to the interior."

G. J. H. in "*National Reformer*", May 10th, 1874.

"When one morning towards

Watson's days pleasant. It was treated as incredible, and for the first time I came to understand the sagacious maxim of the Italians, 'Beware of being too good'. I had known few persons in danger of transgressing the rule, and did not suspect I was one."

the end of our occupancy, £250 was given me by an unexpected friend, for my personal use, I remember with what honest pride he [Austin Holyoake] concurred in its being paid away to such creditors as remained, regardless that it would not leave me anything to divide with him, as would have been his right, had anything remained in my hands. Looking through the window as we spoke, and seeing the largest creditor we had on the opposite side of the street, I gave him £60, and told him to go out and give it him, which was done in the street, and thus ended that obligation.'

Mr. James Watson was a man who was held in the very highest esteem. I have never seen his character impugned by anyone other than Mr. Holyoake. The natural assumption is that, by retiring from business within two months and putting the whole of his stock (even his "glass cases") and goodwill into Mr. Holyoake's hands, he considered he was giving a fair equivalent for the money. When a man of Mr. Watson's character makes no acknowledgment of unusually generous treatment, we are bound to infer that he was unconscious of the generosity. Mr. Holyoake further says of this £350 that "it made the end of Watson's days pleasant". Mr. Holyoake entered into business at 147 Fleet Street in November, 1853. Mr. James Watson died in November, 1874; just twenty-one years later.

As bearing on Mr. Holyoake's claims in relation to the Fleet Street House, we may note in passing that considerable sums of money were subscribed to enable him to carry on the business; for example, £642 is acknowledged for this purpose in the *Reasoner* of August, 1858, and a further sum of £500 in May, 1861.

Mr. Holyoake makes a very serious charge against Mr. Bradlaugh of seducing his servant, "an honest Wesleyan, whom I liked much and entirely trusted" (p. 18), from his

master's interests, and of dishonorable conduct both in regard to the Fleet Street House and in his journalistic connection with the *National Reformer*. It is quite impossible at this date, forty years after the alleged occurrences narrated in "The Warpath of Opinion", with all the actors dead save Mr. Holyoake, for me to bring forward proofs to show that he did *not* do all the unscrupulous things with which he is here charged. But in regard to the "Wesleyan" Wilks—who came into the employ of Messrs. Holyoake in 1854 on the recommendation of Mr. Watson, and who had been with Cleave and Hetherington, and suffered imprisonment for publishing political papers—Mr. Bradlaugh in a long article in the *Investigator* for March, 1858, explains fully the part he took and puts the whole matter in a very different light. He there states that he did not move on Wilks's behalf directly or indirectly until he was in prison—in the opinion of many of his contemporaries a hardly used man.* I have not investigated, nor do I intend to investigate, this matter as far as it regards Wilks: it is sufficient to point out that there were two sides to the question, and my father deemed it right to assist the weaker party. Those who wish for further details can find them in the *Reasoner* and *Investigator* of February and March, 1858. For the other charges against Mr. Bradlaugh in reference to the Fleet Street House (which Mr. Holyoake shows us he was ready to tell to any woman who was ready to listen (p. 19), but which I hear for the first time) I must simply lay it on my readers, first, to consider these charges in the light of Mr. Bradlaugh's character as they have known him themselves. Or if they have not known him personally then in the light of his career of self-sacrifice which culminated in his death; he sought everything for the public good, but was content with little for himself; the very honors he strove for were not for his aggrandisement, but as stepping stones to a more extended public service. Next, I would ask my readers to consider whether it is not more than probable that Mr. Holyoake's memory is at fault here just as we see it is at fault in other cases which are open to proof.

* Mr. Holyoake (p. 18) charges Mr. Bradlaugh with having advised Wilks that he might carry away the books; but in his statement of the case in the *Investigator* Mr. Bradlaugh specifically says: "Wilks took the books (I think erroneously) . . ."

The motive which Mr. Holyoake alleges for this dishonorable conduct on Mr. Bradlaugh's part is so astonishing that it carries its own refutation.

"My impetuous rival," he says, "wanted my place. The proceedings looked like malignity, but it was merely covetousness. As soon as he was able he set up a house in the same street." (p. 20.)

Mr. Holyoake closed 147 Fleet Street in 1861. Mr. Bradlaugh's "impetuosity" equalled his "covetousness," and he opened 63 Fleet Street twenty-one years later, in 1882! These dates are themselves sufficient answer to Mr. Holyoake's amazing charge, but if more be needed, I refer readers to the chapter in my biography of my father in which I speak of the opening of 63 Fleet Street.* I wrote there, what I repeat here, that my father "often said he had never intended to become a publisher, and he had never intended to become a printer; . . . he had, in fact, no inclination for commercial pursuits; they had always been forced upon him by circumstances." Is it, indeed, credible that a man of Mr. Bradlaugh's determination and persistency should "covet" a Fleet Street business to such an extent that he should use his legal knowledge to overreach Mr. Holyoake, that he should have employed "industrious machinations" to destroy his undertaking, and then after all that waste of honor and energy, wait one-and-twenty years before he set up the coveted "house in the same street"! The suggestion is puerile.

"With no one to oppose him, or conspire against him, Mr. Bradlaugh lost the money of others as well as his own, and his Fleet Street House had to be closed. He had no means of supporting it save, as I had, by the proceeds of incessant lectures." (p. 20.)

When Mr. Holyoake wrote the last sentence he had probably forgotten the large sums of subscribed money acknowledged in the *Reasoner* for the support of his Fleet Street House. And when without a word of explanation he tells his readers that Mr. Bradlaugh "lost the money of others" he conveys an absolutely false impression. Mr. Bradlaugh having

* "Charles Bradlaugh: A Record of His Life". Vol. II., p. 101.

no private income, and having no money subscribed for the purpose of his Fleet Street business, nevertheless required money to carry it on. He therefore raised the necessary capital by means of debentures. These debentures carried an interest of 5 per cent. which was regularly paid, to the day, by Mr. Bradlaugh until his death. (Indeed so much had his intention of regular and prompt payment impressed itself upon me that I paid this interest in the March quarter after his death—which last payment one of the debenture holders wrote me was quite unnecessary and uncalled for.) The shop at 63 Fleet Street was closed on November 15, 1890; Mr. Bradlaugh died eleven weeks later, on January 30, 1891. What time was there in which to repay the money invested in the business? I knew that he was most keenly anxious that no one should suffer any pecuniary loss through him, but the utmost I could do, even with the help so generously given me, was to pay 10s. in the £. Had Mr. Bradlaugh lived eleven years instead of eleven weeks after the closing of 63 Fleet Street, I am confident that there is no one who to-day would be able to say that he had lost money in the business. Mr. Bradlaugh, strained as he was during the last months of his life, was yet making engagements whereby he might increase his income for the express purpose of paying off his indebtedness. His anxiety in this direction was great, for, as he said to me one day, he felt that he was "growing old."

In the *National Reformer*, May 10, 1874, Mr. Holyoake wrote:—

"The errors of the affair in Fleet Street were my own. I attempted too much; I promised too much; I trusted too much."

This agrees with the lengthy statement which appeared in the *Reasoner* in 1861 at the closing of the Fleet Street House, and it is what happens to hundreds of unbusinesslike men when they go into business. It is the reasonable and ordinary explanation of failure and eliminates all need for paltry suggestions of an "impetuous rival" conspiring his destruction.

THE SHAEN ARBITRATION.

On the question of Mr. Shaen's arbitration *in re* the

National Reformer (pp. 21-26), the following correspondence took place between Mr. Holyoake and myself in 1893:—

BRIGHTON,

January 24th, 1893.

DEAR MRS. BONNER,—You say in the *National Reformer* for January 1st, that "you find Mr. Shaen had previously acted as solicitor for Mr. Holyoake", as though that affected his decision. Mr. Shaen had been my solicitor long before—on *another* matter as your father well knew when he agreed to Mr. Shaen as an honorable and impartial umpire. Your father was my solicitor in the matter of the agreement. To him I had entrusted in his capacity of solicitor (in which he was then acting in an amateur way) the draft of our agreement, which was not returned to me. Thus my main proof remained in his hands. Of the award, £81 18s., I relinquished £31 18s., leaving him to pay to my brother Austin £50 only, and that at his convenience. I neither sought nor cared for the money except as far as vindicating journalistic right. I was always friendly to your father. I believe you will never find, in writing or in print, any word of personal disparagement of him by me. Where I gave my friendship I gave my confidence; it was therefore I asked him to act as my solicitor in the matter of our agreement.

Very truly yours,

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

30 VICTORIA ROAD, CLAPHAM COMMON,

26th January, 1893.

DEAR MR. HOLYOAKE,—My husband brought your letter to me from the office last night. My first impulse was to append it to the next instalment of my biography, but on consideration, I think, unless it is your express wish, that would be inadvisable. On my father's behalf I should be obliged to make the rejoinder that it is not clear what you intend to be understood by your phrase: "To him I had entrusted in his capacity as solicitor the draft of our agreement"; that it seems to me that such an agreement was properly in my father's hands, and that the arbitrators had power to compel my father to produce any documents relating to the matter, and as a point of fact they did have the agreement before them. It appears from the umpire's decision that "it was intended that this document should have been expanded into a further and more formal agreement", and that it contained only the heads of an agreement. That at first you claimed a further £100, a claim abandoned during the proceedings, and that the letter of Messrs. Ashurst, Morris and Co., offering to accept £50, says nothing about "convenience

but requests my father to "carry it out at once". As regards the "personal disparagement" of my father, I think if you refer to the *Reasoner* for November and December, 1860, and April, 1861, you will find some words of yours that it would be difficult to construe otherwise. And there are later comments within my recollection which were hardly of a friendly nature.

I am, however, anxious for obvious reasons—while endeavoring to do absolute justice to my father—to say as little that is unpleasant to you as I can. To me, personally, you have shown a friendly disposition, and I should be glad to mark my appreciation of your sentiments.

Yours sincerely,

H. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

BRIGHTON,

January 30th, 1893.

DEAR MRS. BONNER,—My note was not sent for insertion. My impression was that you intended to be fair: a friend said I ought to inform you that the umpire in question did not decide as my solicitor in my interest as his client, as the reader would understand you to mean. All I had in view in writing was to explain the facts to you personally.

Very truly yours,

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

BRIGHTON,

September 17th, 1893.

DEAR MRS. BONNER,—In my note of January 24th I said I believed you would not find any word of personal disparagement of your father by me.

On January 26th you referred me to the *Reasoner* for November and December, 1860, and April, 1861. What I said there related to aspects of oath-taking which I have oft said is applicable to Unitarians and Free Thinkers who take this oath. My words were very different from things said in the *Reformer* against me. In the pages you refer to are constant and cordial reports and references to your father which shows I had policy* and not personal disparagement in my mind.

Very truly yours,

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

Regards to Mr. Bonner. Until to-day I have not had time to send this note.

* To accuse a man of conduct tending to "diffuse in Secular societies the low pettifogging morality, the quips, the quirks, and evasions which hang about the purlieus of the law courts" is not unlike personal disparagement.

"THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS."

Before commencing to print 'The Bible: What It Is,' Mr. Bradlaugh obtained the permission of Messrs. Holyoake to use their names as publishers to his work. They took it in the ordinary manner without risk or cost to themselves, and at the full publishing profits. After the third number Mr. Holyoake declined to publish it, refused to advertise it as sold at 147 Fleet Street, and ordered the show-bills to be removed from the window, stating that his reason for doing so was that the book was "an obscene book".

"*The Warpath of Opinion*", p. 11.

"Though the author resented what I said, he did not, so far as I am aware, again obtrude the obscenity of any Bible stories. It is curious to note that, though he made tearful complaints of the injury done to him by my dissenting from his method of treatment, it was he not I who made the matter known. To create an injury by his own act and then to pose as a much-wronged person was a device of which he was a master."

"*Reasoner*", January 6th, 1858.

(Replies and remarks to readers.)

"H. M., Hoxton.—The publishers of '147' took their name from 'The Bible: what it is', because of occasional passages beginning to appear in it inclining to obscenity."

"*Reasoner*", March 24th, 1858.

(Replies and remarks to readers.)

"J. Perkins.—Respecting the 'Bible: What it is', two passages we should cite are these. The sentence on the first passage, p. 19, beginning, 'The species of fruit', ending, 'the sexes'. The sentence in the second passage, p. 153, beginning, 'I would advise', ending, 'of what he exposed'. No gentleman could read these sentences before a public audience. No father could wish them to meet the eye of his daughter. Our objection to the work included only the first passage;* but the title, 'Bible: What it is', implied that more was to come from the same pen."

* On January 6th Mr. Holyoake gives as his reasons for ceasing to publish, that "occasional passages" began to appear. On March 24th he reduces these "occasional passages" to two, the second of which he did not publish. He published only the first twenty-four pages.

Mr. J. M. Robertson writes on this: "I have examined the cited passages of "The Bible: What It Is", and can only say that Mr. Holyoake's account of them, like the rest of his pamphlet, is a melancholy exhibition of perversity. No fair or freethinking critic, no open-minded scholar, could endorse the charge of obscenity. The first passage deals with the story of the Fall, the second with that of David's indecent self-exposure, which act the Bible virtually applauds. The purpose of setting forth (1) the unfitness of the Bible to serve as a guide to conduct, and (2) its fictitious character as an account of human origins and development, necessarily involved animadversion on such passages. To pass them by would be to leave unnoted some of the strongest arguments against its moral and historical authority; and he who would veto such argument is either no freethinker or one perverted by personal malice.

"In his remarks on the Fall story Mr. Bradlaugh in perfectly decent language mentions the widely accepted view that it is an allegory of the sexual relation. The late Professor J. G. Donaldson, in his Latin work *Fashar*, expounds this view at length and in detail, in a fashion commonly held to be permissible only in Latin; but no serious scholar would dream of calling even his language indecent; and Mr. Bradlaugh's phrases are in comparison strictly decorous. The Rev. Sir George Cox, in a paper in "Religious Systems of the World" (3rd Ed., p. 241) is much more explicit than Mr. Bradlaugh. To cite such a passage, and the other in reference to David, as obscene, is to do exactly what Mr. Holyoake charges on Mr. Bradlaugh. The latter, as he explained, passed over innumerable grossnesses in the Bible without comment: he did comment gravely and critically on some passages where it was specially important to do so, in one case by way of scientific exegesis, in others by way of moral protest. And Mr. Holyoake, who on the strength of the first passage called the book 'an obscene book', himself indulges in gratuitous nastiness in his pamphlet (p. 44).

"The remark that 'no gentleman' could read the cited passages in public, or wish to have his daughter read them, is peculiarly unscrupulous. There are countless passages *in the*

Bible which to read in public would be to commit the grossest indecency, yet all Christian gentlemen who are fathers are supposed to put the entire Bible in the hands of their children. It has been reserved for Mr. Holyoake to show how much more unjust a professed freethinker can be made by personal malice than are many zealous Christians.

"It is needless to comment on the phrase 'tearful complaints' as applied to Mr. Bradlaugh. Such language disposes of itself. But I may offer a personal testimony in regard to the main question. The only occasion on which, during the six or seven years in which I wrote regularly for the *National Reformer* under his editorship, Mr. Bradlaugh ever asked me to cancel an article I had written, was when I had in his opinion too lightly undertaken to vindicate some publication of matter commonly held 'improper'. On such matters he was most anxiously scrupulous. Mr. Holyoake represents him as treating all critics or opponents as personal enemies. If he ever did that—which I do not believe—he must have altered profoundly in later life; for I never knew a man more perfectly tolerant of difference of opinion in his associates. I wish Mr. Holyoake had so changed. The most amazing thing about his shocking outbreak of hoarded rancor is that it is precluded by a series of professions to abstain from making 'imputations'; from putting bad constructions on conduct; and from judging 'the merits of another through the minimising light of personal antipathy, if unhappily it exists'. I know nothing like it in literature. To believe a charge on the bare word of one so visibly moved by morbid spite would be to show an irrational credulity."

"In like manner, in after years he gave noisome publicity to the fact that Mr. W. H. Smith did not exhibit his *National Reformer* on his book-stalls; which the public had never known had he not told them. . . . This was his way—to create an injury and proclaim it." (pp. 11 and 12.)

Here, again, we have a distortion of the facts. It was not merely that W. H. Smith and Son would not exhibit the *National Reformer* on their book-stalls, but that they refused to sell it or procure it for their customers, even when it was ordered as part of a parcel of various publications. How

Mr. Bradlaugh "created" this injury—for it was an undoubted injury to the sale of the *National Reformer*—or what motive he could have had for such a senseless proceeding it is impossible to imagine. In proclaiming it, in giving publicity to the fact that these newsagents—who were gradually getting a monopoly of the trade along the railway lines—refused to supply his journal I think—and I believe many will agree with me—that he was quite right. He had not only himself to consider, but the cause which was advocated by his journal also; and so far from thinking the publicity he gave to the fact of Messrs. Smith's boycott "noisome", I maintain that it was perfectly justifiable, and that it would have been an error to have acted otherwise.

OATHS AND THE BLASPHEMY LAW.

Mr. Holyoake objects to the statement made by Mr. John M. Robertson that while he "was in business partnership with his brother Austin, the latter, a highly-esteemed Free-thinker, had taken the oath whenever it was necessary for the purposes of the business",* as "pure imagination". He writes (see left hand column):—

"It was my rule to keep a Christian in my service who could conscientiously make an oath in case of business need. But my trusted Wesleyan was unavailable, being now in the dock. My brother Austin volunteered to prosecute. I did not know then that he had opinions inconsistent with the oath." p. 18.

"At that time [February, 1858] I did not know what my brother's opinions were, and had he taken the Sacraments it would not have changed my affection nor trust in him. Afterwards he professed opinions inconsistent with taking the oath." p. 19.

AUSTIN HOLYOAKE, "*Thoughts in the Sick Room,*" written on his death bed in April, 1874, and published in the "*National Reformer*" for April 19th.

"For twenty years past my mind has been entirely free from misgivings or apprehensions as to any future state of rewards and punishments. I do not believe in the Christian Deity, nor in any form of so-called supernatural existence. I cannot believe in that which I cannot comprehend."

G. J. H., "*National Reformer*", May 10th, 1874.

"My business connection with my brother—a happy portion of

* "Charles Bradlaugh." Vol. II., p 223.

my life with him—extended from 1845, less or more, until 1862. . . . A great merit of his was that he would do whatever he could to cause Freethought to command influence. He cared for its future credit more than for its immediate success. He would work day and night to do, within needful time or with greater taste, something or other we thought useful to issue. I should never have attempted what I did at Fleet Street had I not been sure of his co-operation; and all I take most pride in of what was done there, could never have been accomplished without his aid."

The firm bore the name of "Holyoake Brothers"; what need to employ a Christian to take the oath unless *both* the partners objected to it? And what must have been the relations between the brothers that they could live side by side carrying on a Freethought publishing house, and yet the elder brother feel so little concern for the younger working with him that he did not know what his opinions were? Mr. Holyoake surely does not do himself justice. Although it may be quite true—and I accept Mr. Holyoake's word—that his brother Austin only took the oath in one case for the firm, yet it is surely not true that his opinions were unknown to his elder brother with whom he was in active partnership. The above extracts in the righthand column should remove any doubt on this point.

"I had caused an important exemption to be inserted in an Act of Parliament, and accelerated its being passed, of which Mr. Bradlaugh had the benefit, as did all who stood on his side. Conceding credit without stint, for what he did, and which I always joined in according him, he concealed from the public, on his part, any knowledge of what I had done, before his day, for the protection of freedom of speech. I do not treat this as an offence; I only say he did it. Nor did I take any step to call attention to the omission myself." (p. 37.)

Mr. Holyoake then goes on to tell of the origin of the

Act, beginning with the story of his arrest at Cheltenham in 1842, and continues:—

“An Act was passed while I was in prison whereby all prosecutions for heretical opinions, written or spoken, were taken from the jurisdiction of irate, prejudiced, or ignorant magistrates at Quarter Sessions, and referred to the ‘decision’ of judges at Assize Courts; conferring upon heresy the dignity of a State trial. . . . I was the first person tried under the Act.” (pp. 38, 39.)

This “dignity of a State trial” was at the same time conferred upon Murder, Perjury, Forgery, Abduction, and many other misdemeanors and most felonies! For what was this Act which Mr. Bradlaugh “concealed”? Anyone may get it from the King’s Printers for 2d., and it begins as follows:—

“ANNO QUINTO & SEXTO
“VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

“CAP. XXXVIII.

“An Act to define the Jurisdiction of Justices in General and
“Quarter Sessions of the Peace.

“ [30th June, 1842.]

“WHEREAS it is expedient that the Powers of Justices in General and Quarter Sessions of the Peace with respect to the Trial of Offences be better defined: Be it enacted by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That after the passing of this Act neither the Justices of the Peace acting in and for any County, Riding, Division, or Liberty, nor the Recorder of any Borough, shall, at any Session of the Peace, or at any Adjournment thereof, try any Person or Persons for any Treason, Murder, or Capital Felony, or for any Felony which, when committed by a Person not previously convicted of Felony, is punishable by Transportation beyond the Seas for Life, or for any of the following Offences; (that is to say),

- “ 1. Misprision of Treason :
- “ 2. Offences against the Queen’s Title, Prerogative, Person, or Government, or against either House of Parliament :
- “ 3. Offences subject to the Penalties of Præmunire :
- “ 4. Blasphemy and Offences against Religion :
- “ 5. Administering or taking unlawful Oaths :

- " 6. Perjury and Subornation of Perjury :
- " 7. Making or suborning any other Person to make a false Oath, Affirmation, or Declaration, punishable as Perjury or as a Misdemeanor :
- " 8. Forgery :
- " 9. Unlawfully and maliciously setting fire to Crops of Corn, Grain, or Pulse, or to any Part of a Wood, Coppice, or Plantation of Trees, or to any Heath, Gorse, Furze, or Fern :
- " 10. Bigamy, and Offences against the Laws relating to Marriage :
- " 11. Abduction of Women and Girls :
- " 12. Endeavoring to conceal the Birth of a Child :
- " 13. Offences against any Provision of the Laws relating to Bankrupts and Insolvents :
- " 14. Composing, printing, or publishing blasphemous, seditious, or defamatory Libels :
- " 15. Bribery :
- " 16. Unlawful Combinations and Conspiracies, except Conspiracies or Combinations to commit any Offence which such Justices or Recorder respectively have or has Jurisdiction to try when committed by One Person :
- " 17. Stealing or fraudulently taking, or injuring or destroying, Records or Documents belonging to any Court of Law or Equity, or relating to any Proceeding therein :
- " 18, Stealing or fraudulently destroying or concealing Wills or Testamentary Papers, or any Document or written Instrument being or containing Evidence of the Title to any Real Estate or any Interest in Lands, Tenements, or Hereditaments."

Then comes a proviso as to Justices acting in London and the environs, and so on.

Mr. Bradlaugh was nine years old when this omnibus Act was passed. Probably he never heard that Mr. Holyoake had anything to do with its passing, and although heretics do incidentally benefit by it, one would no more dream of claiming it as a special relief for heresy than for any other of the misdemeanors and felonies placed in the same category and on an equal "dignity" with "Blasphemy and Offences against Religion". Yet Mr. Holyoake actually goes on to say:—

" Knowledge of this great change in the law of heresy, so important to wandering or stationary ecclesiastical offenders, was

suppressed by Mr. Bradlaugh, who well knew it, as he often commented on other parts of the record of the Gloucester trial, which contained it. Thus Dr. Hunter, who followed in his trend, did not know of the existence or value of the Act, since he made no mention of this cardinal link in his historical statement on 'blasphemy law'. Save for this narrative, it would not now be distinctly known to the public. The omission of all reference to this matter could hardly be accidental, for there was historic necessity for citing it," (p. 39.)

Mr. Holyoake must be very hard put to it to bring this charge of "suppressing" and "concealing" against Mr. Bradlaugh and Dr. Hunter, when on his own admission he has "concealed" and "suppressed" it himself: he who ought to have known more about it than anyone. Dr. Hunter, like Mr. Bradlaugh, is dead and cannot repel the attack made upon him. He was an exceedingly able man, and a great and learned lawyer, for many years Examiner for the Law degrees at the London University.

In the 1871 edition of Mr. Holyoake's "Last trial by jury for Atheism", a little book of 121 pages, there are two references to this Act. The first in order (but last written) occurs in the Preface to the 3rd (1861) edition, and is as follows:

"One legislative point was gained by this Trial of 1842. The power of trying persons indicted for blasphemy was taken away from Quarter Sessions where local prejudice and bigotry frequently influenced the sentence of the Court. This discredit was set at rest by 5 & 6 Vict., c. 38—an Act to define the jurisdiction of Justices, etc. (June 30th, 1842), which says. . . ." [Here comes the preamble given on p. 21 down to "capital felony" on line 11.] Mr. Holyoake then mentions Nos. 4 and 14 of the 18 offences, omitting all reference to the other 16, and goes on: "The Act was passed after my committal by the Cheltenham magistrates and who, save for it, would have been my judges. I was the first person tried under it."

On page 27 of the narrative, written presumably in 1850, the year in which the first edition was issued, Mr. Holyoake says:—

"I hastened back to Gloucester. Either a Secretary of State's order or a Bill had come into operation, I was never correctly informed which, removing my trial, from the Sessions to the Assizes, which gave me an impartial judge to determine

my case: At a Session's trial the parties who had caused my imprisonment, and the magistrates who had shown themselves my personal opponents, would have sat on the Bench to try me."

Here there is not a word claiming credit for the Act: indeed Mr. Holyoake states specifically that he did not know that there was such an Act in existence. He was "*never correctly informed*" whether it was a Home Office order or a Bill which had caused the removal of his trial to the Assizes. Even in the trifling matter of claiming to be the first person tried under the Act, Mr. Holyoake's memory is at fault. He was arrested on June 2nd. His friend George Adams was arrested on June 13 for selling No. 25 of the *Oracle* at a public meeting called to consider the grounds of Mr. Holyoake's apprehension. Adams was committed to take his trial at the Sessions, but

"Mr. Adams' trial took place at Gloucester Assizes, immediately before my own."*

The Assizes opened on August 6, and Mr. Holyoake's trial came on on the 13th. Adams was tried by the same Judge, Mr. Justice Erskine, who told him that he had been proved to have published a libel of "a most horrid and shocking character", and sentenced him to one month's imprisonment in the common gaol. So whatever merit there may be in having been the first person tried under the Act of 1842, it belongs to George Adams and not to George Holyoake. That is, so far as it relates to Blasphemy. Persons charged with any one of the other felonies or misdemeanors were probably tried before Adams.

On page 44 Mr. Holyoake speaks of his "years of unaided agitation" to promote the Evidence Amendment Act of 1869.

"All the while Mr. Bradlaugh took no interest in the Bill, and rendered no aid." (p. 45.)

The first statement is horribly unfair to the countless workers throughout the country—but they also are mostly dead—and both that and the accusation against Mr. Bradlaugh are flatly contradicted by the literature of the period. Take up the

* "Last trial for Atheism," p. 29.

Investigator and the *Reasoner* and the *National Reformer*, and all through you will find a living, active agitation to promote the competency of Freethought witnesses. That was one of the objects for which the National Secular Society, of which Mr. Bradlaugh was President, was founded in 1866, and Mr. Bradlaugh by writing, by speaking, by petitioning, worked for it from the fifties onward, until at last he got the Oaths Act through Parliament in 1888; and for this Act—which has given Atheists not merely the freedom of the witness-box and the jury-box in actual practice, but opens to them all offices to which they were formerly barred by reason of the oath—Mr. Holyoake, who boasts of according “credit, without stint,” has not a single word of praise.

Reading all that Mr. Holyoake has to say on the Act of 1842, and the Evidence Amendment Act of 1869, I naturally turned to his autobiography for a fuller account. I hunted through the index under all possible headings, and the only item bearing on the subject was “Oathlessness, sole instance of, ii, 225”. This refers to his Parliamentary candidature for Leicester in 1884, for which his

“primary qualification consisted in my being the only public man in England not a Quaker who on no occasion and for no private or public advantage had ever taken the oath.”*

No one who has read “Sixty years of an Agitator’s Life” can conceive that this omission of all reference to such notable achievements was due to modesty on the part of the author. Must we then seek some dark ulterior motive for this “concealment” from the public, this “suppression”? Or did the matters loom so faintly in Mr. Holyoake’s mind that he forgot all about them?

THE HEADINGLEY BIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

In order to bring another charge against Mr. Bradlaugh Mr. Holyoake speaks of Mr. Headingley’s book as “evidently

* It is not everyone who could, or would, make a rule of keeping a Christian in his service for this purpose. See p. 18, “Warpath of Opinion”.

inspired, since it contained things that the writer could not know" (p. 36), and in this way he accounts for the omission of his name from a passage he considers important.

If Mr. Holyoake were not so old one might imagine him very young and inexperienced: at least he relies upon the inexperience of his readers. Mr. Headingley came several times to Mr. Bradlaugh's rooms at Circus Road; sometimes my father had time to talk to him, at other times he was shown the file of the *National Reformer*, and given the run of the library generally. Some facts Mr. Bradlaugh undoubtedly told him, and these Mr. Headingley filled out as seemed to him best. I have actually pointed out in my life of my father* a passage in the Headingley biography which refers to Joseph Barker, but which Mr. Headingley ascribed to my father, and, as I think, to his discredit. Mr. Holyoake has therefore no excuse for putting the responsibility of every omission or every statement upon Mr. Bradlaugh.

INGERSOLL AND THE 1874 ELECTION.

"When Mr. Bradlaugh was in America he hurried back, first telling his audiences that Mr. Gladstone had taken the opportunity of his absence to dissolve Parliament, in order to prevent his election for Northampton. He told Colonel Ingersoll so, who said to me, 'I did not object to Mr. Bradlaugh thinking he was the cause of the dissolution of Parliament, but I did object to his thinking me such an egregious fool as to believe it'." (p. 54.)

Very witty no doubt on Colonel Ingersoll's part *if* he said it, but not very friendly. Two or three years ago I heard a fuller version of this story, told to my informant by a gentleman who also claimed to have had it direct from Col. Ingersoll. According to this story, Col. Ingersoll called upon Mr. Bradlaugh at his hotel in New York and was kept waiting. When at last Mr. Bradlaugh did put in an appearance he said that he could not give him more than a minute as he was hurrying back to England, for Gladstone had dissolved Parliament during his absence, on purpose to prevent his election for Northampton.

* "Charles Bradlaugh," Vol. I., p. 126.

Colonel Ingersoll was much offended at this brusque treatment and said (using almost word for word the language quoted by Mr. Holyoake), "I did not object to Mr. Bradlaugh being such a fool as to believe that he was the cause of the dissolution of Parliament, but I did object to his thinking me such an egregious fool as to believe it."

A man must be very ruffled indeed if he could permit himself to repeat word for word a cheap sneer of this kind, and for Colonel Ingersoll's sake I should hope the whole story is apocryphal. Of course, in the very nature of the case, it is quite impossible that I can prove that Mr. Bradlaugh did not use those words: indeed it may have been that he did say so in bitter* jest to Colonel Ingersoll. In that case, it just shows how careful a man should be about jesting, especially to a person who has himself a reputation for a sense of humor.

In regard to the "audiences", we are able to test this story, at least to a large extent. On the 20th January, 1874, Mr. Bradlaugh wrote from Boston that he was on the point of leaving there for "Scranton, thence to Washington, Elmira, Ithaca, Aurora, Peoria, and Fairbury." He was on his way to Washington when Mr. Austin Holyoake's telegram reached him (on January 25th) that Gladstone had dissolved Parliament. He turned back immediately, throwing up his engagements at a very heavy loss (Washington alone cost him 219 dollars—£44—for damages), took the first boat from New York to England and reached Queenstown on Saturday, February 7, and Northampton on February 8, three days after the election had taken place, and 14 days after receiving Mr. Austin Holyoake's telegram. There were no Atlantic "greyhounds" in 1874, and the time of crossing usually was ten or twelve days. The "Parthia," by which Mr. Bradlaugh returned to New York in the autumn, took twelve days. Mr. Bradlaugh was about two hundred miles from New York when he got the news of the dissolution, and he had to cover

* It must not be forgotten that Mr. Bradlaugh was all this time suffering great physical pain from an open wound in the hand, resulting from an accident in Kansas City. The wound was still open when I saw it several weeks later in London.

this distance before he could take ship. A certain time also would be required for making the various arrangements which so unexpected a departure must necessarily have entailed. Where, then, was the time and opportunity for addressing "audiences" before he left?*

Now, what *can* be the object of such mean and petty tittle-tattle? To prove that Mr. Bradlaugh was so eaten up by his own vanity that he lost all sense of proportion? But his whole career proves the contrary. His very enemies admit his keen insight and grasp of things. To hold him up to ridicule as an "egregious fool" has been reserved to those who profess "friendship".

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. HOLYOAKE (1875).

"I had never forgotten an act of kindness he had, in an interval of good will, done me. When disablement and blindness came in 1876, he collected from the readers of his journal £170 towards a proposed annuity for me. It was a great pleasure to me to repay that kindness by devising means (which others neither thought of nor believed in) of adding double that sum to the provision made for his survivors." (p. 62.)

To take the last sentence first. Mr. George Anderson, with his usual generosity, was anxious to assist me in raising money to liquidate my father's liabilities, and he invited Mr. Holyoake and Mr. Robertson to meet him at dinner or unch, to discuss means of approaching likely subscribers outside the Freethought Party. Mr. Holyoake suggested that the assistance of a well-known lady—whom it is my happiness to number amongst my most honored friends—should be invited. This suggestion was acted upon with the happiest results to the fund—as all readers of the *National Reformer* of 1891 know.† I fully appreciate Mr. Holyoake's efforts on my behalf, "in an interval of goodwill", but my gratitude for the income of Rothschild could not make me forget for a single moment the immeasurably higher claims of my father's good name.

* I have since written to the Cunard Steamship Company as to the vessel in which my father sailed, and I find that he left New York in the "Java" on Wednesday, January 28th.

† The fund reached £715, to which the lady herself subscribed £200.

In reference to the sum named by Mr. Holyoake I have four documents before me. They are as follows:—

1. "*The Warpath of Opinion*", p. 62.

"I had never forgotten an act of kindness he had, in an interval of good will, done me . . . he collected from the readers of his journal, £170," etc.

2.

A cheque dated June 7th, 1875, on the Central Bank of London, Limited, made out to "George Jacob Holyoake, Esq", for the sum of £200 (two hundred pounds) and signed on behalf of the "Holyoake Testimonial Fund, Charles Bradlaugh, Treasurer", endorsed, "George Jacob Holyoake".

3.

A letter to Mr. Bradlaugh dated January 16th, 1876, acknowledging a further cheque "which Major Bell brought me for my signature the other day. —Yours truly, G. J. Holyoake."

4.

A copy of a printed "Letter to the subscribers of the fund made during my recent illness" addressed "To Charles Bradlaugh, Esq., from Mr. G. J. Holyoake."

In the subscription list with which this letter closes we read "'National Reformer' List (per Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.), £284 10s."

Here, once again, it is quite clear that this "never forgotten" act has been at least partially forgotten.

I do not wish my readers to attach any special importance to this except as further demonstrating a defective memory. My father did no more than his duty, and he of all men would be the last to seek credit or gratitude for what he did. There is, however, one thing in connection with this matter which has always struck me as very curious. On p. 303 of Mr. Holyoake's autobiography "*Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life*", he speaks of this fund (which amounted to £2,254) and gives the names of the members of his Committee and others. "to whose friendship I was indebted". Mr. Bradlaugh's name is not amongst these. If, however, you turn to the Index you will

find under the head "Bradlaugh, Charles" a reference to page 303, showing that when the Index was compiled the name was there, but was struck out before the book finally went to press.

TWO OFFENSIVE STORIES.

I.

"The appearance of such books as Knowlton's, or the 'Elements' on our Secularist book-stalls I thought deplorable. One night a lady who had come to hear a lecture, chancing to notice the book-stall, said: 'What kind of books do you have here?' 'Oh,' I replied, 'I will tell you another time. They will not interest you.' But being Eve-minded, she preferred to see for herself. By chance she took up 'The Elements of Social Science', which opened, unfortunately, at chapters headed by terms the reader would not believe, unless cited. Shutting it hastily, she asked: 'Do persons coming here need this sort of information?' Yet it was for wishing this book to be disassociated from Freethought that Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bradlaugh . . . assailed me with furious and hostile invective in their paper" (p. 32).

sort of

In his eagerness to assure people of his anxiety to disassociate Freethought from "this sort of book", Mr. Holyoake has forgotten that "The Elements of Social Science" was regularly advertised in his own *Reasoner*, and that his evil-minded "lady" might equally have put the question with its implied insult, "Do the readers of the *Reasoner* need this sort of information?"

II.

"As my opinions on swearing were not 'hidden under a bushel', I was often asked what I thought of Mr. Bradlaugh's avidity to take the oath. I answered that 'Christians could no longer charge Freethinkers with want of reverence, since a distinguished Atheist fought his way into the House of Commons in order to kiss the Bible.' (p. 48.)

The manner of the question shows that the questioners were well assured of Mr. Holyoake's personal hostility to Mr. Bradlaugh. A fair-minded man would have immediately resented any question as to Mr. Bradlaugh's "avidity" to take the oath, since it carried with it a false implication.

Instead of this, Mr. Holyoake's answer is a complete example of the *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. The limitations of the human mind are very wonderful. Here we have a case of a man who prides himself upon his rare, his unique, honesty because all his life he refused to take an oath. And yet this same man has no scruple about repeating misrepresentations, distortions and exaggerations and even absolute falsifications of the sayings and doings of a dead man for whom he professes "friendship". If I were asked on which side lay the immorality of conduct, I certainly should not judge it on the side of the man who, under protest, took an oath which was demanded by the law. In the abstract, Mr. Holyoake himself would agree with me, for he admits (p. 49) that while "compulsory dishonesty has some palliation", "voluntary dishonesty is open to absolute condemnation."

THE KNOWLTON PROSECUTION AND PARLIAMENTARY STRUGGLE.

I have no intention of going over again this already too much debated ground. Many persons will be able to recall the incidents referred to, and the discussion and angry feelings to which they gave rise. Those who do not recall them can read about them in the *National Reformer* and other literature of the time. I will only say here that we thought at the time, and I and many others still think, that Mr. Holyoake's action was calculated—intentionally, or unintentionally (that lies with his own conscience)—to seriously injure, in the one case Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bradlaugh who were standing their trial in the High Court of Justice in defence of the right of the freedom of the Press; and in the other, Mr. Bradlaugh, who was making a fight against tremendous odds for the right of Atheists to sit in the House of Commons.

THE "TYRANNICIDE" PAMPHLET.

Whether the author of this pamphlet, Mr. W. E. Adams, was accorded the courtesy denied to me of an early copy of "The Warpath of Opinion" impugning the accuracy of the

account he sent me for the purposes of the biography of my father, or whether he has never seen a copy to this day, I do not know. All that I need to say is that had Mr. Holyoake chosen to send a correction to the *National Reformer* in which Mr. Adams' statement first appeared, it would have had equal publicity; and if the correction had been passed by Mr. Adams the first account would never have appeared in the completed biography.

CONCLUSION.

In the foregoing pages I have shown by actual reference to Mr. Holyoake's own words that his memory is absolutely untrustworthy. His letters to me of 1901 are contradicted both by his acts and by his letter of 1902, the last letter showing also how perversely he can twist a perfectly straightforward and, indeed, necessary inquiry. His different versions of the establishment, the support and the failure of the Fleet Street House do not agree; nor do his statements as to the publicity of his objection to "The Bible: What It Is"; his acquaintance with his brother's opinions; and his responsibility for the Act of 1842.

In regard to those other matters concerning which, from the very nature of the case, I am not able to produce disproof, in some I have given reasons for rejecting Mr. Holyoake's accusations, and in others I would urge that proved inaccuracy in so many points discredits him throughout when the charges he brings are utterly inconsistent with the known character of the man whom he accuses, and diametrically opposed to the experience of all who knew my father best. A small case in point, but one which has for its object the putting Mr. Bradlaugh in the position of the acknowledged wrongdoer and Mr. Holyoake as his victim, is found on p. 59. Mr. Holyoake, in the company of Mr. Josiah Gimson, saw Mr. Bradlaugh at the Bell Hotel, Leicester, and

"In the course of a pleasant, unrestrained conversation, Mr. Bradlaugh said to me: 'That had he known what he had come to know, he had never said of me what he had.' I accepted this frank reparation, until I found that he never said it in the journal he edited, where the recanted sayings may be read to this day."

Two out of the three persons present are dead ; hence the truth of this story rests on Mr. Holyoake's evidence alone. From my knowledge of my father and of the history of his relations with Mr. Holyoake, I have not the least hesitation in affirming that either here, as on so many other occasions, Mr. Holyoake's memory has played him false, and he has forgotten the actual words used ; or, if he correctly represents them, then they applied to some special matter of which there is no information before us.

The evidence of a witness so indisputably inaccurate as Mr. Holyoake is on many points would not be received as to others without very strong confirmatory evidence against a living man in a court of law. I would ask my readers to look upon themselves as a court of honor, and to be no less scrupulous in admitting unconfirmed evidence from an unreliable witness against a dead man.

