

# THE FREETHINKER.

REGISTERED FOR]

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE SOCIETY.

ON a recent Sunday morning at the Midland Arches, a paltry conceited little fellow tried to serve God by selling copies of a scurrilous pamphlet against Mr. Bradlaugh, written and published by that amiable Christian, the revivalist Varley, who has quitted his occupation as a butcher of sheep and pigs and taken to the more congenial occupation of butchering the reputation of better men than himself. The little man we allude to is an accredited representative of the Christian Evidence Society, and perhaps a paid representative as well, for the C. E. S. is silly enough for anything, and we can scarcely conceive a human being, however degraded, engaging in such dirty work for the mere love of it. He, however, is not our game. We mean to deal with the Society, in whose name he speaks and acts, and which must bear the reproach of such sayings and doings until it disavows them.

The Christian Evidence Society, amidst the hurry of multitudinous other engagements, has found time to come occasionally to the Hall of Science, in Old Street, where it has astonished its pious supporters by "bearding the infidel in his den." From the platform of that sink of iniquity its best lecturers have held forth, and the Secular party has attended pretty numerously to hear what they had to say. These lecturers have been treated with uniform courtesy, and with the exception of now a genial laugh and then a little ironical applause; the audiences have been remarkably good-tempered and decorous. When Mr. Foote opposed Dr. Harrison some weeks ago, after one of his lectures in the Longton Town Hall, the huge Christian audience assembled on that occasion treated the apparently friendless infidel with unlimited laughter and jeers; and it was a singular fact that the worst interruptions and most insulting remarks came, not from the poorer people at the back of the hall, but from some well dressed rowdies in the front. Dr. Harrison felt obliged to say that if he promised to visit Longton again, it must be on the distinct understanding that all opponents, and especially speakers like Mr. Foote, should have fair play. In the ante-room Mr. Foote remarked to Dr. Harrison, "The audience here isn't as well behaved as the one you get at the Hall of Science"; and the reply was "No, not in that respect."

When they come to the Hall of Science, the Christian Evidence lecturers are wonderfully suave and polite. They generally occupy a good part of the time in telling how much they respect us, and how foolish it is to quarrel when we all desire truth and progress, although we differ as to what the one is and how the other is to be achieved. They observe, also, very skilful tactics in these lectures. Their points of difference from us are so smoothed over, and their points of agreement with us so accentuated, that criticism is almost disarmed, and we feel it quite a pity to say anything that might disturb such unwonted and agreeable harmony. They put the milder and more gracious aspects of their creed to the front, and their arguments in support of the rest are so vague and elusive that attacking them is very much like punching a feather bed. The audience listens respectfully, even when most puzzled, as to men who must be held to mean what they say. It assumes their good intentions, allows that they sincerely abide in the Christian faith, and only permits itself to wonder in secret, as it might of flies in amber, how the devil they got there.

But some of these lecturers pursue a very different course when they stand on other platforms, and often more than darkly hint that our heresy must be attributed to the corruption of our hearts. The other lecturers, who do the Society's principal work in London by addressing outdoor audiences, carry this policy out to its bad end. Their stock

in trade, for the most part, consists of a collection of small slips and self-contradictions which Secular leaders may have been guilty of during the last ten or fifteen years: abundant abuse of one or two of the most conspicuous ones; an especial hatred of Mr. Bradlaugh and an aptitude for misrepresenting everything he does; and a choice vocabulary of controversial slang, which can only be excused on the ground that they have been influenced by the bad example of David in his comminatory psalms, of Jesus in his railings against the Scribes and Pharisees, and of St. John in his slanderous description of the unfortunates whom he consigns to the bottomless pit. These men profess to be promoters of the Gospel of charity: yet the charity they display is about as much, to use the words of Beatrice, as you might put on the point of a knife and choke a daw withal. Or we might liken it to Gratiano's reasons which were "as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search."

Now what is the object of the Christian Evidence Society? These words are from the fifth clause of its programme—"Especially is it the wish of its members to expound and defend the evidences of Christianity and to encourage the general study of the evidences." And the last words of its programme relate to "the great work of defending the Book of God and the Gospel which it reveals."

Does the Society do this only or this chiefly? Not at all. The published list of its popular lecturers and their discourses before us, shows that only a small percentage of the lectures delivered under its auspices accord with its ostensible purpose. The greater portion are attacks on infidels and infidelity, and a good many of the remainder are defences of the existence of God, which is a principle not distinctively Christian, but common to all theologies. The defence of Christian Evidences is a hard task, and the lecturers of the C. E. S. shrink from undertaking it. They know a trick worth two of that, and ever so much easier. The only popular lecturer of the Society, who really tries to defend them is Mr. B. H. Cowper, an able but somewhat unfortunate gentleman, who successfully edited Dr. Kitto's "Journal of Sacred Literature" out of existence; who managed also to kill the "Christian Evidence Journal," the decease of which the Bishop of Carlisle found himself unable to deplore; and who published a new translation of the Apocryphal Gospels, which so resembled previous translations that the *Athenæum* could discover no reason for its existence. The other lecturers, according to their nature, attack or abuse Secularism, generally the latter. Yet the Christian Evidence Society is established for quite a different object. Let that object be fulfilled, or let the Society abandon its pretensions and change its name. Let it frankly call itself "The Society for Attacking Scepticism and Abusing Sceptics," and then see if it can retain the patronage and the subscriptions of its wealthy supporters.

Soon after this number of the *Freethinker* is in the hands of its readers the Christian Evidence Society will publish its annual report. In our next number we shall dissect that report, and have something to say about the big nobbs of the upper ten and the City Guilds who find the funds which the Society disburses for the welfare of mankind in general and of its own officers in particular. For the present we bid the C. E. S. adieu, or rather we say to it *au revoir*.

## THE EXETER HALL FIASCO.

BUTCHER VARLEY and Butcher Frere, Earl Percy and some other lords, several nobbs of the red-coated army and as many of the



black, put their heads together and concocted a scheme to ruin Bradlaugh. "This fellow," said they to each other, "doesn't believe in our God; yet he wants to enter Parliament, and the dirty snobs of Northampton, who don't believe in any soul except the bottoms of boots and shoes, say that he shall go in. Our friends in the House of Commons, led by Christ-like Churchill and Jehovah-like Northcote, have shut the door in his face. But the fellow is devilish strong and has a lot of other strong fellows to help him. Go to, then, lest he should succeed in pushing himself in and his enemies over, we will summon all the friends of Almighty God to our aid and thus keep the fellow out. Let us call a big meeting in Exeter Hall, and there let us tell everybody that Bradlaugh is an Atheist, and therefore a liar, a cheat, a rascal, who only lives a decent life at present through fear of the prison and the gallows. Let us tell the English people that to admit Bradlaugh into Parliament is to rebel against Almighty God, and to bring upon themselves his wrathful judgment. Let us make them believe that if they allow an Atheist to sit as a legislator, England will soon go to the dogs and become a byword among the nations. And let us call the pious assembly we shall gather together a 'public meeting,' for Englishmen have a stupid love of fair play. But let us take care to keep all Bradlaugh's friends outside. Let us print tickets—that's the ticket—and distribute them only among our own friends. We shall thus have it all our own way, there will be no opposition, our resolutions will be carried unanimously, and the London papers will report to the country that at a great 'public meeting' held in the heart of England nobody had a word to say for Bradlaugh and not a hand was lifted in his favor."

Such was the scheme. How did it work? Miserably. The infidels, who are up to a thing or two, spoiled it.

Elaborate tickets were printed, and the utmost precaution taken to secure their distribution only among the elect. Parsons and others who were entrusted with packets received also a red slip of paper bearing these words—"You are requested to use the utmost caution in distributing tickets to those only who desire to protest against the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh to Parliament." When application was made at the advertised office, No. 9 Strand, it was found that none could be obtained without signing a petition against Mr. Gladstone's Bill. Yet we managed to get nearly two dozen platform tickets and four times as many for the body of the hall. We did a good deal more, but what it was must be kept dark, as we may want to do it again. The platform tickets were possessed by Dr. Aveling and myself and some broad-shouldered supporters; the others were distributed as judiciously as possible.

Before the meeting the "stewards" had a tea-fight, at the conclusion of which they were addressed by a white-chokered gentleman, who said that the Lord of Hosts was on their side, and that they were bound to win. Afterwards they were stationed at various places, and each was presented with a staff about five feet long, good for prodding the crowd or for landing them one on the nob. When our people got in they collared these weapons and made short work with them.

At six o'clock Dr. Aveling and I were in front of the Exeter Hall gates in the Strand. Around us were Messrs. Ramsey, Norrish, Hilditch, and other friends, and behind us soon gathered a dense crowd of well-known faces. In front of us, close to the gates, were two pious respectable old ladies, who looked just typical of the meeting as it was meant to be. Within the gates policemen stood thick, and occasionally one of the black-coated army came forward to survey.

Chaff was plentiful. So was literature. Brewin Grant's friends circulated "Reasons against the Bradlaugh Accommodation Bill," and all sorts of leaflets were flying about.

When the middle gate opened there was an awkward rush, but the police for a moment held firm, and a "steward" advanced between their lines, crying "Tickets, please." A few gave their tickets up, and mine was snatched out of my hand while my arms were closely pinned by the crowd. This person then beat a hasty retreat, and, from behind the police, flatly denied that any tickets had been taken. The fellow had brass enough in his face to furnish instruments for a whole German band.

The police got behind the first barricades, and hurled those back who tried to surmount them. I was plainly told that I was spotted, and should never get in. Then the crowd grew wild, and there arose that angry roar which bodes ill to some one. They surged to and fro like waves on a high beach, and presently away went the middle barrier, and in they poured. I got separated from my platform friends, and I saw no more of them for half an hour. During that time I was with the ticketless crowd, who filled the passages and stairs, and vainly charged the last iron barricades, that were lined with swarms of policemen. Over two hundred bluecoats were in attendance. They not only officiated as ticket examiners, but actually thrust out visitors with *bonâ fide* tickets on their being pointed out by the stewards as obnoxious. Considerable violence was employed, and I saw blood more than once. A villainous member of the Christian Evidence Society hammered away at a man's hands who had caught hold of the stair-rails, until he let go and dropped down the well. I heard a nasty thud and a howl from the crowd, but had no time to inquire what mischief had been done.

Having got two fresh tickets from friends, I tried to get past the barricade again, but they were both retained by the police who brutally thrust me back. "What shall we do, Mr. Foote?" asked our people. "Is Aveling in?" I asked in reply. Nobody

could tell. One friend said that he had himself been led down a false passage, and as Dr. Aveling was standing near him he might have been served in the same way. That decided me against giving the word for Trafalgar Square. I had promised Mr. Bradlaugh that I would speak against the resolutions, and I would not leave without being assured that at least Dr. Aveling had been more fortunate. At last I got another ticket from Mr. Forder, and after struggling again to the final barricade I presented it. "Let's see it," said the guardian in blue. "Catch me," said I, "you've kept two already, you don't get this." He pulled at it, but I grasped it tight, until an inspector, who looked disgusted with the business, nudged me and whispered "Go on, sir, go on."

On I went. At the top of the stairs a Christian Evidence steward repeated the stale cry "Ticket please." Consigning him to a warm place I pushed on. Two more policemen tried to get me up the gallery stairs, but I eluded them by means I will not reveal, and reached the platform alone. To my surprise I heard a hearty cheer, and looking round I saw Dr. Aveling and a score more friends on the platform, and perhaps a hundred more in the front of the hall.

After we had compared notes a steward came and desired us to leave the platform. We declined. Then a gentleman came who said that he had engaged the hall and that he cancelled our tickets. We replied that he should have done that before he opened the doors. He threatened violence. We promised to resist it. Then he fetched a company of police to remove us. We made our protest and withdrew to the body of the hall, and in a few minutes the platform was covered principally with parsons. Butcher Varley, however, did not appear. He was secreted in the ante-room, whence he emerged at a later and safer stage of the proceedings.

Earl Percy presided. His Smithson blood is evident. His face wears the conventional expression of aristocratic arrogance, but it is cultivated and not natural. After committing about a dozen blunders he sat down, and gave place to Sir John Kennaway, who proposed the first resolution in an equally poor speech. It was seconded by Canon Taylor, a sour bilious man, who looked as if his liver could scarcely be stimulated by anything short of Mr. Bradlaugh's execution. His slanderous remarks were frequently greeted with hisses and groans. The supporter was another clerical called White, of Irish extraction, and full of unconscious humor. One of his bulls was exquisite. "You needn't feel so sore," said he, "because I touch you on a sore place."

When he sat down I jumped up to move an amendment. Thereupon one of the prize-fighting gentlemen who were specially retained by the followers of the Prince of Peace, came up and threatened to turn me out. A random shot settled him. I alluded to the prison, and his conscience seemed troubled by the remark. At any rate he slunk away and did not return. Smithson-Percy refused to allow any amendment or any speeches against the resolution, which he put forthwith amid howls of execration. The Christians stood up and voted, and the organ played "God Save the Queen." Then our people stood up and rent the air with cheers for Bradlaugh. The signal was given to clear out before the resolution could be declared carried, and soon the Christians were left to enjoy their meagre victory.

We had spoiled the Meeting. Exeter Hall was not a quarter full, although thousands were outside clamoring for admission, the reason being that the selection of applicants had become impossible. The whole thing was a miserable fiasco. And we will spoil all the future meetings they promise to hold, unless they refrain from advertising them as "public."

Butcher Varley came out of his hiding place after we left, and took part in the proceedings. Perhaps we shall confront him yet.

The crowd outside, numbering thousands, repaired to Trafalgar Square, where we held a mass meeting ten times as large as that in Exeter Hall, and, although amendments were asked for, passed unanimous resolutions in Mr. Bradlaugh's favour.

One of the funniest incidents of the farce was the expulsion of Mr. Turpin, of the Christian Evidence Society, by the police. He unknowingly exchanged his proper ticket for a forged one, and the result was that he got pitched out and badly used. Poor Turpin!

The newspaper reports differed very widely. That of the *Daily Chronicle* was pretty fair; that of the *Daily News* was extremely false, but as it was very brief we concluded that our tactics had robbed the meeting of all importance. The *Standard* did not report at all until the following Monday, and then but briefly. The *Weekly Dispatch* contained a lying report borrowed from the *Daily News*, but it inserted a letter from me on the subject of the meeting, which was, perhaps, a sufficient counteractant.

Will the Protestant Alliance try again? I fancy not, but if it does it knows what to expect. The Freethinkers of London are in earnest and mean business. Let the Protestant Alliance and Butcher Varley beware! We will not let them sail under false colors. They may hold private meetings if they please, but they shall not hold private meetings and call them public. That is our fixed determination. G. W. FOOTE.

"Why did Adam bite the apple?" said a schoolmaster to a country lad. "Because he had no knife," replied the urchin.

## ACID DROPS.

CARDINAL MANNING recently opened a new Catholic church at Bath. In his sermon he denounced Mr. Gladstone's attempt "to efface from our legislature the last token of authority resting upon belief in God." He was horrified at the idea of infidels making laws for Christians, although he thought it quite proper for Christians to make laws for infidels. In conclusion he said that "the Christian world was wrecking itself on every side; it could be dissolved, and was dissolving." We are very glad to hear it. The sooner it fades into what Tyndall calls "the infinite azure of the past," the better.

WHY do priests bewail the dissolution of Christianity more than laymen? Because they stand to lose more in the process. Hence these tears!

SAMUEL MORLEY's got right on the Oath Question at last, although he took a long time to do it. He says now that oaths are traps for men's consciences, and that they are not wanted for men of honor, while they are utterly useless for men of dishonor. We wonder whether the emphatic resolution of the Liberation Society had anything to do with the great Samuel's conversion.

A REVEREND doctor from America said at one of the May meetings in London, that "the way in which the churches leaned upon the fleshly arm of the world struck him much in the same light as if St. Paul had requested Felix or Agrippa to preside at a meeting in order to secure a big audience, or had asked Simon Magus to perform a few tricks in order to increase a collection to pay for a mission to the Romans." Whereat there was much laughter. The *Echo* doesn't see where the laughter comes in. It laments the fact that missionary societies do anything to get subscriptions, and says that "if there come into the assembly of Exeter Hall philanthropists, a man with a gold coronet in peers robes, they are sure to say, Sit thou here in a good place, namely, in the President's chair." Christians are no respecters of persons just in the same sense as their God is. God, said a devout French lady, will think twice before he damns a person of quality; and there is nothing surprising in his worshippers bowing their snobbish heads before titled people who condescend to patronise their cause.

THE *Echo* cannot understand "Mr. Bradlaugh at the gates of Paradise." But if there be a heaven, Mr. Bradlaugh stands quite as good a chance of getting inside it as Mr. Passmore Edwards. If there be a God, he will surely take into account the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh has never advocated one thing in his paper and voted for another in the House of Commons.

SINCE Aaron hit upon the brilliant idea of making a golden calf, that dear idol has never wanted worshippers. The almighty dollar is the chief god of this very pious world. In Paris the ladies have signalled it on their sunshades. A golden calf is surrounded by "Adorez-moi" in enamelled letters. Adore me, says the golden calf, and Christendom falls on its knees.

BRENTS has got a new church, which the Archbishop of Canterbury has just consecrated. It has been erected at the sole cost of Mrs. Hall, of Syndale, as a memorial to her late husband, Mr. W. W. Hall, who made a great fortune in the gunpowder business. Mr. Hall amasses a heap of money by making stuff for men to blow each other to the devil with, and Mrs. Hall devotes a part of the wealth to building a house for God. The Almighty ought to feel very much flattered.

INGERSOLL's latest *bon mot*. Why did Jehovah demand sheep of the Jews? Because the priests wanted mutton.

THE Rev. John Mactavish, one of the "great gaslights of grace" in Inverness, has made his protest against the profanity of Shakespeare, and been snubbed for his pains by the Justices of the Peace. Mr. Walter Bentley had applied for a theatrical licence for the Music Hall, and this so raised the ire of the pious Mactavish, that he ran amuck against theatres, actors and actresses, and even Shakespeare

himself, who although a very good writer (for a Southron ye ken) had put an awful amount of profanity into his plays. The pious champion brought a petition from eighty residents in support of his protest. Two members proposed and seconded the rejection of Mr. Bentley's application, and another supported it; but all the rest, to the number of nineteen, voted that the application should be granted. Mr. Davidson, of Cantray, administered a frightful castigation to this charitable disciple of Christ, and the great Mactavish went home again, doubtless feeling that the Lord had once more been overcome by the world, the flesh and the devil.

MR. WALTER BENTLEY is a son of the celebrated Dr. Begg, of Edinburgh, whose bigotry furnishes frequent amusement to the inhabitants of that city. He was, we believe, brought up for the church, but much to the disgust of Dr. Begg's paternal heart he displayed a taste for a less lugubrious profession.

THE *Scotsman*, commenting on the Bentley-Mactavish case, says that its result "is another added to many signs lately discernible of a growing revolt against clerical domination. Persons who formerly held themselves at the bidding of their spiritual guides, are now prepared to think for themselves, and to act as they think." While the *Glasgow Herald* actually says that "the culture and training required to make even a second-rate actor or actress probably exceeds, in its way, the amount of study and intellectual exertion demanded by the position such men as Mr. Mactavish and his like fill." O Scotland, Scotland! what art thou coming to? Ichabod, Ichabod! sings Mactavish, the glory is departed!

THE first man was duped; the first woman deceived her husband; and the first child turned out a murderer. Such were the originals of humanity, according to the Scriptures, and yet people affect to be surprised that the world is no better than it is.

DR. ALLON, late President of the Congregational Union, says that some of his brethren are honestly trying to do their work with the weapon that Samson employed against the Philistines. We quite agree with him. Many an honest ass works his jaw bone in the pulpit on Sunday.

SAMUEL MORLEY confesses himself an "alarmist with regard to the present state of society," and believes that "even religion itself is largely unreal." With most people religion is a matter of business; with a great many more it is a matter of respectability; and only with a very few is it a matter of conviction. Samuel Morley must have known this for almost half a century, but he has kept his knowledge to himself up to the time (a few days ago) when he perhaps inadvertently let the cat out of the bag.

A VISITOR at Nazareth recently stated that many of the pilgrims, especially Greeks and Russians, took great delight in firing off guns and revolvers. The same traveller says that at the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem, he found a Mahomedan soldier stationed in the middle of the floor to keep peace among the rival Christian sects who divide the church between them.

IN the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh the other week, the celebrated Dr. Begg, descanting on the oath question, pointed out that his reverend brethren had to come under "solemn obligations" in regard to their Confession of Faith. The reminder as to the connection between clerical profession and practice was timely. Still, it could hardly have prepared the public for the Rev. Dr.'s subsequent statement that Mr. Bradlaugh had said he "did not believe in the institution of marriage, except that it was a great evil." The lengths to which Christian clergymen will go in the way of bearing false witness against Freethinkers, form a subject for meditation to believers. Contradictions of Dr. Begg's slander were published in Edinburgh, but probably to little purpose. It is an essential feature in orthodox society that a lie invariably flourishes there better than any other form of proposition.

MR. SPURGEON, having recovered from his illness, is vigorously preaching the bad old creed. His latest utterance on Modern Unbelief is a curiosity in its way. Men, he says, are bound to receive the Gospel, and "must not cavil

at it or raise objections, philosophical or otherwise," for objections are "wilful and wicked." In other words, men are to play the ancient stupid game of close your eyes and open your mouth, and swallow whatever is sent you. That may do in Spurgeon's Tabernacle, but people outside it have a somewhat nicer palate and a less callous throat.

WE have received a pious tract, entitled "The Grace of God to the Collier with the Broken Leg." The unfortunate hero of the story was badly crushed by a fall of the roof, his leg was broken in three places, and he was not expected to live. The tract-writer goes on to say that he "felt assured that this accident was permitted for his dear friend's salvation, and that he (the writer) would be used in blessing to him." That is, the Lord smashed the collier in order to give the pious writer of tracts an opportunity of showing his skill in the salvation line. What vain and impudent creatures there are in the world! And how proud the Lord ought to be of some of his friends!

THE *Christian* argues that Atheists should not be admitted to Parliament because Christianity is the religion of the majority, and the majority must rule. Atheists, it urges, have "no right to reverse the foundation principle of our Government" until they are in a majority. According to this insane reasoning, when Atheists *do* become the majority, if ever, they will be perfectly justified in disqualifying all Christians from sitting as legislators. Does the *Christian* really mean this? It also says that Atheists are incapacitated by law, just as lunatics are. Well, if all virtual lunatics were disfranchised, there are some Christian editors who would have no votes. Atheists, however, are not disqualified either as electors or as members of Parliament. The law on the subject is plain enough, except to the blear eyes of Christian editors.

THE same journal publishes verses "for the young." We select one:

"A little boy of two years old,  
A lamb of the good Shepherd's fold,  
Was heard to say in accents bold,  
"Satan—No!"

What a precocious kid! We should judge the rest of his career to have been as follows. At three he preached sermons to his parents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, as well as to his grandfather and grandmother, who felt it was time to begin to learn how to suck eggs. At four he composed a book of hymns. At five he wrote a treatise on Christian Evidences. At six he published a learned and acute disquisition on infidelity, ancient and modern. At seven his piety, learning, and intellect, were renowned in all lands; and at eight he died, being then a great deal too good for for this dark and sinful world. He is now in heaven, where he snubs Jesus for his ignorance, and occasionally reminds God the Father of a mistake.

RICHARD WEAVER has recently been preaching in London. One of his fervent admirers relates how people have been brought to Christ by reading Dicky's "Life." We wonder if anything is said in that precious book about certain half-crowns a week—or was it five shillings?

BROTHER IGNATIUS startled the canny Scots of Edinburgh the other day by telling them how prayer had dispersed a cancer, greatly to the doctors' surprise. A friend of ours has a lame leg, and we wish Brother Ignatius would set it right again. Here's a fine chance for him to show what prayer can do.

JOSEPH COOK is extremely anxious to be deemed orthodox. Before his lecture at the London Tabernacle last week he remarked that "it overpowered him to have his orthodoxy attested by such a great name as that of Mr. Spurgeon." He "believed with all his heart, and mind, and might, and strength in the faith of the Covenanters and Pilgrim Fathers, in the Westminster Catechism, and in those of the Thirty-nine Articles that had the assent of Evangelical Christendom." Joseph knows what pays, and means to stick to it. He'd believe a great deal more if there was any need, like the curate who on being asked to sign the Thirty-nine Articles replied, "Oh yes, forty if you like."

In a pious journal prayer is requested for "a converted sister who is likely to lose her reason." This is significant.

Religious insanity half fills our asylums, and causes any number of suicides.

A PARSON at Newcastle was sent to prison some days ago for being drunk and disorderly. He has often been at the game before. Some other parsons get drunk without being disorderly, and so keep out of prison. Perhaps the Newcastle parson is not thoroughly seasoned yet.

THE following collection was recently made at a church near Sheffield—£7 7s. 2½d., six buttons, three pencils, and a piece of india rubber. At another church a man put in a bad half-crown and took out a good two shillings' change, and then went to gaol.

IN the South of Russia the Christians are enjoying a Jew hunt. Thousands of Jewish families have lost their all, and many of them have been barbarously mutilated. Whenever did Christianity make people humane without civilisation to help it?

THE *Standard* writes: "It has been said that there are no such skilful beggars as the clergy, and the aphorism is a true one."

IN Belgium the Brothers of Good Works, whose object is to oppose the influence of godless schools, have been proved guilty of awful immorality. Twenty-nine were convicted at Audenarde and thirteen at Maltebrugge. Many others whose names were marked for arrest have sought safety in flight.

A SAN FRANCISCO paper, speaking of Moody and Sankey's work in that city, says "there was a much larger number of arrests the first two months of their revival work than during the two months preceding their angelic presence." It adds that the godly pair "look fatter, sleeker, and holier than ever."

SCENE, a recent prayer meeting. Preacher (to woman with a baby in her arms): "Are you seeking Salvation?" Answer: "No; I'm seeking Sal Jones, who's left her kid with me."

C. J. WHITMORE and Z. B. Woffendale have just been on the war path again. At Jarrow they delivered two fearful and wonderful discourses on "Scripture and Science," and "Christianity and Secularism." Why don't they do something in London? Suppose one or both of them agreed to hold a set debate with a representative Freethinker, and to have a full report (not garbled) published afterwards. We fear they won't bite.

A REVIVALIST at Chester has been found guilty of bigamy. The culprit had been a clown in a circus. He and another travelling showman went to a chapel in Bradford and got converted. He then advertised himself as a revivalist, and said to his friend, "You shall be my corresponding secretary." The pious dodge worked very well for a time, but fortune proved fickle, and Henry John Llewellyn, *alias* John Brown, *alias* William Brown Edwards, now meditates within the walls of a gaol.

IN our last number we printed a pious yarn from the *Christian Herald*, which we invited the editor to authenticate. He has not done so, although he has sent us copies of his paper every week since. The story of the vanquished infidel seems to have been, as we suspected, an editorial concoction. Lying for the glory of God is a very ancient virtue, and has not yet gone out of practice.

#### NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S FREETHOUGHT OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LECTURERS FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1881.

STATION AND TIME.	Chairman	5	12	19	26
MIDLAND ARCHES, ...11.15	Lecky	Job	Thurlow	Foote	Ramsey
CLERKENWELL GREEN 11.15	Hilditch	Moss	Haslam	Grout	Foote
VICTORIA PARK, ..... 3.30	Jones	Moss	Fagan	Foote	Ramsey
MILE END ROAD, .....11.15	Reeve	Thurlow	Fagan	Ramsey	Moss
GIBRALTAR WALK, ...11.15	Gay	Norrish	Ramsey	Fagan	Job

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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LITERARY communications to the Editor, Mr. G. W. FOOTE, No. 9, South Crescent, Bedford Square, London, W.C.

THE *Freethinker* sent monthly post free for a year, 1s. 6d.

J. W. T.—Thanks for the tracts, which you will see we have used. We are always glad to receive such things.

A BRADMAN.—Received with thanks.

C. POTTER.—The Protestant Alliance did not achieve a very glorious success after all. Several correspondents write as you do about the ticket dodge. After all we foiled Butcher Varley and his dear friends.

E. WILKINSON.—We hope you got inside Exeter Hall eventually. Our object is the prosperity and unity of Freethought. Thanks for your good wishes.

F. H. HART.—Scores of letters have reached us to the same effect. The *Freethinker* will be published weekly before long, and we hope to make a definite announcement in our next. Our sale has been, for a first number, unprecedented.

J. SKINNER.—See our account of the Exeter Hall Meeting.

W. CLARK.—The Rev. Dr. McCann has written that illness in his family has prevented him from making arrangements for the debate with Mr. Foote, which he is pledged to hold. He promises to write again on his return to London. Perhaps we shall be able to publish the time, place and conditions of debate in our next.

OUT-DOOR LECTURE FUND.—We have promised to receive subscriptions in aid of the open air advocacy, and we invite our readers to render what assistance they can. The work is one which should be well supported, for it is fruitful in good results. Subscriptions can also be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, 28, Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

E. P. H.—Hardly suitable for our pages. It contains nothing new, distinctive or striking, and that is just what we want.

C. WAHAB.—We cannot discuss the subject in our columns. Our space being limited, we must confine ourselves to Freethought, and leave other questions to journals devoted to their treatment.

H. J. BATHGATE.—Thanks. We are always glad to receive cuttings and extracts.

ELIAS.—We are happy to furnish you some amusement. Anybody can be dull. We do not, however, plead guilty to the joke you elicit from the sentence.

MR. SYMES's conclusion of the Biography of Adam is, very much to our regret, crowded out by the reports of the Exeter Hall Meeting. Two or three shorter articles have shared the same fate.

P.—Accepted with thanks.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

ARCHDEACON BOYD has just been lamenting the fact that his Church gets a poorer supply of clergy every year. The *Bradford Observer* of May 17th contains a long report of his annual charge to his clerical brethren in the Craven district. "He was afraid," it says, "that it could not be denied that the supply of clergy did not keep pace with the population. In 1880, the number of deacons ordained was 689, and of priests 669. But in the year 1878, only two years before, there were 668 deacons ordained. So that it would appear that there was on the whole very little addition to the annual number, whereas all the while the population went on increasing. A few years ago it was the same in America, but the most noteworthy case was that of France. A writer in the *Church Quarterly* said that in 1877, there were 2,500 French parishes entirely unprovided with a priest, and, therefore, so far lacking, or at any rate receiving imperfectly, the ministrations of their religion. This indifference in France seemed to be telling with fearful results, and to be leading rapidly to the dying out of religion." Further on the Archdeacon said, "Among other causes which had doubtless contributed to this general reluctance to take holy orders, it had been confessed on all sides, was that wave of unbelief which had prevailed on the Continent of Europe, and other countries, and which had reached here. This, of all things, it was admitted was telling a sad tale among even the best educated portion of our people." The silver streak, although a "sure defence against invasion and the hand of war," cannot protect us from the subtle miasma of infidelity which is generated on the Continent and wafted all over the world.

THE Paris Municipal Council voted 300 francs towards the expenses of the anti-clerical conference convened by Victor Schœlcher. The Christian papers say that this is a direct attack on religion. These lovers of fair play forget that religion in France is supported out of the State funds. Let them give up their own subvention before they cry out.

IN Sydney, Australia, the Sabbatarians have just been beaten by a majority of two to one. They made a determined effort in the Local Parliament to close the Public

Library and the Museum on Sundays. The Premier, Sir Henry Parkes, sided with the bigots, but they were defeated by 44 votes to 22. A Freethought Association has been started since, and it promises to be a great success.

PROFESSOR TYNDALL, in the *Times*, says that although Carlyle at first abhorred the evolution theory "as tending to weaken the ethical element in man," he eventually began to perceive that this was a mistake. Carlyle after meeting Darwin pronounced him "the most charming of men."

ACCORDING to the Secretary of the Congregational Union, London should send 2,300,000 persons to church and chapel on Sunday, while "on a liberal estimate" she only sends 750,000, or a third of the proper number.

A FREETHINKER looks with rather mixed feelings at the present condition of rationalism in Holland. On the testimony of the orthodox promoters of the new University of Amsterdam, Christianity in their country is well-nigh moribund, and turns an eye of haggard hope to contributions. In Amsterdam, says Dr. Hoedemaker, "there are hardly any physicians or lawyers who are Christian men." It is just possible that too great weight may be laid on Dr. Hoedemaker's words, for he apparently believes he will horrify Christian men in this favored land by the solemn announcement that in Holland "there are pious men who, they would say, preached the gospel, and who believe that the first five chapters of Genesis are a myth!" This awful fact is not quite the worst, however. There are announced to be 300 parishes vacant in Holland at this moment because the people will not accept Rationalist ministers, and find it almost impossible to get evangelical ministers. And in order to establish an evangelical university, the Hoedmakers have to go abroad for money. The matters for regret to Freethinkers, are that there should be so many quasi-rationalists willing to minister in Christian churches, and that a large proportion of the common people should still be orthodox. But even among them there is no mistake as to the direction opinion is taking. Their "£10,000 in one year" to the new university is no great proof of faith, and with the schools "almost all used as an engine in the hands of the infidel Government," the balance will soon change.

MADRAS boasts of a neat little Freethought journal called "The Philosophical Enquirer," which is published in English and in Tamil. It is in its fourth volume, and we hope it will reach its fortieth. The appearance of such journals in India and in the Colonies is a remarkable sign of the times. Freethought is spreading rapidly all over the world.

THE *New York Observer* says that the May Meetings in that city "do not attract the crowds which once thronged the Old Broadway Tabernacle and filled the churches. It is very evident that, for some reason, they have lost their hold upon the people."

## THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

JESUS, called the Christ, is popularly supposed to have been of the seed of David, from which it was promised the Messiah should come. It is, however, perfectly clear that he was in no wise related to the man after God's own heart. His putative father, Joseph, admittedly had no share in bringing him into the world; for he disdained the assistance of a father, although he was unable to dispense with that of a mother. But Joseph, and not Mary, according to the genealogies of Matthew and Luke, was the distant blood relation of David; and therefore Jesus was not of the seed of the royal house, but a bastard slip grafted on the ancient family tree by the Holy Ghost. It is a great pity that newspaper correspondents did not exist in those days. Had Joseph been skilfully "interviewed," it is highly probable that the world would have been initiated into his domestic secrets, and enlightened as to the paternity of Mary's eldest son. The Holy Ghost is rather too shadowy a personage to be the father of a lusty boy, and no young lady would be credited in this age if she ascribed to him the authorship of a child born out of wedlock. Most assuredly no magistrate would make an order against him for its maintenance. Even a father of the Spiritualist persuasion who believed in "the materialisation of spirit forms," would probably be more than dubious if his daughter were to present him with a grandson whose father lived on the other side of death and in a mansion not made with hands. It is, we repeat, to be for ever regretted that Joseph has not left his version of the affair. The Immaculate Conception might, perhaps, have been cleared up, and theology relieved of a half-obscure mystery.

## INGERSOLL'S LATEST.

The following is condensed from a long report, filling three columns of very small type, in the *New York Truth* of Monday, April 25th:—

Booth's Theatre was literally blocked from pit to dome last night, the attraction being Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's new lecture, "Some Reasons Why." As early as 5 o'clock in the afternoon people came to the theatre, to wait until the doors were opened, and by half-past 7 o'clock the street was one vast mass of struggling humanity, pushing and shoving each other in a mad effort to get at the box office or into the doors. When the former was reached, it was only to find that all the tickets had been captured by the speculators who flocked around the lobby like so many crows upon a rich field of newly-planted grain.

The scene in the house was just as noticeable. The moment that the doors were opened a grand rush was made for the most suitable places for hearing. Such as had no seats immediately occupied the aisles and walls and refused to move, thus obstructing the passage of those who had purchased seats. But politeness was at a discount, for the crowd recognized too well the fact that a place once lost in such a crowd was lost for ever, and they held on with the grim determination of despair. Meanwhile hundreds of people were turned away from the door.

The character of this audience was most noticeable. In the thousands who came there was not an unintelligent face. The people who came to see Ingersoll, came to hear also, and they were such as could appreciate when they heard. They were eminently respectable and clearly of the very best inhabitants of the city. No greater compliment could have been paid to Colonel Ingersoll or any other lecturer than the crowd which besieged Booth's Theatre last night.

## THE BOSS INFIDEL.

Mr. Ingersoll appeared upon the stage at 8.15. As the footlights revealed his somewhat portly form and round rosy face, a storm of applause went up that seemed to telegraph that the feeling of the audience was in sympathy with him.

He began by proclaiming that the history of the world showed that religion had made enemies instead of friends. And the experience of fifteen hundred or six thousand years goes to show that religion but entails persecution.

He said it was strange, but true, that those who loved God most had loved men least. That was one of the reasons why the lecturer had opposed himself to religion.

## WHAT IS RELIGION?

He defined it as the duties that man owed to God, and not those which he owed to his fellow man or to his country. The question had arisen, Can any religion arise between finite man and an infinite being? An infinite being cannot receive and the finite cannot give.

## SEEKING INFORMATION.

The lecturer requested information from anyone able to give it, as to whether he could increase this infinite being's happiness or decrease his misery? And did he really need his strength or his heart? He roundly asserted that he did not believe in any such being. The audience loudly applauded. Said he,

"We can clothe the naked, we can feed hungry man, we can finally weave a garment of joy that will clothe the world." [Applause.]

Said the lecturer, "If there is an infinite God and I haven't got reason enough to comprehend him whose fault is it?" The audience drew their own conclusions. A pious stock-broker or two shuddered, but the applause was general. He remarked that some said, as of the Bible, that every great work was inspired. That Shakspeare was inspired. He certainly felt less like disputing the latter proposition than the others.

## SMITH'S LETTER.

The lecturer expounded his idea of Scriptural revelations by supposing that he was going to write a letter to Smith. But the lecturer, if he was an honest man, wanted to convey his meaning to Smith. He wished to tell his meaning to Smith to the best of his ability.

"Now," said Mr. Ingersoll, "I am finite and might not make my meaning clear to Smith, but God is said to be infinite, and if he is honest, he having the power, ought to make his meaning clear to Smith, and to every one else, by whom he wishes to be heard."

God, he said, professed to be intimately acquainted with man, and yet, with this help, he could not express himself. He thought God should convey his meaning personally, too, and not through the medium of another man. Anyway, the lecturer said, this other man lived 4,000 years ago, and he had no means of knowing what that man's reputation for veracity was in his neighborhood. The audience laughed loud and long at this conceit and continually applauded.

## INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

Colonel Ingersoll asserted amidst the greatest applause that the inspiration of the Bible depended upon the ignorance of the man who reads it. He considered that he had just as much soul at stake as any doctor of divinity, and, indeed, more than some he knew. He declared that the first attempt at peopling the world, according to the Old Testament, was a failure. God was so disgusted with the creatures he had made that he destroyed

them all but eight, whom he kept as a sort of seed, and these were the same kind as those he had drowned. Colonel Ingersoll considered this a mistake. He said also referring to Jehovah's selection of the Jews as his chosen people:

In this matter of picking out these people Jehovah had no time to consider the rest of the world; he could only pay attention to a few of the tribe of Abraham. This God could pay no attention to Egypt, though that country had free schools, taught that one wife was enough for one man, had courts of law codes of law, and was a country in which the son of the poorest man might attain to the highest position.

God could pay no attention to India, with her literature, language and advancement. Colonel Ingersoll said that God had no time for these or for anyone else in the world, except these few children of Abraham, whom he tried his best to civilize, and among whom he established a despotism and wrought miracles to prove to them that he was God.

## THE BELIEF OF PRIESTS.

In this connection the lecturer observed that it was very singular that one priest never believed the stories told by another priest. The Christian missionary relates with fervor the stories he is wont to tell, but the Hindoo listens with unchanged countenance; then the Hindoo tells his story, but not a muscle of the Christian's face changes. "Is it possible," exclaimed the lecturer, "that they know each other?" This point was so well appreciated by the audience that the lecturer was interrupted for several moments by the tremendous applause that followed.

Colonel Ingersoll illustrated this peculiarity of priests by a story. He said that on one occasion a gentleman was relating some very marvellous experiences in England. The company were highly entertained, and the story was interrupted by frequent ejaculations of wonder and surprise. Finally it was observed that one man was wholly unaffected by the narrative. One of the most enthusiastic listeners approached this individual and said: "Why are you not interested in the story you have heard?" "Because I am a liar myself," was the reply.

## THE JEWS.

Perhaps God had to bring the Jews up slowly, so to speak, from their barbarity. By way of illustrating this point, Colonel Ingersoll said that the same process might be used in converting cannibals. First the missionaries might be cooked, and after a taste had been engendered in the cannibals for cooked food a little mutton might be slipped in, and as time went on more mutton might be added, and so on until the dish was all mutton and no missionary, and the taste of the cannibal had been cultivated to a full appreciation of mutton. He doubted if this process would be pleasant to the missionaries, but it was much the same as that pursued by the Almighty in his treatment of the Jews.

In speaking of the Jews, Colonel Ingersoll said that they were now a civilized people, and he wished it to be distinctly understood that what he said about the Jews was said without the slightest intention of catering to the prejudice that might exist in the mind of any man. The Jews furnished fewer paupers than any other people, and he might add, that they never had any luck until Jehovah abandoned them.

Under the Mosaic law no sin could be atoned for without blood, and sacrifices had to be made for this purpose. There was one advantage in this. It was always cash down; the priest never failed to get the offering. Under the present system the Christian simply says, "charge it," and when he dies he goes through the bankruptcy of the gospel.

"Why did God demand sheep of the Jews?" asked the lecturer. "Because the priests wanted mutton!" was the answer that took the audience by storm.

## LET THEM FIGHT IT OUT.

Brahma claimed to be greater than Allah, and Allah than Jehovah and as a consequence their followers fought. Colonel Ingersoll wanted to see the followers stop fighting and to have the battle-field transferred from the earth and to allow the gods to fight it out among themselves.

## QUESTIONING THE DEITY'S RIGHTS.

He asserted that a finite being could not sin against an infinite being at all.

"No God," he thundered, "has any right to make a man to be eternally damned, and no man who is eternally damned is a success." While the audience were still cogitating upon this point the lecturer charged up to the footlights with another.

"How long will universal benevolence punish a finite being in another world for failing to believe an unreasonable thing in this?" This was received with great applause.

## WHY HE IS ETERNALLY DAMNED.

Now because a man cannot comprehend this, because he fails to swallow one of Jehovah's stories like this, he is to be terribly punished, but not for that period. His punishment will last for ever—a very much longer time than that described.

He graphically depicted the story of the sufferings of a ship's crew one hundred and seventeen days out of port who were without food and starving. The captain in despair seized a revolver and placed the muzzle to his head, saying to his crew:

"Boys, this cannot last much longer. You must have something to eat."

The mate snatched the pistol from him, and the following day they were rescued by the crew of a passing steamer.

"Now," he asked, "would God snatch this brave, self-sacrificing man's naked soul and cast it into hell?"

## AN AUDACIOUS ANSWER.

People told him that he had no right to pick out the bad things from the Bible. He could only reply that God had no business to put them in. This audacious argument seemed to meet with the approval of the audience, although a few were seen to shudder.

## WHAT WE OWE THE BIBLE.

Some pious souls imagined that we were indebted to the Bible for all the good things that we possessed, all of the mechanical wonders of the age; to St. Paul for locomotives and sewing machines, and to the Apocalypse for monitors and Krupp guns. Now, the Jews had a Bible, yet they crucified an innocent and loving man. They could not have done much worse without one.

Jehovah knew that his Bible would be the defence of thieves called kings and hypocrites called priests. The Old Testament records the hell of the past, the New Testament that of the future. The old the frightful things God has done, the new the frightful things he will do.

Continued applause greeted this expression.

Mr. Ingersoll said the religion of the future is humanity. He proclaimed to every man that he had the right to think and investigate for himself.

"That is my Religion; Justice is Liberty. And (impresively) Liberty is my Religion."

The audience heartily re-echoed this sentiment and the lecturer continued:

"Everything that is true: that is my Bible. Every beautiful thing, every self-denying thought, every pebble and every star, is a chapter in my Bible, and that is all that speaks to man." Amidst the ringing applause that followed Mr. Ingersoll concluded: "All that is good combined makes my Bible, and that, my friends, is what I stand on."

## SOME ACCOUNT OF MY STEWARDSHIP.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—As I believe it is perfectly correct that a steward should render some account of his stewardship, allow me to render mine of Friday last, at Exeter Hall.

I arrived with punctuality at 5.30, at which hour tea was to be partaken of by the stewards, previous to commencing their godly duties. We were all sorts and sizes, a goodly proportion of the white chokered and dirty handed element being present.

Whilst waiting for the tea-fight signal, I amused myself by listening to various conversations carried on by small groups of stewards, from which I began to suspect that the Bradlaugh element was strongly represented. Fancy, sir, Radicals and Atheists acting as stewards at such a meeting! How came they there? How did the ungodly procure tickets? Presently a gentleman, whose general fustiness of demeanor proclaimed him a somebody, gave distinct orders to the orchestra (who on this pious occasion was, as Jem Baggs would say, "a horgan") to strike up "God Save the Queen" at the commencement of the proceedings, and if the other party were stormy to drown them with the "Rogues' March." "How does it go?" said the Organ.

"I don't know," replied the fussy one; "but I know there is such a tune." Tea was announced, and we were ushered into an underground apartment; our tickets were minutely examined, and we took our seats. After waiting some few minutes, the head waiter announced that as Mr. Somebody had not arrived, Mr. Somebodyelse would say grace; and this was the result of the deputy's exertion, Bles'ndlymansfrallfitsferdorssakemien, after which enlightening piece of intelligence we set to. Some of the stewards were knowing ones, and came prepared with extensive margined stomach notes, for the bread and butter and cake disappeared in huge quantities with an astonishing rapidity. I left the table when the head waiter suggested another emanation from the "gracey" one. I could not stand a second edition. A ferocious, bulldog-looking individual was placed near the entrance to the Hall. He was dressed in a coat much too large, probably lent by one of the Committee clergy, and was adorned with a rosette. He declared, with a "big, big d—" his intention to "give it to Bradlaugh's people." We were told to assemble in the committee-room to receive our badges and wands of office. When I was fully invested, I felt a deep sympathy with that much-abused individual the Lord Chamberlain. Walking backwards with a long stick in your hand is not a dignified position. The stick without the walk was quite enough for me, for after having nearly gouged the eye out of a brother steward, and grievously assaulted a fat sister of Christ, I resigned my staff. We were told to go, and we go'ed, the wise to distant parts, the foolish to close quarters. With the first rush of the ungodly—and it was a rush—I, as a wise one, surveyed the storm from the distance. I suddenly bethought me that I could render good service by volunteering to collect tickets, and my statement that my excellent sight would enable me to detect the forged ones begot a most delightful confidence on the part of the godly. How so many of those criminally-concocted pieces of cardboard passed is a mystery to me. Of course I severely scanned the position of the broken H (which was the tricky test of the churchy ones), but there must have been a bad side-light, as I fear I must have passed a large proportion of the ungodly. The Lord forgive me.—Yours,

A STEWARD.

## PROFANE JOKES.

A STORY is told of a shrewish Scotch woman, who tried to wean her husband from the public house by employing her brother to act the part of a ghost, and frighten John on his way home. "Who are you?" said the guidman, as the apparition rose before him from behind a bush. "I am Auld Nick," was the reply. "Come awa', man," said John, nothing daunted. "gie's a shake o' your hand—I am married tae a sister o' yours."

"Do THE converted heathens keep Sunday?" was asked of a missionary. "Keep Sunday? Yes," he replied, "and everything else they can lay their hands on."

DO NOT BE CURIOUS.—It is better not to ask too many questions about the future. A curious husband—that is, a husband who was too curious—asked his wife: "My dear, what kind of a stone do you think they will give me when I am dead?" She answered coolly; "Brimstone, John."

WESTERN newspapers call Talmage's church the Brooklyn Jabbernacle.

THE Rev. Jo. Cook thus analyzes the action of a boy who climbs a tree to steal apples: "The apples are the objective natural motive; the boy's appetite is the subjective natural motive; his intention is his moral motive." The *Chicago Tribune* adds the following: "The seat of the boy's pantaloons is the bulldog's objective natural motive; the dog's appetite for small boys is the subjective natural motive; he has no moral motive; his intention is to make minceeat of the kid."

THE San Francisco *News Letter* is responsible for this: "Supposing that you got private intelligence that to-morrow would be the day of judgment," asked a minister of the gospel to the proprietor of one of our live papers, whom he was trying to convert, "what would you do?" And the news-gatherer paused for a moment, looked up thoughtfully at the ceiling, and said, "You've got me there. I suppose if I used the entire staff, and got all the extras in the city, that we couldn't interview half the people buried in the cemetery as they rose from their graves, and, allowing that we could, a sixteen-page paper with a double supplement would not contain half the matter, even if we could set it up, but I'd run extras all next day until I got it all in somehow. No," he continued, "it would be a pretty tough raffle, I acknowledge, but I'd make it, you bet?"

A MINISTER examined his school-boys thus: "What is the meaning of the word 'repentance?'"—Boy: "Please, sor, an divvent knaa."—Minister: "Now if I had stolen a loaf of bread, what should I be?"—Boy: "Please, sor, locked up."—Minister: "Well, should I feel sorry?"—Boy: "Yes."—Minister: "Well, why should I feel sorry?"—Boy: "Please, sor, cause you was caught."

"My good woman," said an evangelical caller upon a North End resident, "have you got the gospel here?" "No, sir, we haven't," replied the old crone, "but they've got it awful down to Memphis."

## THE WHALE ON JONAH.

THIS comes of being hungry. How long I swam about with nothing to eat I can't say, but I know I was nearly starving when I spied the man I've just swallowed. Mad for food and heedless of his size, I rushed at him and took him in. Alas! he took me in too. Instead of going down peaceably, the wretch stuck just in the entrance, and wouldn't move up nor down. He was in a fix, and so was I. But something whispered "persevere," and I persevered. Judging from the way he wriggled the stranger persevered too. At length I felt him working gradually down, and after a good hour's hard exertion he was safe inside. What a job it was! I shall have a sore throat for weeks.

My God, what an awful stomach ache! If I'd swallowed a rock it couldn't be worse. The stranger doesn't like his quarters, that's clear. However, he'll get digested soon and cease bothering me. Patience! All will be well yet.

Confound him, he won't digest. He's awfully tough. I begin to wish I hadn't swallowed him. Oh, heavens, what a frightful lurch he gave then! I wonder what he's up to. The rumbling in my poor stomach is something frightful. It sounds like the noise I've heard sailors make on their knees in a storm. Little did I think my stomach would ever be used for a prayer meeting.

I'm dreadfully hungry. He's been three days inside, and my gastric juice hasn't made any impression on him. And what's worse, my poor throat is still so sore that I can't swallow anything else. If this don't end soon I shall starve with a bellyful of good meat.

I'm awfully sick, and feel as though I were going to be turned inside out. Good God! what's that? Huucck! He's coming up. Oh heavens! he'll be the death of me. Thank goodness he's out at last. All's well that ends well, but catch me bolting any more big mouthfuls. I shall be a sadder and a wiser whale as long as I live.

REVIEWS.

*Leaves of Grass.* By WALT WHITMAN. Preface to the Original Edition, 1855. (London: Trübner and Co.)—Mr. Walter Lewin has done a real service to literature in republishing, through Messrs. Trübner and Co., this noble Essay, which is omitted from all the later editions of Whitman's works. Many portions of it have been wrought into subsequent poems, but much of it will be new to those who have seen neither the original edition of "Leaves of Grass" nor Mr. Rossetti's volume of selections. Readers who know nothing of Whitman's prose except the inferior contributions of his old age to periodical literature, will doubtless be surprised at the lucidity as well as profundity of this Preface, at its majestic march and splendid rhythm. It forms a capital introduction to a study of Whitman's poetry, and Mr. Lewin's object in republishing it is, we believe, to excite among English readers a wider interest in the works of the great American poet of democracy. Only five hundred copies have been printed, and as many of these are already subscribed for, early application is necessary to secure those which remain. The Essay is very handsomely printed on fine paper, and is more than worth the price (1s. 6d.) at which it is published.

*Wayside Flowers.* By J. R. WALLER. (Bedlington: G. Richardson.)—Mr. Waller's preface is severe on "a Darlington print" which "tried to be critical but failed" with respect to a previous volume of his. Fearing a similar punishment in the preface of some future volume, we hesitated to proceed from his prose to his verse, lest we should find it, like so many collections of miscalled "poems," deserving of emphatic condemnation or the damnation of very faint praise. We summoned courage however, and were agreeably surprised. Mr. Waller's little volume is really worth reading. His verses evince the possession of true fancy, of delicate feeling, and of some humor. One poem, "If I Were In My Grave," shows considerable power; and the last verse of "After Many Years" is musical and pathetic. A sonnet on "Old Letters" is finely conceived and expressed, but the fifth line is spoilt by the terrible word "un-enveloped." Mr. Waller, if not a great, is a true poet; no one could be the worse for reading his productions, and some might be the better.

*Essays and Phantasies.* By JAMES THOMSON (B.V.). (London: Reeves and Turner.) We are obliged by press of matter to defer our review of this volume. For the present we must content ourselves with recommending every Freethinker who can afford it to purchase a copy. Mr. Thomson is the most pronounced sceptic among the poets of our day, and as to his genius there can be no doubt. His new volume, like its predecessors, contains much that will shock Mrs. Grundy and the Philistines, and much that will delight everyone else.

WOLVES AND GODS.

WHEN hungry wolves had trespass'd on the fold,  
And the robb'd shepherd his sad story told,  
"Call in Alcides," said a crafty priest,  
"Give him one half, and he'll secure the rest."  
No, said the shepherd, if the Fates decree  
By ravaging my flock to ruin me,  
To their commands I willingly resign,  
Pow'r is their character, and patience mine;  
Tho', troth, to me there seems but little odds  
Who prove the greatest robbers, wolves or gods.

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