

THE FREETHINKER.

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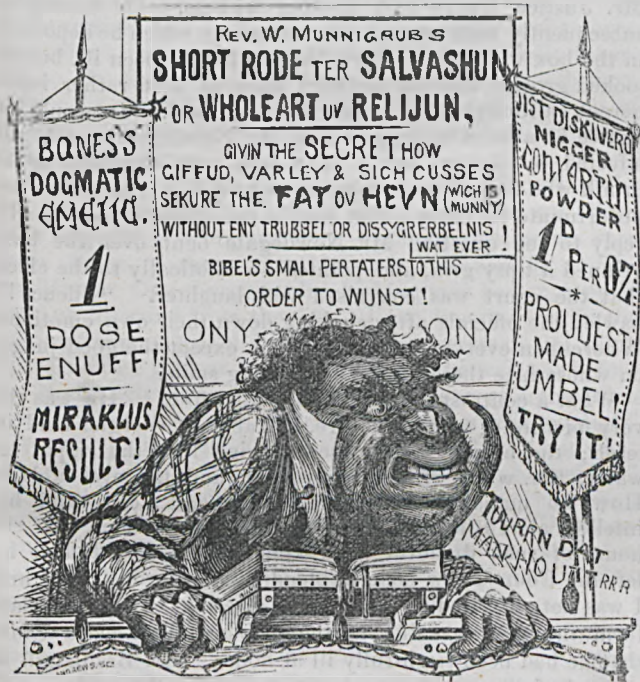
EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

[TRANSMISSION ABROAD,

Vol. I.—No. 4.]

AUGUST, 1881.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.



No more tears!

No moar foul Infidles!

No maur fat!

On Mondy
A
INTERDEUCIN
&
KISSIN
MEETIN
in this Hall.

GRATE
OUTPORIN!

Bro. Leaky, of
the ile stores,
will lead.

6d.

Bring your own
MUGS!

REV. MUMBO JUMBO'S
MORAL,
or ruther
MOROLOJIKAL PILLS
(Specially patternised by
the nobility and *Houser
Commons*.)
FER AYTHEISM & SICH.
NORMUS DMAND!
meny donkeys allus kept a
grandin material!!!
1s. 1½d. per Box.
3 Boxis per prise or 2.
Reduction to *Mr. Bradlaw* if a
qontitty; i.e., that is:—add
m(n)oro soe'um,
(Latin, wich is nessary being eddi-
cated.)

On Wens day
THE LORD,
wich is mo,
will guv to all
fat wuns
ANJELS JAM
wich is
VINIGER & KRUSHT
FLIES.
(Fertesty moanials
see results on
cats.)
STORDINARY
EFFECK!
6d.
BE IN TIME.

INGERSOLL CONVERTED.

AFTER lecturing at San Francisco on the non-existence of a hell, "Bob" Ingersoll was advised by a reporter of the *San Francisco Chronicle* to try the Ophir mine, at Virginia City, and get new views on the subject. He was quite willing, saying, "Bring it on; I'm not afraid of your lowest levels here or hereafter." They dropped him down to the 1,475 foot level. "Call this hot?" said Colonel Bob, perspiring at every pore, "show me something warm, can't you? I'll freeze here!" "Well," said the foreman, "we ain't got no hot drifts here now, but come this way, and I'll give you something a little warmer than this." They all branched off, and the air changed instantly as they turned north. It was warmer; it kept getting warmer as they proceeded. It got hot. "It is cool along here," said the foreman, "but it is a little warmer in the face of the drift." Ingersoll was puffing, but still seemed cheerful. "Come on girls; this don't amount to much. Talk about your hot mines—don't see where they come in." Ingersoll plodded on until they met a miner, with his head down, rushing out of the drift. "Where did you come from, my man?" asked Ingersoll, as the miner passed him. "Come from the face of the drift," replied the miner. Ingersoll yelled, "And where are you going?" "Going to hell to cool off," replied the miner. Ingersoll halted and said to the foreman, "Perhaps we had better not go any farther, I see the girls are not following." As he came back and met his wife, he whispered huskily, "Eva, if I thought there really was

a place hotter than this, we'd go up and join a Methodist church this very night." Then they went down on the incline 300 feet further, in the "giraff," where the foreman told Ingersoll he had a curious natural phenomenon he wanted to show him. Ingersoll followed him down an abandoned drift where the air was so hot that the oldest miner would not work unless a fresh air pipe was first introduced. When he came back he was shirtless, drenched with perspiration, and scarcely able to walk. They were afraid he would faint. "Well, my friend," gasped the Colonel to the foreman, "if you get us to the surface uncooked, I will write you an obituary that would make an angel turn green with envy, when I get to Chicago."

THE BIGOTS' WAR CRY.

RAISE the cry ye holy few,
Let's be the Lord's avenger;
Lo, Bradlaugh's sent to Parliament,
And Church and Crown's in danger:
The Devil seeks to plant his throne
Within our Queen's dominions,
And voters choose their own M.P's.
And men their own opinions!

Pious Churchill, give the case
Your most profound attention,
The blow you strike to serve your God
Will also save your pension;
At privilege as well as creed
The Sceptic aims his blow,
And if he doubts the Lord above
He scorns the Lords below.

Butcher Varley join our cause,
Resume your old vocation,
And butcher in the name of God
The sceptic's reputation;
Be not too scrupulously true
But speak as fancy pleases,
'Tis more a virtue than a crime
To tell a lie for Jesus.

How can heretics be good
And seek our creed to shatter?
And even if the rascals could
What would their goodness matter?
Whoever doubts our loving faith
Must soon in blazing hell be;
If sceptics are not wicked scamps
At least they might as well be.

Ye saintly folk who love the Lord,
Ye Lords who love your places,
Unite and crush the sceptic down
Who dares you to your faces:
Oh, let us curse with holy wrath
From house-top and from steeple
This man who dares to doubt the faith
And dares to love the people.—W. NELSON.

CHRIST AND PROMETHEUS.

If Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Deliverer, why is the world still so full of sin and misery? The Redeemer has come, say the Christians. Yes, we reply, but when will come the Redemption? Christ has in nowise redeemed the world. He was no god of power, but a weak, fallible man, like ourselves; and his cry of despair on the cross might now be repeated with tenfold force. The older myth of Prometheus is truer and more inspiring than the myth of Christ. If there be gods, they have never yielded man aught of their grace. All his possessions have been cunningly, patiently, and valorously extorted from the powers that be, even as Prometheus filched the fire from heaven. In that realm of mythology, whereto all religions will eventually be consigned, Jesus will dwindle beneath Prometheus. One is feminine, and typifies resigned submission to a supernatural will: the other is masculine, and typifies that insurgent audacity of heart and head which has wrested a kingdom of science from the vast empire of nescience, and strewed the world with the wrecks of theological power.



BRADLAUGH BAITING NEWDEGATE.

WHEN Mr. Bradlaugh told me that he was going to cross-examine Mr. Newdegate, in the Court of Queen's Bench, on Tuesday, July 19th, I determined to go and see the fun. By raising the issue which had then to be tried, namely, whether the writ had been obtained before or after his first vote in the House of Commons, Mr. Bradlaugh made all the parties to his prosecution get into the witness-box and give an account of themselves. Whether he won or lost, it was a splendid piece of strategy, as the published report of the evidence has shown.

On Tuesday morning, at half-past ten, I was at the Court, which was densely crowded. Outside the Court, in Westminster Hall, there was a still larger number of people unable to gain admittance. The case of *Clarke v. Bradlaugh* did not come on until three o'clock. Its way was blocked by another case, which had already occupied the Court for two days. There were two counsel on each side, and, in the language of Scripture, "a crowd of witnesses." A landlord had distrained his tenant's goods for £15 rent, and the aggrieved tenant wanted £300 compensation for himself, and £400 for his friends. He got nothing, and had to pay costs. This paltry case dragged along its weary length through more than four hours of one of the hottest dog-days. The poor judge mopped his reeking face every five minutes; the jury looked frightfully hipped; Mr. Bradlaugh sat waiting with an air of hopeless disgust; and his friends in Court evidently wished John Sikes and William Sikes in that warmer place the Duke of Cambridge must have visited to experience weather "fifty times hotter" than the tropic heat of the Aldershot Review. But the worst of things must end this side of hell, and at three o'clock the welcome call rang out of *Clarke v. Bradlaugh*.

The jury were soon sworn in, and all was ready except the counsel for the plaintiff, who had to be sent for. At last he came. Sir Hardinge Giffard is not a pleasant-looking man. His head and face bespeak a shrewd, subtle mind, but his eyes are as cold as a wintry sea. His very smile has something "uncanny" in it. Mr. Newdegate could not have chosen a better instrument.

Mr. Kydd, the junior counsel, was once, I believe, a Chartist. If I am correctly informed he attended a famous meeting at Glasgow, after being rigged out with a presentable suit of clothes for the purpose, and distinguished himself there by a melodramatic offer to bare his bosom to the shafts of power, in doing which, by a violent gesture, he inflicted great damage on his shirt front. Mr. Kydd is in a different position now. He is too plump, not to say obese, for a Chartist. There is no harm in this; but why is Mr. Kydd so very much afraid of owning any connexion with the Kydd of thirty years ago?

Sir Hardinge Giffard's introductory speech was a masterpiece; so airy and graceful, so deferential to the jury, so dexterous in avoiding the whole question at issue. If ever the drama of the Fall is acted in England, as the drama of the Crucifixion is acted at Oberammergau, Sir Hardinge Giffard, if he were only younger and better looking, would do admirably for the leading part.

Mr. Newdegate was the first witness. Like Sir Hardinge Giffard he had to be fetched. He entered the witness-box, kissed the book, and gazed round with a look half smirking and half fearful. When asked his name, he replied very slowly, with a curious mixture of Uriah Heep and Julius Cæsar—Charles Newdigate Newdegate. He was evidently very proud of the *Newdegate*. Immediately afterwards he snuffled out some words which were understood to mean that he claimed the protection of the Court. Mr. Bradlaugh smartly protested, and explained to Mr. Newdegate that he was not in the House of Commons and couldn't claim "privilege" there.

Mr. Newdegate snuffled to the end. No other word properly describes his speech. His mouth opened entirely sideways like a big slit, and the unfortunate words had mostly to come through his nose. I never saw a more abject figure. Mr. Newdegate would just suit the platform of Exeter Hall, but in court he is a gruesome spectacle. After trying many ways to dispose of his hands, he at last adopted the plan of crossing them over his stomach, as though caressing a good dinner or a bottle of old port. Sometimes he liberated these embarrassing extremities and swung them about. On one such occasion he smacked a boy on the head. The indignation of the lid under the

box, and Mr. Newdegate's 'umble apology, were irresistibly ludicrous. Forthwith the hands were clasped over the stomach again, and the business of the court proceeded. Mr. Newdegate's chronic look is saturnine, but it was occasionally diversified by a glare when hard pressed and a leer when he fancied he had made a point. Now and then he fumbled with a piece of blue foolscap, which Mr. Bradlaugh wanted to see. The old gentleman clasped it defiantly. Bland Sir Hardinge Giffard interposed, and with the tone of an indulgent pedagogue to a boy who has made a mistake, said "put it in your pocket, Mr. Newdegate, put it in your pocket."

On Wednesday morning Mr. Newdegate did not turn up at the proper time, and after giving him ten minutes' grace, Mr. Justice Grove took another witness. He turned up subsequently with an umbrella and a bag, which he deposited in the box with great care. He said he had been ill, but he looked groggy, and his answers were at first rather incoherent, although they gradually improved. It would of course be absurd to suppose that Mr. Newdegate was at all affected by liquor; yet I have seen men supposed to be drunk who looked more sober than he did. It must be very unfortunate to carry about such a deceptive presence. In reply to one question Mr. Newdegate bent over the box, grinned a tipsy grin, and pointed so idiotically to the clock that the court was convulsed with laughter. "Silence!" bawled the officials after choking down their own emotions. Whereupon everybody looked glum except the good judge, on whose face there played a lingering smile.

What a contrast did Mr. Bradlaugh afford! He was the very picture of suppressed fire, of rampant energies held in leash; the nerves of the face playing like the ripple on water, the whole frame quivering, and the eyes ablaze. How he managed to keep his judgment steady and his intellect alert is a wonder. But it is no wonder that six hours of such dreadful work knocked him up. Before he left the Court I saw bodeful blood-rims under his eyes; and I was not surprised to learn, when meeting him on the platform the next evening at the Cobden Workmen's Club, that he had been frightfully ill at home. Mr. Bradlaugh is a wonderfully strong man, but the Tories and the bigots are doing their best to kill him, and if this sort of thing is to continue very much longer they may succeed.

Mr. Bradlaugh's cross-examination of Mr. Newdegate was terrible. It lasted three hours, and resembled slaying alive. Once or twice I felt qualms of pity for the old man, although he deserved none; and it may be that the jury, who did not fully understand his monstrous dishonor, sympathised with him very much more. His evidence was splendid—for Mr. Bradlaugh and us. He confessed to having consulted Sir Hardinge Giffard and others as to proceedings against Mr. Bradlaugh before he went to the House at all. He admitted having voted against Mr. Bradlaugh's being allowed to take the oath, and having afterwards instigated proceedings against him for not doing so. He acknowledged that the writ was all ready days before Mr. Bradlaugh affirmed and voted. He let out that he had known Clarke, the common informer, for many years, and had often employed him as an accountant in private business. Best of all, he had to put into Court the bond of indemnity he had given this common informer against all expenses he might incur in the suit. And lastly he admitted that while the suit was pending he had blocked Mr. Labouchere's notice of motion to relieve Mr. Bradlaugh of the penalties, and so used his position in the House to further his own pecuniary interest. Mr. Newdegate's reputation is blasted for ever in the eyes of all honest men; and if Mr. Bradlaugh can punish him, under the law of maintenance, with fine and imprisonment for supplying funds to a common informer, he will richly deserve all he gets. In reading over the evidence Mr. Justice Grove made a curious mistake. He said Mr. Newgate instead of Mr. Newdegate. Was this ominous of the end? Poor Mr. Newgate!

Mr. James John Stewart, managing clerk of Mr. George Stewart, the solicitor of *Clarke-Newdegate* or *Newdegate-Clarke*, was the only witness, as the judge pointed out, whose evidence as to time was of any importance on the plaintiff's side; and his evidence was knocked into a cocked-hat. He shuffled, evaded, contradicted himself, turned pale, looked down his nose, and generally condemned himself. Mr. Bradlaugh got hold of his diary and disbursement book, turned him inside out, convicted him of something like perjury, and finally released him in a pitiable condition, from which he never recovered until the next evening the

jury gave his client an unexpected verdict dead against the weight of evidence.

Mr. Bradlaugh gave his evidence in a model manner, and the solemnity with which he affirmed contrasted with the smug levity with which the other witnesses took the oath. When he sat down again, bearing in mind the evidence previously given, no unprejudiced man could have any doubt that Mr. Bradlaugh's first vote in the House of Commons was given *after* the issue of the writ.

Mr. Collyer was a model witness, and Sir Hardinge Giffard did not cross-examine him. He was corroborated by his junior clerk, Mr. Triggs, and their evidence proved conclusively that Mr. James Stewart must have issued the writ against Mr. Bradlaugh before half-past three. Mr. Bradlaugh's vote could not have been given before four o'clock at the earliest, and so the plaintiff's case utterly broke down. The judge's summing up was impartial, but decidedly favorable to Mr. Bradlaugh. The jury retired, taking with them blue books, official lists, Hansard's debates, and a map of London in which the good judge, who brought it for them, took a fond interest.

Minute after minute went by. Both sides affected to be very jolly, witticisms were flung about, and there was abundant laughter. The jury were evidently discussing very hard. Some of them were obviously unfavorable to Mr. Bradlaugh. One churchwarden-looking man had apparently made up his mind from the first. I can imagine him in the retiring room. "Well," observes one jurymen, "I think the whole case is clear enough; they got the writ out before Mr. Bradlaugh voted." "Ah!" replies our churchwarden friend, "but didn't he write the *Fruits of Philosophy*?" "True, he published it," says the first speaker, "but what has that to do with the question of fact we have to decide?" "Everything," rejoins the churchwarden, "everything; don't he want to unsettle Church and State? Don't he want to undermine our morals? Ain't he an Atheist, a Malthusian, everything that's bad? He won't get a verdict from me!"

After being locked up for an hour, the jury send word that they disagree, and are not likely to come to any agreement. Mr. Bradlaugh offers to take the verdict of a majority; Mr. Kydd, for the plaintiff, declines. The judge orders the jury to be locked up again, and retires, leaving the officers of the Court to take the verdict. Three-quarters of an hour later the jury return to Court and give a unanimous verdict for the plaintiff, to the surprise of everybody, and especially of the plaintiff's counsel. The verdict seems scandalous. How on earth twelve sensible men could sit out a three-days' trial, discuss the matter for an hour, send out a word that they are not *likely* to agree, and soon after find unanimously for the plaintiff in *such* an action, is like the peace of God—it passes all understanding. Mr. Bradlaugh was rightly moved for a new trial, the verdict in this being so clearly against the weight of evidence.

Outside in Westminster Hall there was great cheering by a crowd of sympathisers who, as the *Times* sneered, "applauded as lustily as though their champion had won." True; winning or losing makes no difference. Fortune is fickle, prejudice is strong, and juries are often an added tyranny instead of a safeguard to unpopular causes. Victory may not be won, but true men honor and applaud desert. Amid all the disgrace of this unprecedented contest the one thing that shines out star-like is the strength, courage, prudence and dexterity with which Mr. Bradlaugh defends himself against a multitude of unscrupulous foes; and if his friends applaud him as lustily when he loses as when he wins the circumstance is honorable to both. Their applause would greet him on the worse defeat. Let the *Times* sneer. In the magnificent words of George Meredith—how infinitely above the poor weathercock of a *Times*!—" 'Tis the rare lofty heart alone comprehendeth, and is heightened by, terrific splendours of tempest, when cloud meets cloud in skies black as the sepulchre, and Glory sits like a flame on the helm of Ruin."

But the Ruin is not yet, and the prophets of evil may be deceived.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE Rev. Dr. Cuyler gives the following specimen of "the picturesque oratory of the Southern States":—"Bredren, you will find my text in the book of the prophet Exodus"—"Bredren, I cannot read dis blessed book; some here can, so find out my text when you get home. Here it is—In de last terrible day of the Lord ebery tub must stand on its own bottom."

ACID DROPS.

CHRISTIAN CHARITY.—A manufacturing gentleman who recently gave some thousands for religious purposes, including the augmentation of clergymen's stipends, is reported to have a few weeks previously discharged his laborers at fifteen shillings per week and supplanted them by a fresh squad at fourteen shillings. Is this what is commonly called "Robbing Peter to pay Paul?"

OUR CURSING PARSON.—Such is the sobriquet which a Church of England clergyman in one of the cathedral cities is known by amongst his domestics. An artizan doing some repairs recently on his premises was surprised to hear a row in the kitchen, with expressions such as "God d——n your soul," "Who the h——l," etc., interspersed amongst it. Sometime after quiet had been restored he ventured into the kitchen and enquired what was wrong? Cooky replied, "O, its only our cursing parson; when he swears he means no ill, and when he prays he means as little good."

THE Christian Evidence Society has found us out in a lie. At the end of Jonah's song in our last number there was a postscript, "Translated at very great expense from the original at Nineveh." One of the C. E. S. open-air lecturers has gravely pronounced this to be a lie before a large audience. As we value our reputation for veracity, we beg all interested in this question to hold their judgment in suspense until the return of the special messenger we have dispatched to Nineveh for the original document, which he is instructed to beg, borrow, or steal.

A NEW gold-mining company says in its prospectus that "a descriptive account of the gold will be found in the Bible." The man who drew up that prospectus is a 'cute one. If the company makes him chairman there's sure to be good profits, whatever becomes of the shareholders' money.

THE Rev. J. N. Griffin, of Torquay evidently believes in the maxim of "love one another;" in fact, he seems more amorous than pious. His wife prosecuted her servant girl for stealing a gold pin, and Dr. Griffin had to give evidence in court. He admitted having given the girl money, and her solicitor put into court three letters from the amorous parson, headed "My Darling Lucy," one of which contained a promise of £300 on his death. The Bench convicted the girl, but strongly censured Dr. Griffin for "writing her such demoralising letters instead of protecting her from temptation."

JOHN LIGHTFOOT, of Hockley, summoned his wife for using threatening language. He said he was afraid she would do him bodily harm. In his cross-examination he denied having commenced the previous Monday by reading a short chapter from the Bible, offering up a prayer, and then throwing his wife into the street. He, however, admitted having *turned* her into the street after these pious exercises. The Bench thereupon dismissed the case.

MR. W. H. HIGGIN, chairman of the Preston Quarter Sessions, was very impertinent to one of the jurymen, named Samuel Wilson, who refused to take the oath because "Scripture said, 'Thou shalt not swear.'" Mr. Higgin answered, "Then I think we won't take any trouble with you; I will not argue the question with you, nor let you argue it with us. Go into the gallery." This splendid witticism was greeted with "laughter." Samuel Wilson's conscience and Jesus Christ's command are a good joke to Mr. Higgin. Yet we presume he calls himself a Christian, and goes regularly to church.

There was an extraordinary scene at the funeral of Mr. Jabez Bywater, an auctioneer at Coseley, and proprietor of the Great Western Hotel. He had somehow made himself very unpopular, and several thousand people turned out to show disrespect to his remains. At the conclusion of the burial service they sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

JOSEPH COOK has the audacity to say that "monogamy is a distinctively Christian institution." When Christianity was founded, not only the Greeks and Romans, but also the entire barbarian population, were strict monogamists. God's

chosen people were polygamists, and the early Christians, being converted Jews, were very likely polygamists too. The only man forbidden in the Bible to have more than one wife is a Bishop, and no woman is forbidden to have more than one husband. If Joseph Cook has't a Bible to read, we shall be happy to present him with the last copy we wore out.

A NEW Jonah has come to a new Nineveh. An addle-headed young man has made himself a nuisance to the policemen at the Mansion House, and subsequently to the Lord Mayor's Court, by announcing that God had sent him to warn the people of London that he would destroy their city with fire. The Ninevites believed Jonah, and repented in sackcloth and ashes; but the Lord Mayor remanded this modern prophet, in order that inquiries might be made into the state of his noddle.

WE hear that an enterprising wine merchant has rented the cellars of Exeter Hall from the Young Men's Christian Association. Probably these young Christians, who rail so against the liquor traffic, but don't mind sharing in its profits, will, if closely watched, be seen going down stairs to follow St. Paul's advice, and take a little wine for their stomach's sake.

THE Marquis of Lorne has scandalised the Scotch Presbyterians by travelling in a special train from Halifax to Quebec on Sunday. The Marquis says that the train started on Saturday night, and that he took a distinguished Doctor of Divinity with him. But the Presbyterians refuse to be mollified by this, and persist in treating him as a backslider.

WE have heard Christian Evidence lecturers make great capital out of the fact that George Jacob Holyoake contemplated suicide in Gloucester Gaol when he feared that his reason might leave him. See, said they, what a poor thing Secularism is when you have to face trouble with it! We wonder what these persons think of Christian parsons who not only contemplate suicide but actually commit it. Many such cases have happened. The last was that of the Rev. J. Randolph, vicar of Sandershed, near Croydon, who shot himself on a Monday morning after preaching two sermons in his own pulpit the day before. The explanation given is that "he had experienced considerable trouble lately." Surely his trouble wasn't as great as George Jacob Holyoake's in Gloucester Gaol, with a wife in want, a dying child whose face he might not see, and the horrible fear that his reason would give way. Yet Mr. Holyoake did *not* commit suicide while the Rev. J. Randolph *did*.

CHARLES J. GUTEAU, the infamous scoundrel who shot President Garfield, was an ostentatious Christian. He was admitted a member of the Plymouth Church in 1857, and remained such until 1859, when he left and joined the Calvary Baptist Church in New York. He used to speak at the Friday evening meetings. He was so puffed up with conceit that he determined to put Ingersoll down. He hired a hall in Chicago to lecture against him, and the next morning decamped without paying for the rent and bills. He spends much of his time in prison reading the Bible.

GENERAL DAHLGREN has been lecturing in the States against Colonel Ingersoll. At the close of his Christian discourse he said, "There should be condign punishment for such men as he on earth and in eternity. All men should bear a hand, and women with their garter strings should lash him through the world." General Dahlgren is a brother of the late Admiral Dahlgren, who invented a gun for Christians to blow each other's brains out with.

THE *Scotsman* publishes a big advertisement of the Religious Tract Society, calling on Christians to set apart July 23rd as a day of humiliation and prayer. Many sins are enumerated before a long list of big nobbs who patronise the movement. Sir John Kennaway will return a "Thanksgiving to God for mercies to the nation" in keeping Bradlaugh out of Parliament, according to the earnest prayer of Exeter Hall. Henry Varley will do a little "humiliation" for Pride; Samuel Morley for Unbelief; and Lord Polwarth for Impurity. Of course this is all vicarious.

THE Rev. Charles Marshall, rector of Harpurhey, Manchester, has published a sermon on "Oaths: Scriptural, Sacred and Serviceable," at the special request of the local Orangemen. He quotes nearly every passage of Scripture on the subject except the emphatic "Swear not at all." He evidently thinks Jesus Christ of small account beside Moses, Paul and Jeremiah. Mr. Marshall says that "truly religious persons are never found in seditions." Has he forgotten Oliver Cromwell? He says that "the sacredness of the oath is a pillar of society." Then society must be very shaky, for Lord Coleridge tells us that perjury prevails in all our courts. He protests against "an alteration of the law" to admit Atheists to Parliament. No such alteration is needed, for an Atheist can enter Parliament now, as everybody knows except rabid Orangemen; and, as a matter of fact, one member of the present House of Commons openly declared himself an Atheist in the debate on the Burials Bill, while several others are well known to be so. Mr. Marshall is all at sea on the question. His ignorance of law, his narrow bigotry, and his fulsome patronage of the Almighty, form a very disgusting compound.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* is a little superfine in its Liberalism. It deprecates Mr. Bradlaugh's intention to go to the House of Commons on August 3rd and claim his seat. And on what ground? Because, forsooth, the House of Commons is not acting illegally but unconstitutionally. Yet it admits that Mr. Bradlaugh has "a lawful claim to his seat." This is a *reductio ad absurdum*. Mr. Bradlaugh cannot have a legal right to his seat, and the House of Commons at the same time have a legal right to exclude him. The fact is the House, in shutting Mr. Bradlaugh out by physical force, does act illegally, but owing to a flaw in in our "glorious constitution" there is no tribunal before which it can be summoned.

A MAN out in Canada is building an Ark in preparation for another Flood. His neighbors laugh at him, but he reminds them that Noah's neighbors laughed at him until they saw the cataracts and waterspouts.

A PARSON FACTORY.

THEY have, in Massachusetts, at a place called Andover, a kind of minister factory, where each professor takes an oath once in five years—that time being considered the life of an oath—that he has not, during the last five years, and will not, during the next five years, intellectually advance. There is probably no oath they could easier keep. Probably, since the foundation stone of that institution was laid there has not been a single case of perjury. The old creed is still taught. They still insist that God is infinitely wise, powerful, and good, and that all men are totally depraved. They insist that the best man God ever made deserved to be damned the moment he was finished. Andover puts its brand on every minister it turns out, the same as Sheffield and Birmingham brand their wares, and all who see the brand know exactly what the minister believes, the books he has read, the arguments he relies on, and just what he intellectually is. They know just what he can be depended on to preach, and that he will continue to shrink and shrivel, and grow solemnly stupid day by day until he reaches the Andover of the grave and becomes truly orthodox for ever.—*Ingersoll*.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

TO the Atheist as to the Theist, indeed to all blessed with vision, Nature is an ever new wonder of majesty and beauty. Sun, moon, and stars, earth, air, and sky, endure while the generations of men pass and perish; but every new generation is warmed, lighted, nurtured and gladdened by them with most sovereign and perfect impartiality. The loveliness and infinite majesty of Nature speak to all men, of all ages, climes and creeds. Not in her inanimate beauty do we find fatal objections to the doctrine of a wise and bountiful power which overrules her, but rather in the multiplied horrors, woes, and pangs of sentient life. When all actual and recorded misery is effaced, when no intolerable grief corrodes and no immedicable despair poisons life, when the tears of anguish are assuaged, when crime and vice are unknown and unremembered, and evil lusts are consumed in the fire of holiness; then, and then only, could we admit that a wise and righteous omnipotence rules the universal destinies. Until then we cannot recognise the Fatherhood of God, but must find shelter and comfort in the more efficacious doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man.

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

L. ADAMS.—Mr. Foote's new pamphlets, "Death's Test" and "Missions to the Heathen," have been unavoidably delayed in consequence of the heavy inroads made on his time by invitations to speak at meetings on Mr. Bradlaugh's case. They will be ready soon. See advertisement.

RICHMOND SCHOOLMASTER.—Anonymous letters usually go in the waste-paper basket; but for once we condescend to notice your effusion. We do not pretend to be handsome, that quality being monopolised by parsons and true believers; but your reference to our "broad, repulsive, Atheistic features" goes just a trifle too far. When you next attend any meeting we address have the goodness to say this to our face; and when you write another impertinent letter have the courage to sign it with your name. In conclusion we beg to tell you that for a schoolmaster you write abominable English. Let us know the school you teach in so that we may advertise your inefficiency.

J. MORRIS.—Thanks for the cuttings.

R. WALLACE.—By all means invite the Christian Evidence Society to send one of its lecturers to your hall. Secular societies all over the country should send similar invitations. If the Christian Evidence Society declines, let us know, and we will expose its pretensions in that respect.

A. E.—We regret we cannot accept. We are flooded with verse. Only editors know how many poets there are.

W. B. C.—Thanks for the stories.

G. T.—Many thanks. You must pardon our not writing. We have very little time for private correspondence.

MR. FOOTE'S debate with the Rev. Mr. Howard takes place at Stockton-on-Tees, in the Temperance Hall, on Monday and Tuesday, August 29th and 30th.

A READER.—The "Bible Romances" are approved by others too, if we may judge by the very large sale. The First Series of twelve numbers is now bound up handsomely for a Shilling. A Second Series of twelve will complete the work.

W. NELSON.—We shall always be glad to hear from you. Thanks for your compliments and good wishes.

C. D.—Such scraps are always welcome. We wish all our readers would send us any serviceable paragraphs they may come across.

J. A.—We really cannot find time to answer all the lies of the Christian Evidence Society's lecturers. They live by defamation, and personality is all their argument.

W. C. G. and J. S.—Having verse enough in stock for about twelve months, we are obliged to decline further contributions until our stock is exhausted.

C. WAHAB.—You are mistaken. Mr. Foote is not the person you recollect.

A. FORRESTER.—If the Glasgow members of the Christian Evidence Society do pay or beg a pound each we shall be greatly surprised. We did not notice the statement in the Report.

S. J. C.—The Sermon is very amusing but very long. However, we thank you for it, and shall try to use it.

F. E. HIGGINS.—Shall appear; perhaps in our next number. Our circulation is very good, and as you will see elsewhere the *Freethinker* will be issued weekly in September.

W. ALLER.—Mr. Foote's "Death Test," which will be ready shortly, will supply what you require. Woolwich certainly ought, as you say, to be roused; but there seems great difficulty in obtaining a hall. Like all drunken garrison towns, Woolwich is very pious, and the charitable Christians of the town do their worst to prevent any hall being let to Freethinkers. Something, however, may be done during the winter.

W. S. PALMER.—The "awful mistake" of the missionary who translated "God is love" into Madagascar as "God is stinking fish" was published on the authority of a brother Missionary, whose speech was reported in the *Christian World*.

W. HARRISON.—Mr. Bradlaugh's brother is not worth troubling about. Nobody would notice him if he did not bear a name which Mr. Bradlaugh has made almost a household word.

W. S. R.—Thanks for the cutting.

F. GIBSON.—The story is hardly profane enough. We prefer something a little more highly seasoned. Several of Ingersoll's lectures are published by the Freethought Publishing Company, bound in cloth at 1s. 6d.

W. E. K.—Thanks.

J. R. WALLER.—We shall be glad to receive the papers and anecdotes. Like yourself, several friends are taking extra copies for distribution. Our circulation could not be better promoted.

A. FISHER.—You say the *Freethinker* is "invaluable" but a little "too frivolous." Well, we cannot suit everybody's taste. We can only do our best. Perhaps it would be well to have a special column "For Dull Readers," but our space is limited. Of course we take your criticism in good part, as we hope you take ours.

TO OUR READERS.

THE wonderful success of the *Freethinker* warrants us in responding to the numerous appeals of our readers to bring it out weekly. Our next number will be the last monthly

one. The *Freethinker* will be published every week after the first of September. During the interim we trust that all our friends will do their best to advertise it and to promote its sale, so that we may begin our new departure under the most favorable auspices.

SUGAR PLUMS.

A SUNDAY LECTURE SOCIETY has been formed at Birmingham "to promote the social, moral, and intellectual well-being of the community at large," on the same lines as were pursued by the conductors of the Sunday meetings in the Town Hall. Councillor Martineau is connected with the society, and it will doubtless do very good work. We hope it won't be so horribly afraid of Freethought as some other Sunday Lecture Societies have been.

ACCORDING to the *Standard* correspondent "one of the earliest callers at President Garfield's bedside was Colonel Ingersoll, the eloquent Materialist."

It is reported that Colonel Ingersoll has made a lucky mining investment and is a rich man. We hope the report is true.

THE New York *Truthseeker* maintains its high character. Its editor, Mr. D. M. Bennett, starts on his trip round the world in September, in time to attend the International Conference in London.

MR. BRADLAUGH has called a mass meeting for Tuesday evening, August 2nd, in Trafalgar Square. Every Freethinker in London should attend. We hope to see a hundred thousand people there. The next day Mr. Bradlaugh goes to Stephen's to claim his seat.

In the House of Lords recently the Earl of Onslow called attention to a census of the City of London churches taken on the morning of Sunday, 1st May last. From this it appeared that at 57 churches within an area of one square mile, with, according to the Ordnance Map, 51,055 sittings, and, according to the "Clerical Directory," an annual income of £40,266, the total number of persons present was 6,731, of whom 571 were officials and their families, 706 choristers (mostly paid), 227 claimants for alms, and 1,374 school children, leaving a general ordinary congregation, 3,853, or less than 66 attendants at each church. The fact that a census was to be taken must have been well known for so formidable a following of City church attendants to have been mustered out of so scanty a population.

THE PERSONAL FAILURE OF CHRIST.

It is currently understood and believed by the Christian world that the personal ministry of Christ was pre-eminently successful. Indeed, if we may believe the assertions of Christian disputants his success was simply supernatural. If, however, we take the Gospels as authorities in the matter, we cannot escape the conclusion that his mission was a failure of the most complete description. His want of success was all the greater because his pretensions and his alleged qualifications were superior to those of religious reformers generally. That an ordinary man should fail in his efforts to reform his age is nothing wonderful. But that one who came into the world by a miracle, at whose exit therefrom "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent," and whose whole public ministry was accompanied by miracles of a most convincing kind, should fail in the very purpose for which he came, is in itself nothing short of a miracle. It was God against man—God's wisdom opposed to man's reason—and puny man triumphed. God himself came to save man, but man would not be saved. His own countrymen spurned, maltreated, and finally subjected him to a shameful and agonising death. And yet we are told that his mission was a success!

But his failure becomes even more apparent when we remember that not only did he fail to win his countrymen over to his side, but that he did not even command the credence of his own friends. We nowhere read that his father or mother accepted his messianic pretensions, but we do read that his kindred thought him "beside himself," and that his brothers did not believe on him. Could there be failure more complete than this?

But this is not all. Even the very men who had been his constant companions throughout his public life, to whom he had manifested his powers and revealed his doctrines more than to all others, even these men, at the first appearance of danger, "all forsook him and fled." Now supposing Christ to have been an ordinary being, such conduct is perfectly intelligible; but on the supposition that he was God and man combined, and the doer of the mighty works recorded in the Gospels, the desertion of the disciples at the critical moment is positively inexplicable.

Perhaps the utter weakness of what Christ personally achieved has never been more vividly portrayed than by Canon Farrar, who towards the close of his second volume thus writes: "At the moment when Christ died, nothing could have seemed more abjectly weak, more pitifully hopeless, more absolutely doomed to scorn and extinction and despair than the Church which he had founded. It numbered but a handful of weak followers, of whom the boldest had denied his Lord with blasphemy, and the most devoted had forsaken him and fled. They were poor, they were ignorant, they were hopeless. They could not claim a single synagogue or a single sword."—"Life of Christ," II., p. 425.)

From such an admission by a leading defender of the orthodox creed it is clear that, notwithstanding Christ's wondrous birth, his personal miracles, and the stupendous events at his death, the result of his best efforts was unquestionable failure. Rejected by his kindred, his friends, his countrymen, and positively unknown to the Gentile world beyond his immediate sphere, Christ seems to stand almost alone in the thoroughness of his failure. Compared with the success attained by a mere man such as Buddha, Christ's individual achievement was practically beneath notice.

It must not, however, be concealed that we more than once read in the Gospels that "many" believed on him in certain places, and also that he was not without the favor of a few rather influential persons. But the adherence of these last seems to have been purely nominal, while the utter worthlessness of the belief of the "many" is shown in the fact admitted in the Acts, that after Christ's death the number of the disciples was "about an hundred and twenty." Christian commentators see the absurdity involved in this admission, and piously endeavor to multiply the number, but without success.

Now fancy a God suffering so much to achieve so little! Coming, as he expressly said, to the Jewish nation, we find him deliberately rejected by that people; coming to bless them, he has inflicted upon them the cruel and bitter curse of the Christian rack and stake. While if it be said he came to save all alike, his failure is even more clearly demonstrated by the admitted fact that all are *not* saved, and that at the present day there are more disciples of the Devil than of the God who came expressly to snatch mankind from his diabolic thralldom. We have it on the testimony of Christ himself that when he came the right road was narrow and the wrong road broad. As it was then, so it is now. Despite the mission, the teaching, the miracles, the sufferings, and the death of Christ, the right road is still the "narrow" one, and the travellers thereon are still "few." The road to hell is still "broad," and they who seek it are still "many." If any alteration has taken place through Christ's efforts, it is rather that the narrow way has become narrower and its travellers fewer; while the broad road has widened to admit the greater concourse of the world's peoples who seem so willing and even eager to tread its well-beaten track. In this is manifest the failure of Christ's efforts to save the world. J. E. G.

GODS.—A SONNET.

By John Rowell Walker, F.R.H.S., Author of "Unstrung Links," "Wayside Flowers," etc.

GREAT vultures of an unenlightened time;
 Grim Fear's grim offspring, superstition-fed,
 Whose wide dominions scheming priests have spread
 By every lying art and grasping crime!
 Yours all has been, the best of every clime,
 While your pale victims, prest to bitter death,
 Resigned you all when they resigned their breath
 To glut your maw, for hopes they deemed sublime.
 But through the rolling years a light has come,
 Godism is dying, Jupiter has fled,
 Jove, Mars, Pan, Bacchus, crowds of gods are dead,
 Jehovah, Buddha, Jesus near their doom;
 So sweeps the purging wave from sea to sea,
 Till gods are gone and men shall all be free.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S FREETHOUGHT
 OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.

LECTURERS FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1881.

STATION AND TIME.	Chairman	7	14	21	28
MIDLAND ARCHES, ...11.15	Leekey	Forder	Haslam	Foote	Excursion
CLERKENWELL GREEN 11.15	Hilditch	Foote	Grout	Norrish	Haslam
VICTORIA PARK 3.30	Jones	Foote	Thurlow	Ramsey	Moss
GIBRALTAR WALK, ...11.15	Gay	Norrish	Foote	Moss	Grout
MILE END ROAD,11.15	Reeve	Moss	Thurlow	Ramsey	Moss
STREATHAM COMMON, 11.15	---	Haslam	Moss	Thurlow	Ramsey
BALHAM, 7.0	---	Haslam	Moss	Thurlow	Ramsey

J. WILLIAMSON, Secretary,
 26, CLOUDSLEY ROAD, ISLINGTON, N.

MR. FOOTE AND THE REV. J. McCANN.

THE following correspondence needs no explanation.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I promised after my last lecture at the Hall of Science to give you an evening to yourself, so that you might have a better opportunity of replying to what I had said than was possible at that time. This discussion I looked forward to with pleasure, as I am always glad to meet an opponent whose intellect and whose courtesy command respect. That respect I felt for you when I offered you the evening. I very much regret to say, however, that I cannot feel it any longer, for since then I have read the paper which you edit, and which you call the *Freethinker*. I feel very strongly that no Christian who has the smallest reverence for his creed, can meet the editor of that paper in public debate. Pardon me if I do not enter into detail, as to do so would be both useless and very painful, to me at least. When I first saw your publication I was glad you had adopted that style of writing, as I feel it must injure your own cause, but better thoughts have prevailed, and I now regret that gain to us should be purchased at so great a sacrifice of yourself. I have, however, no wish to avoid discussion of my lecture, and shall defend it in writing in any paper you name other than the *Freethinker*, or as a separate pamphlet, on which should there be any profit you may consider it your own. State your own terms of correspondence, and doubtless I shall be able to accept them.—Yours, etc.,
 JAS. McCANN.

Norwood, 25th July, 1881.

9, South Crescent, Bedford Square,
 London, W.C., July 26th, 1881.

SIR,—Your abrupt letter of yesterday's date has reached me late this evening. I hasten to reply in order that the Secular public, at least, may at once judge between us. As your letter is addressed to the Editor of the *Freethinker*, and not to Mr. Foote, you cannot reasonably object to its publication.

Allow me to say that your conduct has been rather shabby. Early in March at the Hall of Science you publicly promised to debate with me, and privately you promised me an early letter as to the date and other arrangements. I waited for several weeks, and then wrote to refresh your memory. Some weeks later you replied from Brighton, promising a definite answer on your return to town. Another long silence was broken by your letter of June 20th, in which you suggested a debate for one night only, any more elaborate discussion to be postponed. I immediately replied that I saw little use in one night's debate, suggested a lengthier discussion in September, and inquired how the expenses were to be met if I agreed to your stipulation that the admission should be *free*. After another long silence your answer comes on the 26th of July. You have trifled with me, and I seriously doubt your intention of ever debating with me at all.

It is very sad to forfeit your respect, but I shall doubtless survive the blow. When you wrote on June 20th two numbers of the *Freethinker* had already appeared; yet your "respect" was not impaired, and your tone was cordial and friendly. I suspect that as a lecturer for the Christian Evidence Society you resent what I have written of it in my paper. Yet every word in those articles is true. I challenge contradiction. And permit me to add that it is not altogether honorable on your part to give a tacit sanction to the libellous falsehoods of the unscrupulous underlings of your Society, as to which you can no longer plead ignorance.

Your indignation is hardly consistent. You "cannot meet the Editor of the *Freethinker* in public debate," but you are quite willing to hold a written discussion with him. Where is the essential difference? It seems that your want of "respect" does not determine you to avoid debating with me altogether, but only to avoid debating with me on the platform. You share this dislike of meeting a Secular lecturer in oral discussion with most of your fellow lecturers; and I cannot help thinking that *prudence* has more than want of "respect" to do with this compromise.

The Editor of the *Freethinker*, however degraded, is not abject enough to accept your proposal concerning "a separate pamphlet." You insult him by asking him to participate in an enterprise in which he would take all the profits while you shared any loss. If you have no respect for him, you might have some for yourself.

I have no time for written discussion in any other paper than my own, so that idea must be relinquished. But I have time for an oral discussion on the platform, and I ask you to redeem your public pledge. If your only reason for breaking it is that I am Editor of the *Freethinker*, the Secular party will not consider it a valid one; and taking into account the fact that you are willing to hold a written discussion with me, although I am Editor of the *Freethinker*, they are likely to put a very unpleasant construction on your attitude.—Yours,
 G. W. FOOTE.

Any further correspondence on this subject will be published in the next number of the *Freethinker*.

THE STORY OF NEBUCHADONAZAR.

I.

ONCE on a time there lived a mighty king
Whose mighty name was Nebuchadonazar;
A sort of wooden empty-headed thing,
Much as the generality of those are
Who reign by sufferance and the grovelling
Of knaves and parasites. The Court composer—
Romancist, Laureat, or Improvisatore,
Out of these chips concocts the following story:

II.

This despot took into his royal nob
To build a monstrous image all of gold,
Something immense, intense, a sort of job
To flabbergast his people young and old;
And then he swore by Dagon that the mob
(Grown somewhat malapert and overbold)
Should worship it or else be on the rack put
To sound of hautboy, psaltery, and sackbut.

III.

Therewith a score of varlets scour'd the town
And advertised for artists of all hues.
A drove soon came—Smith, Tomkins, Muggins, Brown,
Some wearing crownless hats, some toeless shoes.
Genius is ironhearted, and frowns down
Her ragged offsprings' too aspiring views:
Alas! that brains, the greatest boon of heaven,
To flatter fools for lucre should be driven.

IV.

The image rose; a huge mis-shapen mass,
Crook-limb'd, stiff-jointed, looming high in air;
Albeit it seemed to please the royal ass,
Who sought therewith to galvanise and scare
The swarming legions of the servile class,
'Too spiritless to scorn, too mean to dare;
And so they all, to grace my lord the king,
Declared his toy a "nobby sort of thing."

V.

And now forthwent a royal proclamation,
Commanding that the lieges all should pay
This brazen hobby praise and adoration
At wake of morn and at the close of day;
And all obedient to this intimation
Down drop'd upon their marrowbones to pray,
Except three disaffected scurvy Jews
Who did the royal mandamus refuse.

VI.

That night two satraps watch'd the image throw
Long shadows on the plain: beyond them fell
The Orient moonlight. Safely scon'd, these two
Look'd keenly out, and presently befel
This scene—'twas no illusion—it was true
As truth itself—the watchman knew 'em well,
Three Jewish knaves, their hinders in despite
Turn'd to the image in the broad moonlight.

VII.

The satraps from their covert deftly crept,
One one side, 'tother 'tother, till they came
In easy reach, and then at once they leapt
Upon the quarry. Thus their little game
Achieved, away unto the king, who kept
That night late wassail. He, with eyes aflame,
Roar'd out, "You knaves! How are ye call'd you
three?"
"I'm Shadrack"—"Meshack"—"Abendizzy, me."

VIII.

"Well then, ye dogs, heed well what I shall say;
I've had this image built for your salvation,
And 'tis my will that every soul shall pay
Unto it the profoundest adoration.
'Tis no great sacrifice; and, by the way,
Remember, 'tis unburden'd with taxation.
Back then, ye rogues, and let your Jewish faces
Make some amends, and in the self-same places."

IX.

To him the trio: "Pig and mighty king,
Ve cannot vershup sticksh and stocksh and stones;
Ve cannot pend to thish pig, prassy thing,
Your majesty has puilt; ve only owns
Von cot, a Hebrew cot, to whom we pring
Our shacrifices on our marrowpones;
Ve opes your majesty won't be too hard on
Our race, and grant us privilege and pardon."

X.

Upleapt the King, with pluck of royal beard:
"Good gracious! what is this you tell me—what!
Oh, blazes! three old-clothes men have demurred
To do our bidding! Damn it! Oh, od rot!
Tie 'em together—not another word—
And, meanwhile, make our furnace hot—red hot!
And when ye've made a raging, blazing fire,
As high as ye can make it, make it higher."

XI.

"Heap fiercest fuel: faggots, logs of pine,
Tar barrels, ambergris, and bags of tow;
Pitch, candle, any gris, and turpentine;
Get everything that's fast and nothing slow;
Tie up these Hebrews with a hank of twine,
And skewer them fast as herrings in a row;
Then drag them to the furnace in a minute,
And where it rages hottest pitch them in it!"

XII.

Assyria's hosts pour out to see the fun;
A surging crowd—peers, princes, squire, and dame—
Shoulder each other, thrusting, crushing; some
From dizzy height suspended watch the game;
When lo! a miracle—the lookers on
Fall back aghast before the searing flame,
Observing where it roars and flames the most
The Israelites do neither singe nor roast.

XIII.

Had all the tongues of fire been fragrant flowers,
The glowing beds of cinders banks of thyme,
The red hot sparkles those translucent showers
Which greet us when the spring is in its prime;
Nay, had the furnace been sweet garden bowers,
Odorous with lads' love, lavender and lime,
It had not been more pleasantly betrod
By these three Israelitish men of God.

XIV.

Nebuchaduezzar, the king, knelt down to pray,
Both he and all his court. It was amazing
The change. The mob pull'd down that very day
The heathen scare-crow which they'd all been praising.
The king went sad and silently away,
And, strolling through the meadows, took to grazing;
Grew melancholy, querulous and thin,
And died in doing penance for his sin.

PATROCLUS.

PROFANE JOKES.

"SANDY, what is the state of religion in your town?" "Bad, sir; very bad! There are no Christians except Davie and myself, and I have my doubts about Davie."

LITTLE JOE went to the back yard fence to see "the man" plow. He soon returned. His mother says: "The day is so warm you did not enjoy seeing the man plow, did you?" Without heeding the question, the little six-year-old says: "Mother, did God make that man's horses?" "Yes, my son." "Well, he ought to be ashamed of the job, for they are the poorest rack o' bones I ever seed." "My dear boy. God is not to blame for their looks. The man does not feed and care for them as he ought." After a minute's study, he says: "Mother, did God make the man?" "Certainly, my child." "Well, he ought to be shameder still, for he ought to have made him with better sense."

A MAN in passing a country graveyard saw the sexton digging a grave, and inquired, "Who's dead?"—Sexton: "Old Squire Bumblebee."—Mau: "What complaint?"—Sexton without looking up: "No complaint, everybody's satisfied."

A LAWYER, in referring to some prisoners, addresses the jury as follows: "I tell you, their knees shook as shook the knees of Belshazzar, when Paul said unto him, 'Thou art the man.'" And an advocate, blushing at the conduct of his opponent's client, shouted in open court: "Tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Jerusalem."

A RANTING parson once made the following request: "All those who wish to go to heaven stand up." All immediately complied except an old sailor, whereupon the parson said, "My good sailor do you not wish to go?" "Yes," replied the tar, "but not with such a crew you have here."

"In what condition was the patriarch Job at the end of his life?" asked a Brooklyn Sunday-school teacher of a quiet-looking boy at the foot of the class. "Dead," answered the quiet-looking boy. From this answer no appeal was taken.

THE Count de Villa Medina, being at church one day, and finding there a Monk who begged for the souls in purgatory, he gave him a piece of gold. "Ah! my lord," said the good father, "you have now delivered a soul." The Count threw on the plate another piece. "Here is another soul delivered," said the Monk. "Are you positive of it?" replied the Count. "Yes, my lord," replied the monk, "I am certain they are now in heaven." "Then," said the Count, "I'll take back my money, for it signifies nothing to you now, seeing the souls are already got to heaven; there can be no danger of their returning again to purgatory." And he immediately gave the pieces to the poor that were standing by.

AN amusing anecdote is told of a little four-year-old child who was saying her prayers at her mother's knee, and having concluded as usual, "Bless papa, mamma, grandpapa, and grand-mammas, uncles, aunts," etc., she said, "Oh, mammy, dear, I do wish these people would pray for themselves, for I am so tired of praying for them!"

UNFOUNDED RUMORS.

Our immaculate press—to whom railway accidents, explosions, murders, and startling divorce cases, are merciful interpositions of divine providence, and wars special god-sends—are getting into jubilant twitter at the prospect of a shindy in the House of Commons, and are further elated by the eventual prospect of Mr. Bradlaugh's bankruptcy. They guess that when the junior M.P. for Northampton has once put down his foot, the united power of *Nisi Prius* judges, Queen, Lords, Commons, gods, and the devil's grandmother, will not make him budge. But it is a pity their excitement should effervesce in lies. There is absolutely no foundation for the report that the Duke of Cambridge has ordered a heavy reinforcement of troops to be massed at Knightsbridge on August the 3rd, and the surmise that Mrs. General Booth and Butcher Varley will lead detachments of the Salvation Army to Westminster is slightly premature. Archbishop Tait is *not* drawing up a form of special prayer for the bankruptcy of all heretics, nor have the bishops threatened to resign their seats in the House of Lords in the event of Mr. Gladstone bringing on the Parliamentary Oaths Bill. The Serjeant-at-Arms indignantly repudiates the malignant assertion that he is fortifying himself for a struggle on the 3rd by the constant use of dumb-bells. The noble captain is simply taking tonics with a view to going on the heather by the 12th. Mr. Bradlaugh has not yet taken measures to file a petition in the Court of Bankruptcy, and a firm tone prevails on the Stock Exchange. Our fourth estate tempts us to say deliberately what good King David said in his haste, "All men are liars."

OPEN-AIR WORK.

DURING the past month work has gone on bravely at all our stations. In addition to the regular staff of lecturers, we have had addresses by Mr. G. W. Foote and Mr. J. Symes, both of whom had enormous audiences. The order maintained has been of the best, and the enthusiasm very great. At all the stations resolutions have been passed, condemning the illegal action of the majority of the House in excluding a duly-elected member from his seat. On one Sunday the Christian Evidence representative at Gibraltar Walk put a resolution to the meeting declaring Mr. Bradlaugh to be unfit to sit in the House; to his astonishment, the audience voted a direct negative. Everywhere the Christian Evidence advocates have pursued the same tactics—namely, to heap the foulest abuse on Mr. Bradlaugh and to maintain a course of steady lying slander of all prominent Freethinkers, whenever they speak. The fact that this is done by all their speakers in the open-air at all their stations, and on every occasion, shows that this must be the result of an order to that effect.

We have now established two new stations in South-West London: Streatham Common (11.15 a.m.) and Balham (7 p.m.) The Christian Evidence Society had the former place to themselves early in the summer and abused us most foully; but since we have had lectures there we have gained much sympathy from the inhabitants; and on Sunday, the 17th, the Christian lecturer (Mr. Batchelor) was left without a solitary listener, whilst Mr. Ramsey, who was giving a few samples of Gospel harmony, had a large and enthusiastic audience.

Friends in the neighborhood should communicate with Mr. R. Gollop, 52, Zennor Road, Balham, in order to form a properly-constituted branch, as we can do so much more when well organised than when only acting individually.

Literature sold well everywhere, and the season promises to be one of the best we ever had.

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Printed by E. W. WHITILE, 170, St. John Street, Clerkenwell, E.C.; and published by THE FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, 28, Stonecutter Street, E.C.