

THE FREETHINKER.

REGISTERED FOR]

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.



“I DO SET MY BOW IN THE CLOUD.”—Genesis ix., 13.

A NEW THEORY OF THE GOSPEL MIRACLES.

VARIOUS theories have been put forward to account for the miraculous element introduced by the Christian Evangelists. The earliest seems to have been that of the Pharisees that Jesus cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. This may have had a plausible look in a devil-believing age. Jesus is said to have met the charge by a *tu quoque*. “If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?” (Matt. xii., 27.) That is, both did the same tricks; so neither converted the other. When Jesus sent the devils into the swine the hogicide did not appear to the gardarene owners as a manifestation of deity, and it is very naturally said “they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.” (Matt. viii., 34.) To a people who thought that John the Baptist was Elijah, and that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, trifling miracles could neither astonish nor convince, so the Jews to this day reject Jesus as Christ without troubling to question the stories related of him. Some of the Cabalist Jews perceiving how Jesus “rounded” on them in regard to Beelzebub, suggested that Jesus had by fraud penetrated the holy of holies and stolen the Tetragrammaton or sacred name which invested the possessor with occult powers. According to Origen, Celsus supposed that the Nazarene had learnt conjuring in Egypt. But, as the world knows to its cost, the theory which got the upperhand was that Jesus was God and so, as the author of nature, did just what he liked with his own. That is to say, the unchanging broke his own laws. It was but a slight advance towards rationalism when the German neologians suggested that the miracles were founded on natural phenomena. Thus the tempest happened to still when Jesus said “Peace.” Lazarus came out of a trance, and the Transfiguration was explained by a lunar rainbow being at the back of Jesus on a dark night. The true rationalists soon advanced beyond this by examining the external evidence of the narratives, with the result of breaking down all

supposition of there being contemporary records; and by comparing and dissecting the narratives themselves, with the result of showing them to be contradictory and untrustworthy on the commonest matters of fact; and thus the ground was cleared for new theories. One of the ablest of these is that put forward by Mr. J. Wright in the *Theological Review* for January, 1875. He shows that a large proportion of the miracles were simply cases of healing, and suggests that the kind words and benign treatment of the Great Physician had some real influence on the simple faith of his followers, which gave rise to the more extended reports. But even this theory scarcely covers the whole of the ground. I have of course only disparaged previous theories with a view to making room for my own. It can be stated in a few words. The gospel miracles are merely the “padding” of narratives written for purposes of edification. Every one knows that the bulk of all that goes under the name of “literature” consists of what is technically termed *padding*; matter inserted to illustrate, enliven, or, it may be, simply to extend the theme. Thus I intend to introduce an anecdote about some trap doors as padding to my present paper. Literary critics soon learn to detect and skip the padding in order to get at the gist of the matter. Now, people are never so apt to indulge in whatshallwecallems, as when they have to enliven a story. Your country editor, gravelled for matter, scratches his head, and out comes and in goes, a monster turnip, a Welsh centenarian, or a seven-legged cow on a farm in Ross-shire. Your revivalist when the old story begins to pall on his hearers, and he had well worked out the repetition of his stock texts, can always fall back with confidence on some story of a converted Atheist, or the horrors of an infidel deathbed.

In olden times it was the custom to enliven up all tales with stories of wonders. Even grave historians like Herodotus and Livy *pad* their narratives with prodigies. Romance writers like Apuleius, who wrote nearly at the same time as the evangelists, are full of them.

It may be objected against my *padding* theory that the gospels are nearly all padding, that with the miraculous element eliminated the residuum will be something like the play of Hamlet with the part of the Prince of Denmark omitted. But I beg to observe that, to the critic, bulk counts for nothing. He often discerns far more real matter in a very short story than in most three-volume novels. And I have the intelligence even of Christendom with me in saying that this residuum was the essential object of the writers, though what that residuum is, it is not my present purpose to determine.

I confess the padding was slightly overdone, but plead in extenuation that the writer lived in primitive times. The days of artistic romance-writing were not yet. And there is a fascination in working out a good thing in writing which is very tempting to beginners. Even old hands if they get a hobby will ride it to death. A friend of mine, well known in the North, was contributing a serial to the *Glasgow Meekly Wail*, and the story flagging a little, it was suggested that he should enliven it up with a trap door, or so. Whereupon the very next number of the *Meekly Wail* contained three trap doors; and, before the story was finished, eight more were introduced. Eleven trap doors in all from one suggestion.

The evangelists were evidently novices in their heart, and so overdid the thing. If they lived in these days they would doubtless follow the times, and, instead of enlivening their story with miracles, put in a few bigamies and a forgery or so. We respect the old miracle plays because we know that from their crude beginnings our glorious dramatic literature was evolved; and we need not unduly disparage the miracle stories of old, because superseded by Miss Braddon and the penny Scott.

LUCIANUS.



DOLET,
THE FREETHOUGHT MARTYR.

VII.

(Concluded from p. 99.)

DOLET'S character has already been largely described in the course of this biographical sketch. But a few more touches may be added. His disposition was somewhat proud and turbulent, liable to make enemies, and not apt to conciliate them. Yet his quarrels do not seem to have been personal, and we must make great allowance for his vehement language. The age was not remarkable for urbanity in discussion, and even a century later we see by Milton's invective against Salmacius that literary manners had not much improved. Longfellow has humorously hit off this temper in a well known passage :—

Seraphic Doctor—The Lord have mercy on your position,
You wretched, wrangling culler of herbs!
Cherubic Doctor—May he send your soul to eternal perdition,
For your treatise on the irregular verbs!

Dolet must not be made responsible for the common failing of his time. If he had as Mr. Christie alleges, "serious faults of temper and temperament," he nevertheless "excited the affection, the admiration, and the respect, and obtained at least for a time the friendship of every man of learning and virtue with whom he came into personal contact." He never penned an unkind word of any man who had once been his friend, and we have to learn the story of his quarrels with intimates from other sources than his own writings. Mr. Christie confesses that the exalted estimate of Dolet's character, with which he began his researches, has been lowered in their progress; and he frankly states his opinion that the great printer had faults of head, and perhaps some of heart, which contributed to his misfortunes. But who is perfect? It is surely enough that "with all these drawbacks he remains a man possessed of many most admirable qualities, of high talent, an intense desire after knowledge for himself, and an equally intense desire of communicating it to others, an intense sympathy with every kind of intellectual progress, and an intense hatred of ignorance, bigotry, superstition and priestcraft."

We should judge Dolet, says Mr. Christie, as a scholar and a man of letters. And he continues :—

"If we cannot place him among the two or three foremost names of his contemporaries, he is certainly entitled to a high position. . . . His Commentaries were one of the most important contributions to Latin scholarship which France had as yet given. His 'Formulæ,' his criticisms on Terence, and his translations, are all among the most meritorious works of their kind. . . . Nor must his services to the French language be forgotten. He was one of the few scholars of the day who had formed a true conception of its importance, and of the method of treating it scientifically. His grammatical tracts and his translations afford us proofs of this, and add to the many other indications of what he might and probably would have done had a longer life been allowed to him. For in judging of his talents and abilities we must not forget that he had only attained the age of thirty-seven years at his death, and that the last four years of his life were almost wholly passed in prison."

Mr. Christie points out something beyond and above all this. He notices that both in his Latin and in his French verse Dolet "rises to a height of pathos, vigor, and imaginative power rarely, if ever, to be found among the poets of the day, and which certainly induce us to believe that, had he devoted to French verse the labor and pains which he gave to elaborating and polishing his Latin prose, he might have equalled any of his contemporaries, and surpassed all except Marot."

Was Dolet an Atheist? Mr. Christie affirms that nothing in his published works warrants the belief that he was. He wrote as a true Catholic, and submitted to the authority of Mother Church. But so did Rabelais, Desperiers, and nearly everyone else. Mr. Christie tells us that Dolet was held to have been executed as a relapsed Atheist, and although it is not so stated in the sentence, he "inclines to think that this was its effect and intention, and that the almost universal belief that he was a Materialist, or (for the words were then and afterwards used as synonymous) an Atheist, was shared by his judges." If not really an Atheist, it seems pretty certain that he was put to death as one.

But let us hear some of his contemporaries. Scaliger, in a brutal ode written after Dolet's death, calls him "Atheist," and says that he was "filled with an arrogant madness which, being armed with the most consummate impudence, would not even confess the being of a God." Franciscus

Floridus, after charging him with plagiarism, adds—"This fellow asserts the soul to be mortal, and the highest good to consist in bodily pleasure." Bernard Bochetel, Bishop of Rennes, said that Dolet "fell in a short time into the most execrable blasphemies I ever heard." And lastly, the sweet-mouthed Calvin wrote, soon after Dolet's execution—"It is a matter of common notoriety that Agrippa, Villanovanus (that is, *Servetus*), Dolet, and such-like *Cyclopes*, have always ostentatiously despised the Gospel, and at length they have fallen into such a depth of insanity and fury, that not only have they vomited forth execrable blasphemies against the Son of God, but, as regards the life of the soul, have declared that it differs in no respect from that of dogs and pigs." It is probable that Dolet gave freer vent to his scepticism in his conversation than in his writings. And this view is borne out by the words of Floridus in his reply to Dolet's defence. "The opinion," he writes, "of your impiety, which is everywhere held, cannot be got rid of by any extracts from your 'Genethiacum,' for I hold this to be certain, that what you believe concerning God and the soul you would speak of cautiously and not openly to all, lest you should be immediately seized and put to the torture."

Such a general belief must have had some foundation. Dolet did not take much interest in theological controversy, nor was it likely that he would show his heresy in his works, except "between the lines." In that age men wrote, so to speak, with the halter round their necks and the faggots at their feet, and the slightest indiscretion was dangerous. When the bloodhounds of persecution were on their track, Freethinkers who had no desire for death were obliged to imitate the cunning of the fox. A Rabelais, with infinite strategy and wit, might contrive to avoid being burnt for the love of God; but fervent impetuous natures, like Dolet, were almost sure of an evil doom.

Mr. Christie concludes that Dolet was "a sincere Theist." We do not dispute it, but we say that the evidence is incomplete. Mr. Christie himself admits that Dolet's avowals of orthodoxy are "ostentatious," and that "they do not strike the reader as proceeding from the writer's heart, but as being inserted rather as a matter of form than of actual belief."

With respect to the immortality of the soul, he was at least dubious. His ode, already cited, on the death of his friend Villanovus, proves this. And there is another short Latin poem in the same volume, which concludes :—"Do not be terrified by the arrows of death, which will cause you either to be deprived of sensation, or else to be sheltered in happier regions and to be in a joyful condition, unless the hope of heaven is vain."

In his "Commentaries," on the word *Mors*, he breaks into a noble strain of panegyric on immortality, but the immortality there meant is the immortality of *fame*. After quoting the names of great scholars, poets, warriors, and statesmen, he says that "the works of men of such excellence, consecrated as they are to immortality, are clearly beyond the power of death, and will, I am certain, never perish, but rather the sharpness of death and of time, which tramples all things under its feet, will be blunted by their virtue." In this immortality he was, as Mr. Christie allows, in his heart of hearts a believer; and he hoped, by passing his life "nobly and courageously," to participate in its glory.

"To say that he was a Christian," writes Mr. Christie, "as the term was then used or accepted equally by Protestant and Catholic, would be undoubtedly to say what is not the fact." As M. Henri Martin remarks, "Philosophy has alone the right to claim on its side the illustrious victim of the Place Maubert, whom the Reformation has denounced as impious by the voice of Calvin."

Dolet sided neither with the Church nor with the reformers. His religion, to use Mr. Christie's apt language for the last time, was "a religion of duty in relation to this world only, and troubling itself not at all with the future, as being a matter of which nothing can be certainly known, and concerning which it was useless to reason or to speculate." What an admirable summary of Secularism! Dolet was with us, and we claim him as a martyr of Freethought, another name on the noble list of our sacred dead.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE exhibitor of a whale tells the Cleveland people that the exhibition is something the like of which has never been so far inland before, not even "since Adam first sat and laughed and crowed on his mother's knee."

THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.—SERMON IX.

"The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works."—Psalm cxlv., 9.

THIS, be it remembered, is not an empty boast. The Psalmist understood the matter well, being inspired by the Holy Spirit. He did not, as sceptical and profane persons would have done, look at the world and carnally survey the deeds and vicissitudes of life: he piously closed his eyes, and thus saw plainly that the Lord was "good to all, and that his tender mercies were over all his works." The pious king—when have kings *not* been pious?—adopted the only possible method of discovering that the Lord was good to all, etc., he saw it by faith, as any one may who has faith enough.

But this sublime and salutary and universally comforting truth may be proved to a demonstration.

1. The Lord is almighty, and can do whatsoever he will. He can make two and two to be seven, or turn a summer-sault, or turn himself inside out, if you give him time enough to do it in—that is, *all* time. He made all things in six days the very first time he ever tried, and could no doubt do it in six minutes now, were he so inclined. I mention these facts to show that the Lord is Almighty and quite able to do everything.

2. He is all-knowing too; and so, in point of knowledge, as well as power, perfectly competent to execute goodness and extend his tender mercies to *all*.

3. Historical proofs may now be given of the above truth; and these are so numerous that we can merely select a few out of an almost infinite miscellany.

1. He made a man and woman and put them into a garden, where there was a tree they were not to eat of on pain of death. He also made a "subtil" serpent who tempted the two to eat, and they "did eat." For this the Lord cursed the pair, the serpent, and the very earth. All the posterity of this couple were involved in their parents' fate, and are to this day doomed to pain, toil, want, sickness, misery, and death for that old crime of eating forbidden fruit! This is the first proof of divine goodness and tender mercies.

2. Less than 2,000 years later, when men were numerous and not over good in their conduct, the Lord resolved to show how far he could excel them all in criminality and cruelty. There was not a man then living who would, if he could, have drowned the whole world. But the Lord showed his goodness by pouring down 1,000,000,000 (one thousand million) cubic miles of water upon the earth, or two thirds of a cubic mile for every man, woman, and child now in the world! So abundantly plentiful was the supply that each man might have truly said with the grateful Psalmist, "My cup runneth over"—if he could have spoken after being drowned. It is true, the story says that eight persons were saved in this universal deluge; but they might just as well have been drowned for any good we know of them. The water, by the way, was so plentiful that it seems to have disgusted Mr. Noah, who broke the pledge and went out on the spree as soon as he could get anything to tipple upon.

3. Not to confine his exhibition of tender mercies to a superabundance of water, a few centuries later the Lord poured out a cataract of fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and delivered from this terrible overthrow only Lot and his two daughters, who must have been as bad as any of them.

Speaking of fire reminds me of another trifling incident in the Lord's biography. It is true he did not invent nitro-glycerine, gunpowder, lucifer matches, or Greek fire, but he did, if the Bible is to be believed, light up an inextinguishable fire in a "bottomless pit" for the behoof of the Devil and his angels, as well as for unbelievers, etc. It is equally true that that fire has recently burnt itself out, but that does not appear to be the Lord's fault—the priestly stokers let it out while he slept; and I am not sure that he has yet been awakened and apprised of it. The parsons and other responsible parties may expect squalls when he does awake.

"But little he recks, so they let him sleep on,
With the angels snoring around him."

4. David must have known of a few cases of "tender mercies" in his own lifetime. He must have remembered how the Lord commanded Samuel and Samuel commanded Saul to go and kill all the Amalakites, including "infant and suckling," because their fathers more than 400 years

previously had fought the Israelites! Could he have forgotten the slaughter of 70,000 of his own innocent subjects because he himself, at the suggestion of Satan (*i.e.*, the Lord), at the instigation of the Lord (*i.e.*, Satan)—2 Samuel xxiv., 1, and 1 Chronicles xxi., 1—had dared to take a census? Could he have forgotten the three years' famine among the Gibeonites "for Saul and for his bloody house" (the Lord hates blood), and how his deity was pacified by an offering of seven sons of Saul, whom he himself had offered up in sacrifice? Perhaps David regarded that as a very tender mercy upon himself, though.

5. The Lord, still rules, they say, and his tender mercies are yet over all his works. It is true, some of his works destroy and devour others of them, and the balance the Lord destroys himself. Notwithstanding, his tender mercies are over all his works. The world is full of pain, broken limbs, aching teeth, rheumatic joints, festering sores, poisoned blood, fevers, cancers, small-pox, insanity. As Dr. Watts well said—

"Dangers stand thick through all the ground,
To push us to the tomb;
And fierce disease wait around
To hurry mortals home."

Phew! Avaunt, you quacks, who preach an almighty God and a benevolent Providence! Nature proclaims you all fools or knaves. An almighty God could, if he would, remove every evil in the world in less time than I could suggest it. Tell us, ye inspired idiots! why he does not, if he is merciful. I am sick of your everlasting twaddle. Why can you not preach a little plain blunt truth, and admit, like honest men, that you do not know of any God, whatsoever? You ask us to respect you and your most cherished convictions! Tell us truth, then, and cease to utter your stupid fables; show that you have some respect for yourselves. You live upon the people's gullibility. You know no more than they know—any baby three days' old knows as much of God or the Lord as you know, and as much of providence. A little hard-headed honesty would make you say as much.

Farewell. I commend my text to you, and ask you to compare it with the most common facts of life. Amen.

J. SYMES.

ACID DROPS.

SOME one has advertised in the *Times* for assistance to suppress the French Comic Bible. Our answer is to reproduce one of the best sketches in this week's *Freethinker*, and as we shall continue our reproductions (at considerable cost) week by week, the pious advertiser may try his hand at prosecuting us. "Lay on, Macduff," etc.

IN the *Daily Telegraph* for October 25th there appeared the following advertisement:—"Sugar boiler (respectable, sober) wanted; no infidel need apply.—21, Great Windmill Street, Haymarket, W." The disgusting impudence of this pious advertiser shows him to be a true Christian. He need fear no awkward questions at judgment day. Peter will just let him in straight, without waiting for the Lord's verdict.

BUT what connection is there between infidelity and sugar boiling? Do sceptics spoil the material, or do they turn out worse sugar than Christians? Mr. R. A. Cooper, of Norwich, who does a world-wide trade in confections, might enlighten us on this point.

WE happen to know the secret of this advertisement. The man who occupied the position referred to had been in the advertiser's employ for five years. He was "respectable and sober," and gave complete satisfaction. No fault was ever found with his work. But at length the employer found out that he was an "infidel," who went to the Hall of Science, and read *The Freethinker* and the *National Reformer*. For this horrible offence the man was discharged. Fortunately, however, he has been so "respectable and sober" during the five years that he has saved enough to go into business for himself, and bigotry is thus once more defeated.

THIS incident reminds us of a passage in Ingersoll's "Breaking the Fetters," just published, with an excellent portrait, by Mr. Morrish, of Bristol. "I know," says Inger-

soll, "there are thousands of men who substantially agree with me, but who are not in a condition to express their thoughts. They are poor; they are in business; and they know that, should they tell their honest thought, persons will refuse to patronise them—to trade with them; they wish to get bread for their children; they wish to take care of their wives; they wish to have homes and the comforts of life. Every such person is a certificate of the meanness of the community in which he resides." True. But some day, when these oppressed men pluck up the courage of defiance, they will be surprised at their own number, and the evil creed will go down with a rush.

It is said that a Birmingham curate the other day stated from the pulpit that the Lord fed five hundred persons with five loaves. The clerk whispered from below, "Sir, the reading is 5,000." "Hold your tongue, you fool," was the reply, "it's just as much as they can do to believe the 500."

THE *Leisure Hour* has just given fresh currency to the scandalous fable of M. Littré's dying recantation. It says that "in his last days, M. Littré professed his belief in things beyond natural vision or reason; and, in the conventional manner common to such belief, he sent for a minister of religion, and died after receiving the rites and ministrations of the Church of Rome." There is not a word of truth in this. M. Littré never believed in such nonsense, he never sent for a priest, and he never received the rites of the Church from one. Madame Littré baptised him herself when he was at his last gasp, in order that her husband, who was born and bred a Freethinker, may die within the pale of the Church. The whole story is told in Mr. Foote's "Death's Test."

THAT poor martyr, Mr. Newdegate, has been holding forth at the Nuneaton Institute. He complained that so many people seemed to think that the history of England began in 1832. Mr. Newdegate seems to think that it ended then. This fossil old Tory actually supposes that the great struggle of to-day lies between the British Constitution and the infidel Revolutionists of France! The member for North Warwickshire is the Rip Van Winkle of politics. Why doesn't he expire and get exhibited in an archaeological museum? He still glories in his dirty work against Mr. Bradlaugh, and calls Atheism unscientific, as though the House of Commons were a scientific assembly, or as though, if it were, Mr. Newdegate would ever have been admitted to a seat in it. He evidently considers himself a much persecuted individual; he thinks it monstrous that the Atheistic worm should turn when trodden on; and he means to continue the Siamese-twins business with pious old Clark, the common informer, and to pocket the Bedford Pym subscription, all for the glory of God.

THE *Christian World* has a delicious trimming article on revivalism, in which Moody and Sankey are patted on the back while the Salvationists are frowned at. One remark on the American twins is really amusing. "We are not disposed," says the *C. W.*, "to be hard on a certain crudeness of doctrinal statement, and a certain falling short of standards of intellectual and artistic excellent." In other words, so long as Moody and Sankey can bring people to church or chapel and draw them into the Christian swim, it doesn't matter if their addresses are full of falsehoods and bad taste. As for the Salvation Army, the *C. W.* regards it with "grave apprehension," and hints that it may become a serious danger.

WHY are the Salvationists' vagaries tolerated? Simply because they are Christians. If Freethinkers paraded the streets, singing infidel songs, stopping the traffic, and causing general disturbance, they would be dispersed by the police. Now we think that what is sauce for the Secular gander is sauce for the Salvationist goose.

A RELIGIOUS paper states that "the reading of a single copy of St. John's Gospel led sixty families in Japan to renounce idolatry." At this rate the conversion of all the Japanese to Christianity is very simple. Divide the total number of families by sixty, and send out the resultant number of New Testaments. We suspect, however, that the job is less easy than it looks.

THERE have been some strange outbreaks of Puritanism in Cornwall lately. At St. Ives last week a boatload of pilchards, which had been taken on Sunday, could not command any bids, except one of £10, which was one-fifth of the value, because the fishermen had "broken the Sabbath" in shooting the seine on "the Lord's Day." The austere people of the place were confirmed in their resolution to "Boycott" Sunday traffic by the sinking of the boat and the loss of her cargo during the night—a mishap which was looked upon as a direct "and special manifestation" of divine displeasure. The owner of a cellar refused to let it for the purpose of curing some fish caught on Sunday.—*Truth.*

LAST Sunday was Sacrament Sunday at Edinburgh, and it was a sight to see the godly and respectable elect wending their way to kirk. Even the animals seemed to be impressed with the solemnity of the day. The horses drooped their ears and attempted a funeral pace, while at a certain establishment for the breeding of birds, all the fowls abstained from laying except one profane little hen who dropped a solitary egg.

ONE of the notorieties of Edinburgh is Mr. George Bone. He is a peculiar man, with peculiar ignorance, peculiar pretensions, and a peculiar delivery. One of his favorite occupations is opposing Secular lecturers, in which he displays a much unconscious humor, to the amusement of the audience and his own disgust. Last Sunday Mr. Bone opposed Mr. Foote's evening lecture on "Great Christ is Dead!" "What?" said he, in one of the most singular parts of his singular speech; "what, Christ is Dead? Dead here in Edinburgh? Why, let it be recorded that in this city to-day, more Christians have taken the holy sacrament than last year." There was a few cries of "Oh, oh!" Whereupon Mr. Bone retorted, "Aye, ye may cry out; but it's true; and if ye don't believe it, disprove it." Whereat the audience roared, although Mr. Bone could not see the point of his own joke.

MR. BONE's argument reminds us of an incident at one of Heller's performances. His daughter was acting as a clairvoyant with her eyes blindfolded. Heller, holding in his hand a hair from a lady's head, asked "What have I in my hand?" "A hair." "What color is it?" "Black." "Is it a lady's or a gentleman's?" "A lady's." "How many hairs are there on the lady's head?" "Two milliou, three hundred thousand, five hundred and six." "There," said Heller, "that's the number, and if you don't believe it you can count them."

THE *Sydney Bulletin* says: "The most popular preacher told his hearers on Sunday that according to Babbage's theory of sound, not only every thought that man has shaped, but every whisper that woman has uttered, will be printed in everlasting characters in the air and read out on the Day of Judgment. If this is so, it will be a long job, and space will be pretty scarce when that important occasion arrives. In fact, we've noticed a closeness in the air this last week, even.

"If all the women's talk we hear,
In endless waves of sound,
Be written in the atmosphere
Till Judgment Day comes round—

"Oh, then, when Old Time's phonograph
Is carefully unrolled,
Won't resurrected spirits laugh
To hear the secrets told!

"What tales that tinfoil will outpour,
Such spicy bits of scandal;
But—what a long, long contract for
The man that turns the handle!"

RANDY PANDY, member for Woodcock, after pecking at Mr. Bradlaugh is now flying at higher game. He goes about the country exposing the pretensions of Mr. Gladstone. Crowds go to hear him. He charges them nothing for the fun.

MR. TENNYSON has a notable poem, entitled "Despair" in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*. It treats of a godless husband and wife who tried to drown themselves out of this miserable life. We shall have something to say on it next week.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Mr. FOOTE will lecture to-day (Sunday, November 6th), in the Eclectic Hall, King Street, Glasgow: morning, 11.30, "The Religion of Humanity v. the Religion of Dogmas and Creeds;" afternoon, 2.30, "Byron and Shelley, the Poets of Revolution and Progress;" evening, 6.30, "The God Christians Swear by."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

November 13th, Hall of Science, London; 20th Sheffield; 22nd, Walworth; 27th, Manchester; 28th, Hyde Eclectic Institute.

December 4th, Huddersfield; 11th, Claremont Hall, London; 18th, Rotherham.

January 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th, Hall of Science, London; 8th, Bradford; 15th, Rochdale; 22nd, Halifax.

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G. HAWKINS says that the *Freethinker* is a great success in Clapham and Balham, and that the friends there "post off six copies every week to clergymen, visiting ladies, and other pious people."

J. MCCREDIE.—We are not up in the literature of boxing and fencing, and cannot advise you. Write to one of the sporting papers, or to *Lloyd's* or *Reynolds's*.

J. R. J.—There is no one book which covers the ground, but you would no doubt find Mrs. Besant's part of the "Freethinker's Text Book" useful.

J. MILLAR.—Contents bill shall be sent. We thank you for your kind attention. We are pleased to know that the *Freethinker* is your "weekly treat," and that "even the Christians cannot refrain from laughing at the 'Bible Romances'."

W. SOWDON.—The Rev. J. Furniss's book on Hell is utterly abominable. We can understand your disgust.

L. HICKS.—Tylor's "Anthropology" would suit you. We intend to review it shortly.

ANONYMOUS correspondents are warned that no notice will be taken of their communications, while the impudent humbugs who occasionally send us abusive letters, carefully concealing their names and addresses, are advised to save their halfpence.

SEVERAL correspondents are unanswered in consequence of the editor's absence from London.

W. BRIGGS.—Thanks for the cuttings and for your efforts to promote our circulation. That the Christians "utterly hate" the *Freethinker* is a sign of our success. We never meant them to like it.

CONSTANT READER.—Thanks.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE *Quarterly Review* contains a powerful article on the Revised Version of the New Testament. Of the Revisers themselves the writer says: "These accomplished scholars have succeeded in producing a text vastly more remote from the inspired autographs of the Evangelists than any which has appeared since the invention of printing." Discussions of this sort will do great good. They will lessen the popular reverence for the Bible, and go far to destroy the Protestant fetish. We had a New Testament, we have now a New New Testament, and by-and-bye we shall have a New New New Testament. By that time the "infallible Bible" will have become a dead superstition.

PRINCESS MARIA, the only daughter of King Menelek, of Shoa, South Abyssinia, is to be married to the only son of Johannes, King of Abyssinia proper. Her father's dynasty claims to be the oldest in the world, dating back to 1183 B.C. The old gentleman himself pretends to a direct descent from the Queen of Sheba, and his daughter is in possession of several relics that are said to have belonged to that ancient queen. No doubt these include some of the presents from King Solomon, and it is understood that the Christian Evidence Society has despatched a learned archæologist to study them carefully, and to prepare a monograph on them so as to prove once for all the perfect historical character of the Old Testament.

It appears from Mr. Morley's new Life of Richard Cobden that the one book which supremely impressed the great reformer was Combe's "Constitution of Man," one of the best treatises on practical Secularism ever written.

SOME of Dr. Robertson Smith's admirers have presented him with books and manuscripts to the value of £1,000.

THERE was a good deal of well-meaning but not over-wise talk when the gift was presented. Dr. Bell said that Christianity had gone on from one triumph to another. Well, the latest triumph in Scotland was the turning of Professor Smith out of his chair for heresy. Professor Bruce said that "the whole bias of the Bible was in favor of innovation," which we take to be an excellent joke, of the rare dry Scotch sort.

GODS AND DEVILS.

"Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin dammed,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee."—Hamlet, Act i., sc. iv.

THE greatest bugbears against which men have had to war in all ages have been the gods; the greatest stumbling-blocks to the gods have been the devils, and man who made both, and fitted them with the most hideous attributes, has blamed the gods for his existence, and the devils for his miseries; has fallen down and worshipped the most malicious, and in his devout and pious moments has been persuaded to revile and slander the least cruel and tyrannical, the more powerful and consistent of his own terror-made myths,—the devils.

The man who does not absolutely shut his eyes to reason, cannot fail to see and acknowledge that "god" and "devil" are simply the altered synonyms of "good" and "evil," and the man-manufactured bogies who have ruled the world hitherto are only these two elements dressed up in personalities, given arms, legs, heads, eyes; in short, magnified men of stupendous power, whose malevolent and vengeful natures are worked by the scheming priests who dressed them up, and who, holding the strings of this wonderful god and devil machinery, have played on the fears of the ignorant to their own fattening and aggrandisement.

The Christian's god and the Christian's devil, though certainly not the most elaborate, are inferior to none of the dead and gone myths in the hideousness of their characters. Perhaps the chief difference between the Christian bogies and their predecessors is the fact that, whereas, among the older Pagans the god was *good* and the devil was *evil*, the order has been reversed in the mythology of Christianity, and according to the accepted record of their deeds, the devil appears as the least objectionable of the two.

According to the accepted theology of the churches, which really do agree in some points, the attributes of God and of the Devil are substantially the same. God is represented as being everywhere present, filling all space, so is his Satanic majesty; and when the theologian sees the difficulty of two distinct and antagonistic beings occupying the same space, and equally balanced as to power, he steps gracefully out of the dilemma by saying "of course it must be all right though it is not for such worms as we to understand." God influences at will the hearts of men; so does his devil, (for that he is *his* there can be no doubt). God can take various forms and do wonderful things; so can his opponent.

I heard a man preaching some time ago on the temptation in the wilderness; he dwelt at some length on the forty days' fast as a proof of Jesus Christ's godship, "and at least it proved," he said, "inasmuch as it was a miracle, that Jesus was called of God." This Christian was too dull to see the force of his own teaching, and overlooked altogether the claims of the Devil to a similar honor, for he who bare Jesus through the air on to the temple roof surely deserved honor as a miracle-worker, and might claim to be "called of God."

Much might be said of the comparative characteristics of the Bible Devil and the Bible God, did space and time permit, for in the very opening of the Bible, God's veracity suffers, for he said, referring to the forbidden fruit, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." The Devil said, "Ye shall not surely die." This was a flat contradiction of his opponent, and the sequel proved that the Devil was right and the God was wrong. Nor was this all. The Devil said, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Here the Devil's wisdom was greater than the God's, and his intention more honor-

able and noble. He proved God not only a liar, but a hypocrite likewise. He proved himself the more powerful, for *he* succeeded, and the God failed.

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." Thus was the God driven to acknowledge his own baseness and the Devil's superiority, his own falsehood and the Devil's truth. O, beloved wisdom! given us, in spite of a God, by his anti-thesis! What do we not owe to the Devil? the knowledge of good and evil! I set this one deed of an ill-used and slandered Satan against all the good the gods have done for man, and I call on the world to witness that I acknowledge my indebtedness to the least loved of the two, while I recall the probability that, however little of wisdom I may now possess, had the God had *his* way, I should not have had even a knowledge of good and evil.

Ingersoll says, "The basest thing recorded of the Devil is what he did concerning Job and his family" This he did not do without the sanction of the *good* and *holy* one. I place before you, my Christian brother, the recorded deeds of the God for whom you are beholden to the despised Jew, and I ask you, how can you deride and persecute the men from whom you stole your God, and give honor and respect to the heinous myth you stole?

I am reminded that your God ordered his "chosen people" to swindle the Egyptians. Find me a deed of the Devil's base as that!

Your God gave this order through Moses—"Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him; but all the women children that hath not known man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves." And in obedience to this order, 16,000 young girls, fatherless, motherless, and defenceless, were carried to the arms of their parents' murderers, and out of this poor defenceless host, thirty-two weeping girls were given over to the cowardly and inhuman priests of *your good and merciful God*. Match me this, my blind and trusting Christian friend, in the whole annals of the most hideous devilism!

Your God says himself, if I must believe this book you worship, that he put a lying spirit in the prophets' mouths to cause the death of Ahab. He sent two she-bears out of a wood to tear up forty-two children, because in their childishness they called an old man "bald head." He ordered the wholesale slaughtering of thousands. He it was, you tell me who placed his helpless children in a world of pain, fire, earthquake, famine, war, pestilence, disease, anguish and death. The greatest crime of *him* whom the parson calls my enemy, was either the tempting of a woman to procure for man the priceless boon of wisdom, or obedience to the wishes of your God. Let me appeal as an earnest man to his priest-ridden fellow-men! Can you match the records of your myths with the real beings who move around you and choose from the two we have briefly studied, a being worthy of the admiration and worship of the grand men who work with heart and brain to-day? Show me which of these two is your God, and why! Show me what is sufficiently good in his nature to overbalance his hideousness, but do not ask me for my worship. Show me something in your God I can respect, or let me live without him.

JOHN ROWELL WALLER.

"BLESSINGS TO TENANTS" AND THEIR RECOMPENSE.—At Stratford police-court, on Wednesday, the Rev. T. Bousfield, of Lousley House, Princes Risborough, was summoned by the Leyton local board for not complying with a notice to abate a nuisance at four cottages near forest-place, Leyton. The inspector of nuisances, the Surveyor to the local board, and the medical officer of health, stated that the houses were in a fearfully dilapidated state, the plaster falling from the walls, large holes existing in the ceiling, the floors breaking up, and the closets in a filthy state. Pigs were allowed to run about the lower rooms, and the place was quite unfit for habitation. Scarlet fever had broken out and in one house six cases had occurred; three cases had terminated fatally. The first order was made by the board in July last. The reverend defendant contended that the houses were perfectly healthy, and that it was a blessing to the tenants to be allowed to live there. The proceedings, he added, were hard and tyrannical, and it was a shame that he should be called upon to expend about £1,000 over them for nothing. The magistrates however, made the order as asked, and allowed a month for the performance of the work.—*The Building News*, October 7, 1881.—An adjacent paragraph reports the insertion of a stained glass window in a church, with the texts therein:—"Was an hungred, and ye fed me;" "Was thirsty, and ye gave me drink;" "Was naked, and ye clothed me;" and "Was sick, and ye visited me."

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

THE plain fact is, that the character of Jesus, *as actually drawn* in the gospels, abounds with manifest and grievous blots; and of necessity whenever a book is made sacred, its worst parts become more widely influential than its best. Hence, unless we destroy that reverence which forbids criticism and subjugates the mind, we cannot act against a pernicious influence.—*Professor F. W. Newman*, "What is Christianity without Christ?" p. 9.

THE Christian God is a father who makes a great deal of his apples and very little of his children.—*Diderot*, "Addition aux Pensées Philosophiques," xvi.

THE sacred oracles of divine wisdom, the god-breathed Bible, was not given to men to instruct them in their own wondrous frame and the nature or the constitution and grandeur of the universe we inhabit, but to teach us to save our souls. Such, to the priest-ridden mind, is the all-sufficient apology for the stumbling blocks, the moral errors, and physical impossibilities of the Bible. It is not considered that without some gleams of science man's soul is a blank, his morality incongruous, his religion idolatry, his prayers not the cry of a freeman of the city of God, but the utterances of a scourged or maudlin slave—his hopes of futurity the echo of the fanaticism and fraud of priests.—"The Religious Thoughts of a Believer in Nature," p. 107 (published by John Chapman, 1855).

THE ATONEMENT.—The Church says that the sinner is in debt to *God*, and that the obligation is discharged by the *Savior*. The best that can possibly be said of such a transaction is, that the debt is transferred, not paid. The truth is, that a sinner is in debt to the person he has injured. If a man injures his neighbor, it is not enough for him to get the forgiveness of *God*, but he must have the forgiveness of his neighbor. If a man puts his hand in the fire and *God* forgives him, his hand will smart exactly the same. You must, after all, reap what you sow. No god can give you wheat when you sow tares, and no devil can give you tares when you sow wheat. There are in nature neither rewards nor punishments—there are consequences.—*Ingersoll*.

ORIGINAL SIN.—The doctrine of heritable guilt, with its mechanical consequences, has done for our moral nature what the doctrine of demoniac possession has done in barbarous times and still does among the barbarous tribes for disease. Out of that black cloud came the lightning which struck the compass of humanity. Conscience, which from the dawn of moral being, had pointed to the poles of right and wrong only as the great current of will flowed through the soul, was dogmatised, paralysed, and knew no fixed meridian, but stayed where the priest or the council placed it. There is nothing to be done but to polarise the needle over again. And for this purpose we must stay where the priest or the council placed it. There is nothing to be done but to polarise the needle over again. *And for this purpose we must study the lines of direction of all the forces which traverse our human nature.*—*O. W. Holmes* in "Poet at the Breakfast Table," p. 284.

ORTHODOXY.—As for the excellent little wretches who grow up in what they are taught, with never a scruple or a query, Protestant or Catholic, Jew or Mormon, Mahometan or Buddhist, they signify nothing in the intellectual life of the race. If the world had been wholly peopled with such half-vitalised mental negatives, there never would have been a creed like Christendom.—*O. W. Holmes*.

RESIST NOT EVIL.—The idea of non-resistance never occurred to a man with power to protect himself. This doctrine was the child of weakness, born when resistance was impossible. To allow a crime to be committed when you can prevent it, is next to committing the crime yourself. And yet, under the banner of non-resistance, the Church has shed the blood of millions, and in the folds of her sacred vestments have gleamed the daggers of assassination. With her cunning hands she wove the purple for hypocrisy, and placed the crown upon the brow of crime. For a thousand years larceny held the scales of justice, while beggars scorned the princely sons of toil, and ignorant fear denounced the liberty of thought.—*Ingersoll*.

JUDGMENT DAY.

A NASTY, cold, foggy day was Christmas, 1881, and, just when everybody was least expecting it, a host of herald angels appeared in the sky, and commenced trumping out that the great Judgment Day had arrived. Then in a moment all was confusion. Hardly anybody, in fact nobody, knew what to do. Everybody left his occupation, even those who were banding round the plate in church, although I'm sorry to say that they first of all appropriated the contents to themselves. Everybody was hunting up his solicitor to defend him at the judgment seat, and Mr. Montagu Williams and other well-known pleaders looked like making a fortune fast. But the confusion rose to its height when the graves and the sea gave up their dead. Oh! the sight it was to see the skulls and bones of everybody rushing and tearing about like wildfire, knocking against everybody else, searching for some missing portion of their human frame, for, of course, no respectable skeleton could appear before its Creator in a defective state.

There was the skull of Thompson rushing, or rather rolling, madly along, intent on finding its nether portions; here the legs of Brown straddled about in everybody's way, searching for their upper portions; there the skull of a Chickewowum Indian, which had been confined within the British Museum, shouted out in an unknown tongue for the keepers to let it out of its case to go and search for its body; here was the body of a pious old gentleman, wildly demolishing a brick wall, in which some unscrupulous layer of bricks had built his skull, after disturbing him in his grave; whilst a nice old Bible-reading lady was swearing away in a most unsanctified manner because one of her legs was missing. And, oh, dear me! just in the midst of all this confusion the last trump was sounded, the herald angels flapped their wings in a violent manner, and then disappeared within the gates of heaven, which they closed after them, double-locking them with one of Chubb's latest patents, and shutting out from heaven all who had not had time to get together. In a moment the world was ablaze, and hell was formed. Despite the efforts of Captain Shaw and his men, it blazed away right merrily, and everybody who was in it was damned, even to a sanctified old gentleman whose name was Abraham, and who had been delayed from getting in through his legs having got mislaid, and yet another nice old party, who had been unable to find his head, and who was no other than

J. ELLIS

THE SAINTS' CONSOLATION.

ALL must go to hell!!! and why? The Bible only gives us the choice of two places to make our abode in after death—heaven and hell (Matt.) Those who are not the disciples of Christ will not be admitted into heaven (Matt., John, Cor.), consequently must go to hell! That we cannot be Christ's disciples, hear what he himself says: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and his mother, and his wife, and children, and brethren, and sister, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke). If we possess ourselves of this hatred to become his disciples we cannot go to heaven, because the Bible says: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (John); and again it says: "Murderers shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev.)

Ye who love your Bibles
Great is your comfort!!!

It is said (Prov.): "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going." The priest knows there is much truth in this, and in order that the credulous may not be shocked out of their credulity by the horrid nature of the precept contained in Luke, he will endeavor to persuade you that it does not mean what it says, but that the literal interpretation is the only proper one that can be given. The following verses may be taken as a positive demonstration:—

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt.)

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay, but rather division; for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; and the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, and the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law" (Luke).—*Oracle of Reason.*

MR. T. W. CHRISTIE, of Liverpool, in a book on Methodism, calls John Wesley a *roué*, his father an "old cockatrice," and his family a "brood of vipers." How mild and courteous these Christians are when they differ from each other! Some day we shall give a column or two of the abuse which great Christians have flung at one another, as a sort of answer to those who twit Freethinkers with their occasional disagreements.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CLERICAL EXCUSES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—As a supplement to the very valuable statistics you have furnished your readers with in the *Freethinker* of October 23rd, I send you the following extract from Canon Cook's "Ideology and Subscription" ("Aids to Faith," page 181):—

"Nor can it be denied that the alleged facts of the census of 1851, in themselves most questionable, have been most unfairly applied. Certainly, of all inferences, the least reasonable is that the absence of some 45 per cent. of the population from public service was in any way attributable to conscientious objections to the doctrine taught in our churches, or to a conviction that heathenism, after all, is no very lamentable condition of two-thirds of the human race. We should have thought that ignorance, vice and indifference on the one hand, on the other the want of sufficient and proper accommodation, were generally recognised as the main causes of what certainly was a most painful result of an inquiry into the actual number of worshippers."

It will be seen according to the above that, in 1851, there was a decrease of 45 per cent. in church attendance as compared with the previous census. But this the Canon accounts for partly by the increasing ignorance and vice of the people, and partly by the insufficient church accommodation. If the still larger decrease of worshippers in 1881 is to be attributed to the same cause, what excuse can the Church find for its existence and the millions of pounds which it annually swallows in its maintenance? As for the want of sufficient church accommodation being generally recognised as the main cause of this falling off in church attendance, Liverpool, with 152,000 more people, 64 more churches, 36,000 more seats, and 38,000 less worshippers to occupy them than in 1853, is a sufficient reply. This may assist your readers in estimating the value of clerical excuses.—Yours truly,

J. A. FLEMING.

BLASTS FROM THE NORTH.

"And a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind."
—1 Kings xix., 11.

I WAS in the wind that troubled the waves at the port of Sunderland last week, and I saw a sight awful in its grandeur. One day in particular, thousands of people thronged to see the raging sea and the troubled vessels seeking admission to the harbour; one large vessel I noticed was having a hard time with the elements, and when the pilot went out, the piers were literally black with spectators. When the vessel got through the surf and rode safely between the piers, her crew were all grouped on deck, and a storm of cheering, above the howl of the tempest, broke from the crowd on shore. Why did not these grateful sightseers drop on their knees and thank the Christian God for the safety of the men? Where are the evidences of Christianity at such moments? Man is a "religious animal" say the Theists. Why did these Sunderland Christians cheer the daring hearts and neglect the good God? Because they believed in man, his courage and his skill. The God was forgotten in the enthusiasm of the moment?

THE Holy Spirit would probably remind Sunderland's "religious animals" of the debt of gratitude they owed "The Father" when they went to church on the Sunday; and his ghostship would strive particularly hard to convince them while the collection was being made.

I HAVE more than once referred to the *Newcastle Chronicle*. My readers, however, had better be able to distinguish between the "Daily" and the "Weekly." The *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* is eminently sceptical. It is edited by a gentleman who, I believe, took some interest in the *N.R.*, when it was first founded. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* is under distinct and separate editorship, and is eminent for its piety. The "Daily" is psalm-singing every day over "the good work" of the American Christian star artistes. It twaddles of the converts who have "received good" from the holy pocket-emptying.

THE SALVATION ARMY in Newcastle have a real Zulu for their standard bearer. He is one of a troupe who entertained young Newcastle at a public hall a short time ago. He is active in the service of the Lord, too. The muscular darkey carries the message of peace and goodwill in a hearty and laudable manner; he hit a passing cabman on the head with his flag pole a few days ago, saying, "Dat Zulu Christianity, how you like him?"

THE NORTH WIND.

A NEGRO out in Georgia, who had faith not according to knowledge, went home from a camp meeting, and declared that he was going to heaven. He then mounted a tall tree seventy feet high, and undertook to fly the rest of the journey. The fall killed him.

PROFANE JOKES.

A FISHING boat off Cork was in imminent danger of being swamped. The two persons who were in her were very frightened, and did all they could to bring her to shore. As a last resource, one of the two knelt down and prayed. "O Lord," says Pat, "if you will only save us this time I will give you all my lands, and all my houses, and all my property, and all my money." "Hold hard," said the other, "you liar, you haven't got any houses, or lands, or money, you spalpeen." "Whist," said Pat, "don't make a noise. I am trying to blarney the old man."

A CLERGYMAN in the North of England was one day making his usual visit to his parishioners. At one of their houses he found no one at home but a lad of about twelve years of age. He sat down and commenced talking to him, and found to his great horror that the lad had never heard of God. "My lad," said he, "God is everywhere." "Is he in this room," asked the lad. "Yes, he is, but you cannot see him." "Is he in a dark place, like our coal hole," asked the lad. "Yes," answered the clergyman, "for he is everywhere." "That's a lie," said the lad, "for we haven't got any coal hole."

AN elder was baptising some converts in a river, and was about to perform on a wiry, sharp-looking, old sinner, when a tall powerful man standing by said, "I don't want to interfere with your business, Mister, but one dip won't be enough for that chap, if you want to get all the sin out of him you will have to anchor him out in the deep water all night."

"OH, Lord," prayed a minister, "keep me humble and poor." "Oh Lord, if thou wilt keep him humble," said the deacon, who next prayed, "we will keep him poor."

A TENNESSEE man can so perfectly imitate the sounds made by two dogs engaged in fighting, that he can call a Memphis congregation out of church in three minutes.

REVIEW.

Breaking the Fetters. By Colonel INGERSOLL. Bristol: W. H. Morrish.

ANOTHER of the great orator's eloquent discourses, and as brilliant as any that ever came from his lips. Mr. Morrish states that most of the oration has been specially reported, and that the publication has been duly entered at Stationers' Hall. By way of frontispiece there is an admirable new portrait of Ingersoll from a photograph by Sarony of New York.

CORBETT'S OPINION OF PARSONS.—I have sometimes been half tempted to believe that the magpie first suggested to tyrants the idea of having a tithe-eating clergy. The magpie devours the corn and grain—so does the parson. The magpie takes the wool from sheep's backs—so does the parson. The magpie devours alike the young animals and the eggs—so does the parson. The magpie's clack is everlastingly going—so is the parson's. The magpie repeats by rote words that are taught it—so does the parson. The magpie is always skipping and popping and peeping into other nests—so is the parson. The magpie's color is partly black and partly white—so is the parson's. The greediness, impudence and cruelty of magpies are proverbial—so are those of the parson.

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