

PROSECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY.

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Vol. III.—No. 5.]

FEBRUARY 4, 1883.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

"COMIC BIBLE" SKETCHES.—LVI.



THE CONSECRATION OF SAUL.

Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it upon his head.—
1 SAMUEL x., 1.

FREETHOUGHT IN FRANCE.

WHEN John Stuart Mill died, a Christian journal, which died itself a few weeks later, declared that he had gone to hell, and expressed a wish that all his friends and disciples might soon follow him. Now that Gambetta is dead, a number of Christian scribes and spouters turn an honest penny by defaming his character and voiding their filth over his grave—like live asses assailing and insulting a dead lion with heels and tail. Among these pious vilifiers is Henry Varley, a person who, as we long ago remarked, has given up the slaughter of pigs and sheep, and taken to slaughtering the reputations of his betters. He publicly stated at Guildford, a few days ago, that "Gambetta's awful sins killed him, and he was personally glad he was gone." Fancy, said the converted butcher, a bad man like Gambetta living four or five hundred years like Noah! The idea is truly original. Henry Varley seems to think that Noah's virtues preserved him to a good old age. But what is the fact, according to Scripture? We are not informed that Noah lived a remarkably good life before the Flood. After the deluge we are told that he first gave the Lord a sniff of cooked meat and then got dead drunk. When he awoke he cursed the wrong party, and all the rest recorded of him is that he lived until he died. Such was the virtue

of Noah! On the other hand Gambetta spent his whole life in fighting for freedom and progress; and the people whom he loved and served gave him a funeral which eclipsed the obsequies of emperors and kings. Yet a paltry Exeter Hall tub-thumper dares to stigmatise him as a villain, and a congregation of charitable Christians murmur approval of his impudence.

We presume that Varley and his friends, with the prudence of their kind, have greedily swallowed all the scandalous lies told about Gambetta's death. These professors of the religion of charity are always eager to believe any malignant falsehood about those who are outside their faith. Gambetta's accident was a very simple one, and the subsequent complications which brought about his death are perfectly intelligible to anyone with the smallest knowledge of physiology. The autopsy showed that all the vital organs were sound except the parts immediately affected, the brain in particular being in splendid condition. As for the "lady" in the case, she was purely a myth; and it would be surprising that the foolish story did not die after M. Reinach's authorised statement, if we were not aware that in Christian countries you can hardly ever run a lie down if you give it a week's start.

The motive of all this posthumous defamation of the great Frenchman is very obvious. Bigoted Christians hate Gambetta because he was not only a great man but a Free-thinker. They gnash their teeth at the spectacle of a statesman mourned over by a nation, and carried to his grave without any religious rites. They search for some means of consolation in their distress, and their boasted charity suggests the pleasing reflection that, although they cannot deny that Gambetta was a great man, they can at least affirm that he was a great blackguard.

Leaving these pious vultures to their hideous repast, let us congratulate ourselves on the fact that Gambetta's heresy is beyond all dispute. During his life time he never entered a church even when attending a marriage or a funeral, but stopped short at the door, and let those who pleased go inside and listen to the mummery of the priest. He called Comte the greatest thinker of our century; that Comte who proposed to "reorganise society, without God and without King, by the systematic cultus of humanity." He defined religion as simply "the bond between man and man," not between man and God. In one of his great anti-clerical speeches he said, "Yes I confess myself a votary of Freethought; I put nothing on a level with human science." He publicly declared himself an admirer and a disciple of Voltaire—*l'admirateur et le disciple de Voltaire*. When asking a meeting of Parisians to subscribe to the fund for the victims of an accident in the Rue Béranger he said:—

"Give, always give; it will be returned to you a hundred-fold, I do not say in the other world, but on this earth. I would not trespass on another's ground, I can only promise you terrestrial consolations, and I have the conviction that the sacrifice and the recompense go together."

On another occasion he said in a speech at Romans:—

"I recognise in no one the right to decide my philosophy or my idolatry; either must arise from my reason or my conscience; I have the right to make use of my reason as a torch to guide me after centuries of ignorance, or to let myself be rocked asleep by the myths of childish religions."

Add to all this the fact that Joseph Gambetta, who has

never renounced his Catholicism, buried his great son at Nice without religious rites, out of deference to his well-known wishes, and you have an adamant chain of proof that Gambetta lived and died a Freethinker.

His friends were also Freethinkers, from Spuller, who accompanied him in the balloon from Paris, down to the latest intimate. Every member of his short-lived ministry was a Freethinker, and one of them, M. Paul Bert, is a notorious and militant Atheist.

But more remains. All the Republican leaders are Freethinkers. It is doubtful whether a single Christian has figured in any recent French ministry. M. Grévy, the president of France, is a Freethinker; and the same may be said of Duclerc, Ferry, Freycinet, Floquet, Clemenceau, and a host of others. Victor Hugo is a Freethinker, so is Rénan, and so are three-fourths of the leaders in French literature, science, and art. Civil funerals are becoming more and more frequent, and the compulsory education of girls as well as boys is fast emancipating French women from priestly thralldom. Christianity is plainly dying out in France. It boasts no men of genius or of first-rate intellect. Its only hope of regaining power lies in force and fraud, and the chance of some royal pretender leaping on the nation's back by the aid of the combined armies of religion and war. We believe the hope and the chance are alike small; and we have faith that France will keep alive the beacon-fire of liberty, to flash over Europe from Russia to Ireland, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, terrifying kings and priests, cheering the hearts of slaves, and nerving the soldiers of progress with fresh courage for the battle.

G. W. FOOTE.

EMERSON AND CHRISTIANITY.

THE Rev. Joseph Cook, the Boston swaggerer who indicated his claims to write a book on "Conscience," by grossly aspersing the character of Shakespeare, had the impudence a little before the death of Emerson to claim him as a convert to his own preaching. The falsehood was at once exposed by Emerson's son Edward Waldo, its only foundation being the fact that Emerson had been induced to attend one of the Boston bully's lectures. Mr. E. W. Emerson declared that his father had in no way altered the opinions that were to be found expressed in his writings. Mr. G. W. Cooke, in his valuable "Life and Philosophy of Emerson," has sufficiently shown the falsehood of the assertion of the reverend gentleman, a falsehood the more contemptible since Emerson was then suffering from almost complete loss of memory, a calamity which developed from the time when his house was burnt down in 1872. The publication, however, of Mr. Moneure D. Conway's interesting book on "Emerson at Home and Abroad," draws new attention to the religious views of the sage of Concord.

Mr. Conway, whose opinions are pretty well-known to our readers, may be said to be a direct disciple of Emerson. He ascribes the fact of having left his Virginian slave-owning home, where he was about to become a Methodist minister, to the inspiration derived from a single sentence, which he has come across in a quotation from one of Emerson's essays. It was by Emerson's advice that Mr. Conway has followed the career we know; and, from intimate relations with the teacher to whom he owes so much, there can be no doubt that Mr. Conway is a competent authority upon what were and what were not the opinions of his master.

Every one knows that Emerson resigned the ministry of the Unitarian Church rather than continue to administer the Christian sacraments. His mind was opposed to the performance of any form which did not spring from a voluntary act. He said upon resigning his charge, "This mode of commemorating Christ is not suitable to me. That is reason enough why I should abandon it." Every one sees that the Unitarians only rejected their ablest man because his position cut at the root of historical Christianity. Mr. Conway, however, is very hard on the Unitarianism of the period. He says—

"It was trying to hold on to the Christian fairy-tales after destroying the faith on which they rested. It clung to the rosy visions of a theologic heaven, whose evidences it invalidated by repudiating its equal revelation of visions not rosy. It was able to give no reason for its surviving faith in God or immortality; and when Abner Kneeland denied these, and was shut up in prison, Unitarianism mingled with its petition for mercy to its abhorred

child a cry of helplessness. It was then shown, also, that temples sprinkled with Unitarian holy water were not only prepared to imprison the human mind, but might be made buttresses of the national inhumanity based upon the Bible. What, then, was Unitarianism? Christianity made easy. New England theology with none of its crosses, but all of its comforts, adapted by scholars to suit spiritual epicures. Between the Universalists, who believed God too good to damn them, and the Unitarians, who believed they were too good to be damned, respectability was able to make itself quite comfortable. But how was it with the real heart and intellect of the country?"

Mr. Conway asserts that "Emerson's theology changed to a spiritual positivism, and then to a poetical philosophy."

"Scepticism was not in his temperament; he was a born believer; his eye was made for ineffable visions; yet the fatal shaft of criticism had reached the vulnerable point—his intellectual veracity—and there remained not a rack of the ancient deities or heavens."

Residing with his prayerful mother in the home of a successive line of ministers, Emerson saw in his own words that "As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect."—"The cure of false theology is mother-wit."—"The faith that stands on authority is not faith."—"The Word miracle, as pronounced by Christian Churches gives a false impression: it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain."—"Christianity became a mythus, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt before."

When Emerson delivered his celebrated address to the Divinity College, Cambridge, in 1838, he broke for ever not only with the churches and their creeds but with all historical Christianity. Mr. Conway says—

"Little wonder that the New England shepherds watching their flocks by night should have been sore afraid when this light shone around them. 'But it is of no use,' said an eminent divine, when he heard the censure passed on the address; 'henceforth the young men will have a fifth Gospel in their Testament.'"

Even the Unitarians called him Infidel and Pantheist. One good Methodist, however, Father Taylor, while admitting that it looked as if Emerson was going to hell, added, "but I am sure of one thing, if Emerson goes to hell, he will change the climate there and emigration will set that way."

Elizabeth Peabody, in her "Reminiscences of William Ellery Channing," relates an interesting incident of Emerson. When he was revising the proof of the Divinity College address, she suggested the alteration of a letter in the passage where he speaks of Christianity as "dwelling with noxious exaggeration about the person of Jesus. But by this Eastern monarehy of a Christianity, which indolence and fear have built, the friend of man is made the injurer of man." Miss Peabody wished him to "put a large F to designate Jesus as the Friend of Souls." Emerson replied, "No; directly I put that in large F they will all go to sleep."

When, in his old age, a pious individual called to know his opinions upon religion, Emerson quietly took him to his book-shelves, and, pointing to his own volumes, said, "You will find my opinions there." And there the student will find not only an utter absence of all distinctively Christian teaching, but a breadth of thought that leaves all its dogmas far behind. Emerson is none the less an opponent of the patched creeds which he discarded because he does not directly attack them. He is, indeed, their worst enemy, because he raises his readers into an atmosphere in which they are far above them.

J. M. WHEELER

CHRISTIANITY AND THE JEWS.—Christianity, which, if our accounts be true, threatened to seduce large numbers of people from their allegiance to the orthodox creed, was practically extinguished among the Jews themselves by the death of Christ. They could not possibly believe in a crucified Messiah. Only a very small band of disciples persisted in adhering to Jesus, justifying their continued faith by asserting that he had risen from the tomb. But it was no longer among the countrymen of Jesus, whom he had specially sought to attach to his person and his doctrine, that this small remnant of his followers could find their converts. Neither then, nor at any subsequent time, has Christianity been able to wean the Jews from their ancient faith. The number of those who, from that time to this, have abandoned it in favor of the more recent religion, has been singularly small.—*Viscount Amberley*, "An Analysis of Religious Belief," vol. i., pp. 418, 419; 1876.

How do you know that there were railroads in the days of Solomon?—Because it is stated that when the Queen of Sheba came to visit him, she came with a great train.

LIBERTY!

I will be free!—I'll bear these chains no more!
Each individual link and ev'ry tight-bound knot,
Altho' with cunning art they bind each vital spot,
I'll rend away and cast them from my door;
Cast off the burden, quietly borne long years,
I see a happier future looming thro' my tears.

I will be free!—Why should I cringe and pray?
Why, with the murmur of a trembling tongue
While yet my heart is light—my life is young,
And, while I work yet, beg for bread each day?
Another struggle—Proudly I am free!—
Oh, what a precious boon is perfect liberty!

EDGAR T. BENTON.

ACID DROPS.

MORE murders attributable to religion! A mother described as young and handsome, but afflicted with religious mania, has under the influence of some horrible religious delusion taken the lives of her three children, the eldest only four years old, at Milwaukie. The particulars are not given, but there have been numerous cases where parents have killed their children in hopes of preventing their becoming eternally damned in hell. When will the world give up these pernicious superstitions and be content with human morality?

WHAT trash pious people will listen to. There is the popular lecturer the Rev. Paxton Hood discoursing, at Falcon Square Chapel, on "The Wonderful Story of Joseph's Bones." We suggest that he follows this up with the wonderful stories of Adam's rib, Jacob's cheek, the spleen of Moses, Samson's muscles, Elijah's nerve, Elisha's occiput and Hezekiah's bile. Balaam's donkey might bring up the rear, or Isaiah xx. 4, would provide him with a text concerning that holy prophet.

We have always sympathised with the social reformers, and especially with the brave ladies, who are working for a repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts; but we cannot agree with the wording of their latest resolution on the subject. At the recent Convention they declared that the C. D. Acts "are contrary to the Law and Word of God and to the Christian instincts of the Nation." Now, as so many clericals have got into the movement, we can easily understand why they thrust Christianity into their resolutions. They use the salt of a good work to preserve their rotting doctrines. As a matter of fact, there is nothing in the Bible against these abominable Acts; on the contrary, such legislation is favored by the spirit and tendency of the book. And seeing that the C. D. Acts were passed by a Christian legislature, which objects to the presence of an Atheist, the less said about the Christian instincts of the nation being against them the better.

It should be noted, too, that our spiritual lords, while clamoring in opposition to the "Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sisters Bill," as against the word of God, have never once raised up their holy voices against the C. D. Acts.

WILLIAM HON. HUDDLESTON of Brigg, late a Captain in the Christian Evangelists (Salvation) Army at Market Rasen, was ordered at the police-court to pay for the maintenance of an illegitimate child of a girl whom he met at the religious meetings and subsequently seduced. But no officer in the Army ever commits a crime. The reason is obvious, when his crime is known he ceases to be an officer.

A ZEALOT desired to go to heaven without delay from Reading, Pa., but prayed in vain for death. Then he tried the plan of kneeling in the Schuylkill river, while offering up his petition, but the result was only a violent cold, from which he recovered. His next place for prayer was on a railroad track, before an approaching express train, but he was dragged off in time to thwart his purpose.

A LANCASHIRE county magistrate sends us the following letter from, as he forcibly says, "a canting wretch of a would-be parson, who wishes to grab a lot of money without working for it":—

"Silloth, Cumberland, January 12th, 1883.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am making an effort to raise the sum of £150 to enable me to go to college and ultimately to become a minister of Christ. I am at present a missionary to the navvies at Silloth New Dock, having been sent here for a short time by the Church of England Navy Mission. The dream of my life, the height of my ambition, has been to become a minister of Christ, and to consecrate my talents, time and life to God's glory and the Salvation of souls. This

desire I believe is the prompting of God's Holy Spirit, and if I should gain the object of my wishes I shall ascribe all the honor to Him. The time has now arrived when I should like to commence my college career. There is one difficulty in my way, and that is lack of funds. I calculate I shall require £150 to enable me to complete a two year's course at St. Bee's, and I regret to say that I have no friends upon whom I can rely for this amount. If you can assist me in accomplishing the good and ardent desire of my heart, I shall ever remain your grateful servant.

"The Rev. R. Shepherd, rector of Heaton Moor, N. Stockport, was staying in Silloth last summer, and he had frequent opportunities of judging of my character, qualifications, and fitness for the ministry. He took a warm interest in my work here, and if I succeed in gaining my object, I shall attribute my success to his kindness, sympathy and encouragement. He kindly offered to answer any inquiries respecting me.

"I am pleased to be able to state that the Right Hon. Lord Egerton (of Salton) and F. W. Grafton, Esq., M.P., have investigated my case, and after strict inquiries as to my qualifications and fitness for the ministry, the former sent me a donation of £20 and the latter one of £10.

"The following clergymen who have promised to assist me will answer any inquiries you may like to make:—Rev. Dr. Herbert Silloth, Rev. R. Shepherd (rector of Heaton Moor, Stockport), Rev. C. H. Frost (rector of Foulsham, Norfolk).

"I obtained your name from "The Diocesan Directory," and sincerely trust you may be able to help me.—I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,
F. THICKNESSE."

THE Bishop of Salford (Catholic) has issued a little book entitled "Who is Saint Joseph?" Among other fine names, poor Joe is called "the virgin spouse of the virgin mother of God." Apart from the dirty blasphemy of this language, there is a very grave problem involved in it. Will the Bishop be good enough to tell us who was the father of "the brethren" of Jesus? And if it was Joseph, how can he be called a virgin?

A BEGGING circular is sent out with this religious manual, promising absolution from sin and prayers for souls in Purgatory on receipt of cash. There's the secret of it all.

It is the custom of fine writers to talk of Purgatory as a device to mitigate the horror of Hell. Nothing of the sort; it was a piece of clerical business. The priests said to themselves—"Here are these sheep of ours, ready to be fleeced; and as our exchequer is getting empty, we must rob them in a fresh way. We get money out of them when they are born, through baptism, and money out of their mothers, through the churching of women; we get money out of them when they are confirmed, money out of them when they are married, money out of them when they become fathers and mothers, and money out of them when they are buried; but this is not enough, so we'll set up Purgatory and get money out of them by proxy after they are dead."

THE Rev. John Yonge, of Warrington, complains that Freethought is "becoming insolent and aggressive." He especially denounces our Christmas Number, of which he says—"The editor's name is given, but no publisher's name; a guarantee this last that this thing is too vile for any man to own who cares for his credit." As a matter of fact, our Christmas Number bears our usual imprint. Christianity and accuracy seldom go together.

THE world has long enough been troubled with an "insolent and aggressive" Christianity, proclaiming salvation only through the blood of its God and condemning all unbelievers to eternal torment. Freethought at any rate has never taken into its service the sword, the stake, the rack and the thumbscrew. It has never sought to visit its opponents with physical tortures, mental torment and social ruin. It has simply to smile and the bigots are roused, for like the silversmiths of Ephesus they see their craft is in danger.

THREE new sects among the colored people of Florida rejoice in the names of High-stepping Baptists, Long-tailed Presbyterians, and Short-waist Methodists.

MR. J. P. HOPPS, who has recently returned from a Unitarian convention at Saratoga, states that at Chicago he found the theatres on Sunday were open while the Churches were shut. This in the city of the great revivalists Moody and Sankey. Had they not better stay at home or is the field not so lucrative as in godly Scotland?

THE Rev. James Kennedy has put out a book with the title "Deuteronomy, written by Moses; proved from the Book itself." We wonder if he relies upon chapter thirty-four, which says, "So Moses the servant of the Lord died."

IN one of our monthly magazines we find an advertisement worthy passing notice. It emanates from the "Prayer-Book

Revision Society, or Association for Promoting a Revision of the Book of Common Prayer, and such Liturgical Reforms in the Church of England as will strengthen its Protestant and Scriptural character." Under this verbose and bewildering title comes the name of Lord Ebury, as president, and a list of nonentities grouped under the headings of "vice-presidents" and "council," as lengthy and as meaningless. The secretary is J. Butcher—a capital name for a man who is doing God's work on "Scriptural" lines. The Association has bankers (Messrs. Ransom and Co.), for of course the lamb is too old a sheep now to ransom anybody "without money and without price."

We don't deny that this time-renowned invention for saving expenditure of clerical brain-power (such conservation being urgently needed where the stock is so small) is capable of improvement. Since the invention of the phonograph we have seriously proposed starting a society (and of course acting as hon. treasurer) for the abolition of pale young curates and the introduction of a phonograph for the performance of church services. The vast saving to be effected in this way is at once apparent when we reflect that the same man who blows the organ could guide the handle of the praying machine.

THE changes proposed by the Society, however, are not so abrupt as this. Apart from points aimed at the destruction of the ground on which the Ritualists now stand—for they don't see that the only possible Christianity of the future is Romanism—they chiefly desire to give the Athanasian Creed its quietus, knock a few broad passages out of the marriage service and the omission of "the Curses." This latter is intolerable. Where would Christianity be without its comminations? As for the marriage service, it had better be let alone till that blessed Bible has been purified. Those who can swallow all the filth attributed to Moses shouldn't be squeamish about being told, when they came to be spliced, that their object is "the procreation of children." It is strange that Christians should be "so extremely down upon" that embodiment of biblical charity and good feeling, but so it is, and so with a tear of sympathy we pass on. Those who haven't been baptised will be pleased to learn that the Society is going to give them a chance at last by knocking out the assertion that they will certainly be damned. We always thought God and his friends when they come to consider this point would take this course. On the other hand they want to knock out the clause in the burial service by which any blackguard who happens to be buried by a Church of England clergyman, has "a sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection." As we don't expect to be resurrected this may pass. All this is preliminary to the most important point—collecting funds. As all readers of the *Freethinker* will no doubt desire to join such a laudable Society, we hasten to state that five shillings a year will make them members, but they can't vote at the meetings unless they double that sum. A ten-pound note constitutes you a life member. Now then, hurry up. Write at once to J(ehovah's) Butcher, and send P. O. order or cheque, and "kindly oblige by stating whether letter should be addressed Rev., Mrs., or Miss." Wise secretary! to mention only three branches of the female sex!

IN a lecture at Bradford on "Evolution," the Bishop of Carlisle said that "if geology justified evolution so did Genesis," and the remark was greeted with applause. Yes, the Bishop is right; Genesis does teach evolution, and a very wonderful evolution too. The first man was developed out of a mud-pie, and the first woman out of a spare-rib; and all the different races of men on the earth, red, white, brown and black, were evolved in a few centuries out of one family of eight people. There's evolution for you; it beats Darwinism hollow. Its only defect is, as Huxley says, is that it isn't true, and that no educated man believes it.

BY-THE-WAY, it would be well if the Bishop would answer an attack on the Mosaic cosmogony written by his own brother some twenty years ago.

THE Rev. F. O. Morris does not agree with the Bishop of Carlisle. He writes to the *Rock* complaining that the Christian Evidence Society will not publish his attack on "The Gospel according to Darwin," because some of their members are not decided upon the question of Darwinism. Mr. Morris says that every Christian ought to be in flat opposition to Darwinism, since it flatly opposes Genesis.

DR. PARKER asks the City Temple congregation to subscribe twenty guineas towards the Tait Memorial Fund, as a sign of their "gratitude for the great work which was done by the illustrious Primate." Perhaps Dr. Parker will some day condescend to tell us what this "great work" was. It certainly appears that the oracle of the City Temple, like several more Nonconformists who preach to wealthy congregations, is very anxious to figure among the respectable people who butter royalty and its friends, and hope to be presented at Court.

THE railway companies have unanimously decided to run no excursion trains and to sell no special trains on the date of Mr. Bradlaugh's national demonstration, on the ground that they do not want to lend themselves to political purposes. This pretence is too transparent. The railway companies have frequently run excursion trains to political demonstrations, notably to the great Conservative gathering at Manchester a few years ago. Their object is plain; they simply want to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh's supporters from coming up to London next Thursday week. But they will not prevent *delegates* from coming, and London will make up the deficiency. We hope that Mr. Bradlaugh, when he takes his seat, will block every railway-bill and give these bigoted capitalists a Roland for their Oliver.

FOUR parsons waited on the mother of a girl in the employ of Mr. Saore, the Secretary of the Balls Pond Secular Hall Company, and told her that unless she took her daughter away from that infidel's house they would get all her customers to take away their washing. The poor woman was obliged to yield. What a dear delightful thing piety is, to be sure! There was a time when pious people starved themselves for the glory of God, but now they are more sensible and starve somebody else.

ONE parson boasts that he will drive the Secular Society out of Stoke Newington in three months. We give him three centuries. If he wants more time he must pray to the God of Methuselah for it.

THE Bishop of Peterborough is begging for a parson to look after a parish which at present affords no income. No soul-saver hears a call from the Holy Ghost that way. Why doesn't the Bishop give a hundred or two of his own big salary? W. C. Peterborough winks.

ST. JUDE'S CHURCH, Liverpool, is becoming famous for rows. They have just had another within its sacred precincts, and it is thought that it will soon be the most attractive gospel-shop in the city.

ROBERT BRUCE, a Salvation Army official employed at the Grecian Theatre, has been sentenced to two months with hard labor, for stealing a gold watch and silver chain. He probably meant dedicating them to the Lord or the General.

THE Archbishop designate has fixed the day for his enthronisation as Primate, disregarding that according to the Church forms, his election is not yet complete, for the Deans and Canons have to assemble in solemn Chapter and invoke God's guidance, and then declare that in His name, and by His guidance they have chosen Dr. Benson as the fittest occupant of the see of St. Augustine. As a matter of fact, of course God would have equally guided them to Canon Liddon or Dr. Fraser, if Mr. Gladstone had so chosen.

THE *Rock* complains of having its saintly eyes offended by the sight of a copy of our Christmas Number, publicly exposed in the most busy thoroughfare in London. According to it the burlesque *Life of Christ* is "full of details of indescribably ribald blasphemy," and it claims the protection of the law, for such wanton outrage of its pious feelings. In the mouth of these bigots, "the protection of the law" means the power of preventing any opposition to the clerical monopoly.

AT Folkestone, a member of the Salvation Army, named Snelling, has been arrested for the attempted murder of a policeman, who sought to arrest him. The prisoner has either become insane through his religion, or is shamming insanity to cover his crime.

REVIEW.

The Restoration of the Jews and the Rebuilding of King Solomon's Temple. By Bro. C. W. MEYER.

When we state that this shilling pamphlet, of twenty pages, appeals for subscriptions for the purpose of fulfilling prophecy by the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple, we fancy we shall have sufficiently warned off our readers.

A PHILADELPHIA boy was asked if he ever prayed in church, and he answered: "Oh, I always say a prayer like all the rest do, just before the sermon begins." "Indeed," replied the astonished querist; "what do you say?" "Now I lay me down to sleep."

It was Saturday night in the Seven Dials. Six rough laborers were playing poker. But as the clock struck the hour of twelve, proclaiming that the Lord's day had come, with one accord they threw down the cards and left the tap-room. They went across the street to see a dog-fight.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Mr. FOOTE lectures three times to-day (Sunday, Feb. 4th) in the Lecture Hall, North Street, Leeds:—Morning at 11, "Buddha before Christ;" afternoon at 3, "Gambetta: Republican and Freethinker;" evening at 6.30, "A Blasphemous Creed."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

February 11th, York; 18th, Plymouth; 25th, Liverpool.
 March 4th, Manchester; 11th, Edinburgh; 18th and 25th, Hall of Science, London.
 April 1st, Milton Hall, London; 3rd, Walworth; 8th, Clarendon Hall, London; 29th, Oldham.
 May 6th and 13th, Clarendon Hall, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

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 RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—C. B. B., Lazarus, G. H. A.
 R. NICHOLLS.—One of our friends is preparing an Index to the *Freethinker*, and it will probably be soon ready. Apply to our publisher for the numbers you want.—The word Agnostic comes from the Greek, and means literally "one who doesn't know." An Agnostic is one who knows nothing of deity or immortality; it serves as a respectable term for a timid kind of Atheism.
 J. C. CREBBIN.—Many thanks, but it is scarcely possible that we could follow the Bishop about, nor do we think he is worth so much attention. There is a pretty long reply to a previous lecture of his, on Evolution, in Mr. Foote's "Arrows of Free-thought" under the title of Baiting a Bishop.
 R. SHAIN must be a joker. He wants to know if we take Salvation Army bonds in payment of subscription. We hope he has not been fool enough to invest.
 J. W. HOLT.—You will see that we have noticed Varley's outburst in our leading article.
 E. DONCASTER.—Thanks for the enclosures and your good wishes, and especially for your wife's. The ladies are still the mainstay of priestcraft, but they are gradually coming over to Freethought.
 J. BROWN.—The Liberation Society's address is 2 Serjeant's Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.
 MOSES.—The pamphlet is, we believe, out of print; but if not, we cannot say where it is procurable now.
 R. SHEPHERD.—The best work on the French philosophy of last century is by Damiron—it is in French; or consult the "Histories of Philosophy," by G. H. Lewes and Uberweg.
 S. B.—Oliver and Boyd's Almanack says there are Christians about 178,000,000 Roman Catholics, and 103,000,000 Protestants.
 G. N. R.—Your verses have merit but they are too long for insertion.
 AN ATHEIST BLACKSMITH who urges us to "strike hard, strike often, and strike home," promises that he and his friends will in the event of our conviction take two copies of the *Freethinker* for every one they now purchase.
 W. WRIGHTSON.—We will insert the notice if you make it more explicit. There must be some address given. Petition Sheets sent.
 F. GIBSON.—Cuttings are always welcome.
 J. BELL writes that the Stockport Freethinkers know nothing of the "converted infidel" Moss, and believe him to be an invention of the godly. He also states that in the local Parliamentary Debating Society he succeeded in carrying a motion for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws by 26 votes to 23.
 W. H. SPIVEY.—Thanks for your constant attention.
 F. SUMMERSGILL.—Thanks for the cuttings. The Bishop's lecture was already noticed. You will doubtless see the joke in print in due course.
 J. BARTON.—We should prefer something more recent. The Christians have a knack of repudiating anything about thirty years old if it happens to be awkward.
 S. FLOYD.—"Brown's Story" is being reprinted from our Christmas Number with some slight alterations and considerable additions. It will be illustrated profusely by Paul Bellevue, and printed on fine tinted paper, so as to make it a real *édition de luxe*.

ANOTHER PROSECUTION.

The following elegant document was served on us last Monday:—

"To GEORGE WILLIAM FOOTE, of No. 9 South Crescent, Bedford Square, Middlesex; WILLIAM JAMES RAMSEY, of No. 28 Stonecutter Street, in the City of London, and No. 20 Brownlow Street, Dalston, Middlesex; and HENRY ARTHUR KEMP, of No. 28 Stonecutter Street aforesaid, and No. 15 Harp Alley, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.
 Whereas you have this day been charged before the undersigned, the Lord Mayor of the City of London, being one of her Majesty's

Justices of the Peace in and for the said City and the Liberties thereof, by JAMES MACDONALD, of No. 7 Burton Road, Brixton, in the county of Surrey, for that you did in the said City of London, on the 16th day December, in the year of Our Lord 1882, and on divers other days, print and publish, and cause and procure to be printed and published, a certain blasphemous and impious libel in the Christmas Number for 1882 of a certain newspaper called the *Freethinker*, against the peace of our Lady the Queen, her crown and Dignity. These are therefore to command you, in her Majesty's name, to be and appear before me on Friday, the 2nd day of February, 1883, at eleven of the clock in the forenoon, at the Mansion House Justice-Room in the said City, or before such other Justice or Justices of the Peace for the same City as may then be there, to answer to the said charge, and to be further dealt with according to law. Herein fail not. Given under my hand and seal, this 29th day of January, in the year of Our Lord 1883, at the Mansion House Justice-Room aforesaid.

"HENRY E. KNIGHT, Lord Mayor, London."

The case will open at the Mansion House before this week's *Freethinker* is in the hands of some of its country readers, but our London friends will have an opportunity of witnessing the proceedings. We are not aware who James MacDonald, the common informer, is; but some of our readers in the vicinity of his residence will perhaps make inquiries and inform us of the result. We have an impression that he is probably as honest and Christian a gentleman as Sir Henry Tyler. Whoever is really moving in this new prosecution is playing that city knight a scurvy trick. Why not let Tyler have his turn first? It is very likely he will after all, for we expect to sit on this new crusader until we have settled with the other. At any rate, one thing is now clear. The bigots are bent on putting down the *Freethinker*. It will be as well for them to know that before they can succeed in their cowardly enterprise they will have to keep the editor, publisher, and staff of the *Freethinker*, and half the Freethought party, permanently in gaol. If they are prepared for this, well and good; if not, they had better leave us alone. We despise and defy them.

SUGAR PLUMS.

A DEMONSTRATION to protest against Mr. Bradlaugh's exclusion from Parliament will be held on Clerkenwell Green, Sunday morning, February 4th, at 11.30, to which all friends are invited.

We have received number one of the *Liberal*, the organ of the Freethinkers of New South Wales. We trust they will effectively support this new venture, which promises to be a credit to the name it bears.

OUR Calcutta contemporary, the *Anti-Christian*, is still pursuing its useful mission of exposing the absurdities of the Christian Faith. We are glad to notice that some of its most trenchant articles are reprinted as tracts, which will doubtless have a wide circulation in Bengal and prove a thorn in the sides of the missionaries.

THE National Sunday League Ball was, as usual, a thoroughly enjoyable affair. The magnificent rooms of the Cannon Street Hotel were, however, so crowded that the League may have to look for even larger premises next year.

We are delighted to see that Spiritualism is getting into very low water. The Southampton Row organ begs for means to keep itself alive, and a subscription is floated to clear off the liabilities of the "Spiritual Institution." A lady medium, too, whose public life is said to be free from taint (she must be a prodigy), is having a benefit got up for her to keep the wolf from the door. All this is very gratifying, for unless the cash flows in pretty freely the missionaries of Spiritualism seek fresh woods and pastures new. But why don't the mediums get the spirits to bring them money as well as less useful articles? Ah, why?

HENRY LABOUCHERE speaks out in his usual frank and manly style in *Truth* against the Sunday Closing movement. He rightly says that it is mere Sabbatarianism. If public-houses are immoral places on Sunday, they are immoral any other day in the week, and *vice versa*. It is religion that makes the difference, and not morality or common sense.

MR. G. H. DARWIN, M.A., F.R.S., of Trinity College, Cambridge, has been elected to a professorship of Astronomy and Experi-

mental Philosophy in that university. Mr. Darwin is a son of the world-renowned Chas. Darwin, and, in common with his brothers, is likely to prove a credit to the great name he bears.

THE ex-Rev. Mr. Miln, who became an Agnostic and then took to the stage, is said to be meeting with large success in the West. His voice is good, and his personal magnetism is great. His costumes are costly and magnificent, and his enunciation is exceptionally distinct.—*Truthseeker*.

THE *Folkstone Express* has a very good article on "The rival Army Nuisance," which is making that town, like so many others, the scene of perpetual conflict between Skeleton and Salvationists. The absurdity of giving the streets over to any sect who chooses to raise a religious hubbub, should be manifest when the right of way of the Army is opposed by another claiming equal privileges.

DR. HITCHMAN of Liverpool, sends us a long resolution on the Bradlaugh question which he intends to submit to a meeting of his fellow townsmen. We have not space for it, but we hope he will succeed in carrying it. The warning to Mr. Gladstone is especially appropriate.

THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.

[SECOND SERIES.]

VIII.

MEN AND WOMEN OF FAITH.

I do not feel inclined to slacken in my attacks upon Christianity, for I am disgusted with its wholesale hypocrisy, its unblushing and open outrages upon decency. For example, it is prosecuting the *Freethinker* for telling the plain truth and for exposing a religion that only the Peculiar People and a few other fanatics practise; and it is prosecuting them for practising it! Only within the past few days a government clerk has been declared guilty of manslaughter for obeying the New Testament and trusting in Providence! The ruling powers in this country are a set of the worst hypocrites in existence; for they try to compel you to profess Christianity while they punish you for practising it!

Here again, in Birmingham, a man has been prosecuted for being a "Seer" and getting money under false pretences. At the same time tens of thousands of parsons and revivalists are getting about £25,000,000 per annum out of the pockets of the people, every penny of which is obtained by false pretences; and if they told the truth it would stop the supplies. The moral is plain: Take a few shillings by pretending to foretell an *earthly* fortune, and go to prison as a miserable, vulgar impostor; take a few hundreds or thousands—the higher the sum the more respectable you will be—for predicting a *heavenly* fortune, and you will be glorified as a saint by all—except your rivals in the business, and honest men who risk imprisonment for exposing you.

One more point may be named. I have said that Christians are hypocritical. I may have gone too far; for their present-day hypocrisy is as thin as those famous Egyptian robes through which the whole body could be seen. The ruling Christians to-day openly violate all the principal rules of their religion. They even swear upon a book that positively forbids all swearing, and try to compel, by pains and penalties, by abuse and slander, all honest people to do the same!

But where should I stop? The whole system of Christianity is a gigantic fraud, a congeries of stupid lies, an instrument of tyranny and torture, the foulest and most brutal thing that civilisation has ever had to contend with.

But I must proceed to get those *Men and Women of Faith* out of hand.

14. The unknown author of *Hebrews* (xi., 32) says time would fail him to speak of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. Well, I must find time to notice them slightly.

Barak—met Sisern, who commanded 900 iron chariots, and an army in proportion, no doubt. Barak killed the whole of them to a man, Sisera only escaping to be assassinated by Saint Jacl, who was to be called the most blessed of women for the deed! (Judges iv., 5). Israel had rest forty years after this; and Barak and the prophetess Deborah went to—I really don't know; to the

bosom of Mother Earth, probably—instead of Father Abraham's.

Gideon—saw an angel, who was a capital juggler, by the by. Then, after the angel, the Lord himself visited Gideon, and told him to persecute Baal and break down his altar. After testing God with a fleece of wool, he put a whole army to rout with 300 men armed with trumpets, pitchers and lamps! It is marvellous that the Lord did not do it all himself, instead of troubling about Gideon. But there! the Lord's ways are always as unaccountable as a lunatic's. Gideon murdered his prisoners of war. Then he made an ephod, which the Israelites worshipped. His wives were very many, and his sons numbered seventy.

Samson—is too well known to need description.

Jephthah—murdered his daughter in sacrifice to his God; and a poor woman in America, equally insane, has just more than followed his example by sacrificing three children to the Lord. When will vendors be prosecuted for selling the Bible, which so corrupts and brutalises people?

David—the man after God's own heart. The less said of either of them the better for civilisation.

Samuel—Ditto.

The prophets—Well, they were mostly mad, filthy beings. As Hosea said—and he should have known—"the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad" (chap. ix., 7.). Most of the ruling spirits of the churches and of Christian States to-day are not fools—though their subjects and dupes are, to allow them to reign and swindle as they do,

Those ancient saints *subdued kingdoms*—the villains!—*wrought righteousness*—never!—*obtained promises*—No doubt; but were they ever kept?—*Stopped the mouths of lions*—They must have been poor animals. Lions ate Christians when they got a chance, except those who had rendered themselves unfit for food by long fasts and filthiness. That is how the prophets stopped their mouths, no doubt. What respectable lion would touch a shambling skeleton, covered with a dry sheepskin, mud, and swarms of vermin? *Quenced the power of fire*—Well, any one can do that with plenty of water. The so-called martyrs burnt readily enough.—*Women received their dead by a resurrection*—Tut! tut! No dead man ever yet lived again, and never will—Others, we are told, endured torture in hope of a better resurrection. What an infamous religion this must be thus to impose upon poor idiots by promises never to be fulfilled! When will public decency put an end to that awful imposture, a white-robed fortune-teller at the grave side, burying corpses "in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection unto eternal life?"—*They went about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes of the earth*—We must not suppose that it was persecution that led to this. The early Christians did those things voluntarily. They renounced this world, as Jesus commanded, hated their friends and all worldly things, went in herds and swarms to the deserts of Egypt and Syria, living lives worse than any other wild beasts. It is true, many to-day who hope to get their reward without following their example, contend that they were not Christians—We know their reason for denying it. So-called Christians to-day, in all except persecution, slander and falsehood, are as far from being what the New Testament bids as it is possible to be. Therefore they pretend that those who really lived as they professed were not Christians; just as to-day the ruling hypocrites of this land persecute those of no religion, and with equal ferocity pounce upon those who really obey the Gospel. Hypocrisy will never go beyond that.

JOSEPH SYMES.

"FREETHINKER" DEFENCE FUND.

Nottingham (per J. B. Coppock): — Columbine, 1s.; J. B. Coppock, 1s.; D. Gow, 2s. 6d.; — Hinems, 1s.; E. Wright, 1s.; G. Farmer, 1s.; J. Farmer, 1s. W. Barralats (wrongly acknowledged as W. Banati), 5s. Newcastle Branch of the N. S. S. (per F. Creswell):—Profits of Tea Party, £1 8s.; — Ranim, 2s.; T. Simpson, 1s.; J. H. Creswell, 2s.; W. Bell, 1s.; H. Hall, 1s.; T. Robson, 6d.; J. Rasten, junr., 6d. Grimsby: J. Alward, 5s.; G. Alward, 3s.; C. Blyton, 1s.; T. Darrell, 2s.

At the Ulverston Police-court the Rev. Dr. Hayman, vicar of Aldingham, was fined £4 and costs for keeping a manservant and a dog without license. He was apparently under the impression that these were clerical perquisites.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE "FREETHINKER" AND THE CHRISTIANS (!)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have not written to you for some time, having been very busy of late, but this week's "Trade Circular" to News-agents and Bookseller's, sent out weekly by Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son, contains an announcement with reference to your paper the *Freethinker*, that I think it my duty to at once acquaint you with. The announcement runs as follows: "News Department Notes"—"Those few customers who take the *Freethinker* will please note that after this week's number we cease to supply it."

Such is the sweet announcement, and such is the charity shown toward your lively paper the *Freethinker*.

However, I beg to inform you that I have written them a strong letter in protest against such bigotry, and at the same time inform them that if they persist in the refusal as announced, I shall take my trade to another house, and I might here add that I am in the habit of paying them above £12 per month for newspapers alone. Hitherto, Smith and Son have supplied me with every kind of literature I required, even the "Fruits of Philosophy," but it seems there has some pressure been put on somewhere to prevent your paper living, but I trust that such opposition will be met with defeat as it merits, and that Freethinkers everywhere will use their endeavors to keep the paper going. I promise you that I will do all I can to accomplish this, feeling as I do, that the *Freethinker* is just the paper to suit the requirement of the times. I am simply delighted with it. In conclusion, I trust that your health will continue good to enable you to wage war against such a creed as is prompting those who are prosecuting you and your colleagues.—I remain, yours truly,
JAMES D. STONES.

EMPLOYMENT AGENCY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Permit me to make through the medium of your columns, a suggestion which I am vain enough to consider not wholly without value.

From time to time I hear of Freethinkers whose want of capital, *i.e.*, of independence, exposes them to much petty persecution on the part of their bigoted employers; of others who are unable to obtain situations through the fact of their heresy being too notorious; of others, again, who from timidity, or the very natural dread of bringing suffering and poverty on their families, dare not give vent to the anti-religious sentiments they mature in secret. Now what I wish to suggest is this: that the Freethinkers of England, who are so fast becoming a "power" in the land, and who are able, when united, to dispose of considerable pecuniary means, should combine to found an agency for the assistance of governesses, tutors, clerks, servants, etc., desirous of obtaining situations in offices or families, where independent thought on religious and political subjects would meet with sympathy, or, at least, with toleration.

I have no experience in these matters; but the many cases of hardship that have come to my notice, and the convenience that masters and mistresses would find in being able to apply to an agency that recommended well-conducted, but Freethinking servants—and this, more especially in the case of servants entrusted with the care of children—encourage me to venture this suggestion in the hope that it may attract the notice of those who are able and willing to carry it into execution.—I am, Sir, yours very truly,
R. H. DYAS.

Cossilla, Italy, Jan. 24th, 1883.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

PREACHERS AND MORALITY.—Many who call themselves Christian preachers busily undermine moral sentiment, by telling their hearers that if they do not believe the Bible (or the Church), they can have no firm religion or morality, and will have no reason to give against following brutal appetite. This doctrine it is that so often makes men Atheists in Spain and profligates in England, as soon as they unlearn the national creed; and the school which has done the mischief, moralise over the wickedness of human nature when it comes to pass, instead of blaming the falsehood which they have themselves inculcated.—*Dr. F. W. Newman*, "Phases of Faith," chap. vi., p. 208; 1851.

GOD'S REVELATION.—Had the pretended revelation of God been worthy of a God, it would never have been done. Had its simple but holy purport been "all men are brethren, all are alike children of one common nature: let them make themselves happy—this is wisdom; let them labor to promote the happiness of others—that, that alone is virtue," the tale would have been told too soon, there would have been nothing in it by which one man could over-reach the understanding of another. There would have been no lies to be made to look like truth, no injustice to be made to appear just; no impossibilities to be made to appear possible; no hell, no Devil, no damnation, and no

clergy.—*Rev. Robert Taylor*, "Devil's Pulpit," vol i., p. 124; 1882.

THE DECALOGUE.—A very curious thing about these Commandments is that their supposed author violated nearly every one. From Sinai, according to the account, he said, "Thou shalt not kill," and yet he ordered the murder of millions, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and yet he gave captured maidens to gratify the lust of captors; "Thou shalt not steal," and yet he gave to Jewish marauders the flocks and herds of others. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house nor his wife," and yet he allowed his chosen people to destroy the houses of neighbors and to steal their wives; "Honor thy father and thy mother," and yet this same God had thousands of fathers butchered, and with the sword of war killed children yet unborn; "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," and yet he sent abroad lying spirits to deceive his own prophets, and in a hundred ways paid tribute to deceit. So far as we know, Jehovah kept only one of these Commandments—he worshipped no other God.—*Col. R. G. Ingersoll*, *North American Review*, p. 480; 1881.

PROFANE JOKES.

A GERMAN preacher, speaking of a repentant girl, said, "She knelt in the temple of her interior, and prayed fervently," a feat no indiarubber doll could imitate.

"MINISTER," said an old woman in the North, "I'm going away fast, and I'll soon be in Judas' bosom." "Hoots, toots, Janet," said the clergyman, "ye mean Abraham's bosom." "Ah, minister, if ye had been as lang a single woman as I've been ye wouldn't be particular who's bosom it was."

AN old Irish woman, thinking she was about to die, called her brother to her bed-side and said, "Pat, berry me in th' owld Church-yard, not in the simmetry." Grasping her hand, he exclaimed, "By the help of God, Biddy, I'll see you buried there before this day week."

SOME Evolutionists say that man evolved from a jelly-fish. According to the Bible, man "evolved" backwards, for when God breathed into him the breath of life he became a living sole.

ONE Sunday night a sanctimonious old lady was riding inside a tramcar; the driver pleased at its being the last journey for the day, began singing a merry song, whereupon the old lady shouted to him, "Oh you wicked man, you shouldn't sing songs on a Sunday—you should keep it holy." "Then keep your Sunday wholly at home," replied the conductor, "and study that part of the fourth commandment where it mentions manservant, cattle, etc."

THERE are mean men in the world. A while ago a "living skeleton" in a circus—the thinnest one ever known—was picked up by a society, who, having educated him for the ministry, sent him as a missionary to the Cannibal Islands. Imagine the disgust of the cannibals!

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MR. REID'S LECTURES.—Subjects: "Commune and Civil War in Paris" (Mr. Reid having been an eye-witness); "How the Working Classes are to be Saved and Pauperism Extinguished;" "Gambetta and Bradlaugh." Address, 4 Park Street, Northampton.

A Monthly

Magazine.

"PROGRESS."

Edited by

G. W. Foote.

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