

PROSECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY.

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sentenced to Twelve Months' Imprisonment for Blasphemy.

Interim Editor, EDWARD B. AVELING, D.Sc., Fellow of University College, London.

William James Ramsey, as Proprietor, sentenced to Nine Months' Imprisonment; and Henry Arthur Kemp, as Printer and Publisher, sentenced to Three Months' Imprisonment:

Vol. III.—No. 38.]

SEPTEMBER 23, 1883.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC SKETCH.—2.



CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

An honest man, when he had been
With fresh-imported hell-fire warmed,
Grow serious—from his dress and mien
'Twas plainly to be seen
The fellow was transformed.

His eyes turned up, his mouth turned down;
His accent caught a nasal twang;
He oiled his hair; there might be heard
The grace of god in every word
The villain said or sang.

SHELLEY (*slightly altered*).

REPLY OF DR. EDWARD AVELING TO THE REV. C. J. WHITMORE'S LETTERS APPEAR- ING IN OUR ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER 16TH.

13 Newman Street, W., August 24, 1883.

Sir,—At greater leisure than I had when I acknowledged the receipt of your last letter, I now write. I regret to find your second letter as wanting in good manners as your first. I sent to you notice of my lecture as I was going to attack your words; and I thought that even if you were unable to be present some representative of yours might come. I introduced the name of Mr. Bradlaugh, to whom you refer with the coarseness of manner that seems, unhappily, habitual with you, because that gentleman, in an article published in the *National Reformer* of July 2, 1882, exposed in part your fraud. You read my letters very carelessly. The whole of the sixteen persons to whom you refer by initials may have existed, and yet you and kindred Christians may "invent" others. The last part of my last sentence in my last letter but one is of general application—the first part is of special application.

I intend to show that your statements are misleading in a written debate with you, if I can induce you to debate. You speak of "self-styled Christians" only as turning Atheists, and deny that they were real Christians. Even you must see that this sort of argument cuts both ways. May I not with equal justice say that "no *Atheist* ever yet turned Christian?"

[No. 111.]

But if you allude to some self-styled Atheist leaders who have done so, and you are proud of them," then part of your pamphlet may have meaning?

I am prepared to discuss with you the question, "What becomes of the infidel leaders?" in the columns of the *Freethinker*. I shall endeavor to show (1) that your pamphlet is misleading (2) that you have really begged the question, as you have not mentioned the true infidel leaders of this age or of past times. You must clearly understand that I shall not only deal with the initials given in your tract, but I shall carry you much further afield. The question you ask is a large one. What becomes of the infidel leaders? I shall take you and our readers, if we have any, over the lives of all the infidel leaders of our time, and shall show them, whether I succeed with you or not, that you have carefully avoided referring to the real leaders in secular thought, and that your pamphlet cannot be taken as in any sense a truthful and complete reply to the momentous inquiry that heads it.

In a letter, that with your permission has been sent on to me, you speak of the *National Reformer's* "scandalous blackguardism," and call that paper a "filthy print" I will admit that you are, probably, better versed in scandalous blackguardism than I, and that your professional acquaintance with the Bible gives you the right to recognise filth. None the less I challenge you to quote from the *National Reformer* a single passage that is filthy, and I refer you to the following chapters in the Bible as examples of the disgusting nature of the book that you place in the hands of little children. Genesis xix., 30-36 (The story of Lot and his daughters.) Genesis xix., 4-11 (The story of the men of Sodom.) Genesis xxxviii., 9 (The story of Onan). Leviticus v., 3; xv., 16-18, and indeed the whole of that fifteenth chapter. 2 Samuel xiii., 10-14, and the Song of Solomon, *passim*. As long, sir, as you and wicked men like you are idolising a book containing such passages as these that I have picked at random out of the large number of filthy passages in the Bible, so long had you not better cease, for very shame, to speak of indecency in men's writings? No man has written anything to approach the horrible filthiness your god, as you say, has vomited forth in his book, the Bible.

In this same letter you write, "For many years I have been the subject of persistent attack, simply because I exposed their wickedness; and I have repaid the attacks by feeding and helping all the broken-down Secularists who have come to me whom their own body left to starve." Again I challenge you to substantiate this statement.

Candidly, I had no desire to meet one of such conspicuous ill-breeding and so unscrupulous a nature as you appear to be. There is an old proverb as to the impossibility of touching pitch—you know the rest. But when I find you posing as an authority upon the fates of Secular leaders, attacking myself and slandering a newspaper and a party with which I am connected, I put on one side personal feelings and challenge you (1) to a written discussion upon "What becomes of the infidel leaders?" (2) to quote from the *National Reformer* passages as filthy as those to which I have referred in the Bible (3) to substantiate your statement as to succouring Secularists left to starve by their own body.—Yours faithfully,
EDWARD B. AVELING.

The rev. gentleman replied as follows:—

88 Caversham Road, N.W., August 27, 1883.

Sir,—As you are clearly afraid to make good your bragging threat of "attacking my statements" on a public platform, I beg to decline any further correspondence. And as to writing in the *Freethinker*, my opinion is that no decent man would touch the "obscene" thing with a pair of tongs.—Yours truly,
C. J. WHITMORE.

It will be seen that this clerical coward and slanderer dare not take up the challenge that I fling in his face. In subsequent issues of the *Freethinker* I shall show in detail the falseness of his leaflet.
EDWARD B. AVELING.

JUMPING COMMENTS UPON THE BIBLE.

(Continued from page 291.)

I HAVE had nearly enough of Noah's flood, I can tell you; and yet I must now take a header into the very midst of its awful superfluity of waters. The earth is a globe (nearly so) 25,000 miles in diameter; and the area of its whole surface equals about 200,000,000 square miles. Its highest mountains rise more than 5 miles above the level of the sea; the flood rose about 26 feet above the top of the highest of them. Therefore, the earth must have been encased in a shell of extra water about $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 miles deep, the highest peak in the world being over 28,000 feet high. This equals an ocean 25,000 miles long, by 8,000 miles wide, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 miles deep, measuring down to the ordinary sea-level. The solid content of this new and universal ocean could not be less than about 1,000,000,000 cubic miles of water, or about 1-80th of the solid contents of the whole earth as it now is. If this water could be formed into a river 1 mile wide and 10 yards in depth, it would stretch out to the enormous length of 176,000,000,000 miles, almost 2,000 times the distance from the earth to the sun! If the water of that river flowed by at 7 miles per hour, it would take 2,878,188 years to run away!

Whence did all this water come? From heaven, and down through its windows? It must have been very many millions of years on the road. And when it is remembered that the earth is totally invisible from heaven, we must conclude that he who fired or squirted all that water from his syringe must have been a most excellent marksman indeed, not to have hit the sun instead of so tiny a mark as the earth, and so absolutely invisible as it must have been. We cannot, I am sorry to confess, sufficiently admire the goodness and wisdom of god in this transaction, especially when we consider that he must have shot the water from his syringe many millions of years before either earth or sun was created! Now this shows divine skill in its most transcendent phase. Imagine, my reader, a marksman who could fire his rifle, and while the shot was flying could go and create the target and then coolly wait for the flying bullet to hit the bulls-eye! Jehovah, the war-god, was the very best marksman ever yet known. How carefully he calculated the time and the position of the moving target! Remember, this earth is flying through space at the rate of about 65,000 miles an hour! How clever of him to hit the mark under such conditions! Then, how kind of him to arrange for drowning the world so many millions of years before it was created! What an exhibition of foresight and providence! Who would not worship thee, O Jehovah! after this display of thy goodness and wisdom?

What became of the water after it had done all the drowning, I am not able to say. Nor can I explain how it was that so large a mass of water, falling from heaven with a velocity some hundreds of times greater than a cannon ball has, did not bear the earth before it as a falling drop of rain does an invisible grain of dust. These are mysteries we had better leave alone. Divine wisdom has thrown a veil over them. Who shall dare to lift it now?

There are many other incidents connected with the flood that prudence bids us not to meddle with, if we would retain our faith. Therefore, let them remain buried in the divine oblivion which shrouds them.

When Noah escaped from his box he murdered one or more of all the clean beasts and fowls he had with him, and burnt them for Jehovah's dinner. He had kept Lent for over a year, poor fellow; and never had been so delighted in his days as he was with this sacrifice. He *smelled* but does not seem to have eaten it. So delighted was he, that he promised never to drown the world again. Perhaps he feared he might lose all animals in another flood, and so get no more smoke of burning flesh as long as he lived. How extremely condescending, my friend, it was of the infinite god, who fills all space, to stoop so low as to bring his nose near enough to sniff up the reek of Noah's sacrifice! One might have thought that he would have been above such conduct. But no; the Bible reveals god as having nothing better to do just then than to enjoy himself smelling the burning animals. Of course he has been wonderfully civilised since then. The bishops have taken him to task over a good many things, and you wouldn't know it was the same god now, so great a transformation has there been in him. Indeed, the incident of Noah's

sacrifice is now never mentioned in his presence. The slightest allusion to it would produce an earthquake.

And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of every man . . . whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed (Gen. ix., 5-6). The Bible has been translated into many languages, but not into all. Why are the poor beasts forgotten? They shed men's blood, some of them; and god will require it at their hands. To this day the beasts have never been warned. How shocking! Lions and tigers, mad bulls and wolves have shed many a man's blood, because they did not know the risk they ran. Why does not some pious divine go and tell them that they will be damned if they shed human gore? Alas! to think of the many serpents and ravenous beasts that might be tamed and converted by this Bible text if they only knew it! And how hard-hearted are the worshippers of god, that they don't go and tell them. Put up this text in all places where men and beasts meet, in the languages of all the animal species of a dangerous nature; let them know the real price of human blood; and neither beast of prey, nor flea, nor bug, will ever shed a drop again as long as the world shall last.

The latter part of the text is the stronghold of the public executioner. But for the Bible the death-penalty would probably disappear. In obedience to divine commands men have burnt witches and heretics, and still hang murderers to glut their taste for vengeance. What good is done to anybody by hanging a man? Does it restore his victim to life? Does it deter from crime? Not at all. It is the result of superstition, and merely multiplies murder.

Behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you (Gen. ix., 9-10). Such is the text. The comment is not yet written.

JOS. SYMES.

(To be continued.)

N A T U R A L M A N .

CONCERNING the when and how of the origin of man nothing positive is known. Genesis states that "god made man," but as the greatest intellects of modern times doubt the existence of deity, a ready acceptance of the Mosaic account of the creation of the human species can only take place among those who are not well qualified to weigh evidence, balance probabilities, and appraise the evidence of rival theories.

The researches of men of science lead us to the belief that the authors of the first and second chapters of Genesis were mistaken. They formulated a theory and imagined it to be a fact.

Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, and other eminent scientists, dispute altogether the theory that man was created perfect, and in their works have proved to demonstration that the beings called men have evolved from lower organisms; that they have the same anatomical structure as the Catarrhini apes; that there is a distinct blood-relationship between them, and that they have both had a common parentage.

To establish the truth of the evolution theory, it is enough to look fairly at the facts of nature; to observe man under various aspects; to consider him in barbaric times, or in countries where he is not yet civilised; to see him in a nude condition with nothing to cover him but a mass of hair which nature provides; to watch him in his struggle for life with his enemies, destructive lower animals and his fellow men, and to find in the course of years that a higher form of man has evolved out of this barbaric creature.

The evolution theory accounts for the facts as they are observed in life—facts which upon any other theory are quite inexplicable. And it must not be supposed that because the theory does not give a complete explanation to all the phenomena that it therefore is not reliable. Haeckel says ("Pedigree of Man," p. 36): "If we can only prove the general truth of the Darwinian theory, our idea of the origin of man from lower vertebrata follows of necessity, and we are not obliged to give a special proof as to this latter view if the general proposition is well established. That the general proposition is well established is now admitted by the most enlightened of the opponents of Darwinism. What is called the "evolution theory" is generally acknow-

ledged to be removed from the region of hypothesis to that of fact."

But it is not my purpose further to pursue the subject of man's origin, which, while it is confessedly a most interesting question, is one upon which no man who is not a skilled scientist can write or speak with authority. I can only deal with probabilities. Nobody, so far as we know, was present to witness the first man spring into existence. Indeed, we do not know that there was a first man! And if there was a first, it does not follow that he was conscious of being made, or when he was completed that he had the pleasure of seeing his maker, who told him how it was done. Or, on the other hand, if he evolved from some lower creature it does not follow that he was conscious of the evolution. But at least we can be sure that history speaks with no uncertain sound concerning man's progress in the world and the means by which it was achieved. As a civilised creature man is not many centuries old. Even now we find many savage races existing on the earth, and in type so low in the scale are they that they more nearly resemble the brute beasts, both in intellect and in physique, than the higher forms of men. Now if we would study the progress of the human race to any advantage, we must study it apart from all prejudice, and not allow religious or superstitious notions concerning the superiority of one class of people to warp our minds and prevent us from understanding the important part played by savage peoples in the battle of life. For it must always be remembered that man's history is one of fearful warfare, not only between men and men, but between man and the lower animals.

It is no flight of the imagination to say that there exist the clearest proofs that man many ages ago lived in "holes in the earth," and went in constant fear of animals who sought him as their prey. Sometimes he would have to scramble up trees to elude the vigilance of these sagacious beasts; sometimes the tree would form no place of safety, and he would have to run for dear life or become a living sacrifice to these savage beings.

In the course of time man learnt how to keep himself warm while the beasts of the field perished from cold or parched with thirst and famished with hunger, sunk and died; he learnt how to huddle himself up close to a fire in his mud-hut out of all danger from the enemy. In addition to this he learnt how to speak, to communicate his thoughts to his fellows. These were great steps in advance. Man was still in a nude condition. But now he began to form a theory of the cause of the phenomena of the universe. He began to establish the reign of the gods. All his gods, naturally enough, at first were fetishes. Those animals which he considered superior to himself he elected as special objects of worship. As soon as he found that these were not superior but inferior to himself, he began to make gods after his own image. He was still naked. Voltaire says ("Philosophical Dictionary," vol. ii., p. 182) in dealing with this period: "Man had only his bare skin, which, continually exposed to the sun, rain and hail, became chapped, tanned and spotted. The male in our continent was disfigured by spare hairs on his body, which rendered him frightful without covering him. His face was hidden by these hairs. His skin became a rough soil which bore a forest of stalks, the roots of which tended upwards and the branches of which grew downwards. It was in this state and in this image that this animal ventured to paint god, when in course of time he learnt the art of description."

Out of small tribes in course of ages grew great nations. Men could now manufacture weapons of destruction with which they could procure food and destroy their enemies; thus little by little were built up the nations of the earth. All advance, all progress towards civilisation made by primitive man was made by opposing with all his strength and skill the destructive forces of nature, and by strenuous attempts at improving upon human nature itself. Was man then inherently depraved and prone to evil continually? Not so. The germs of evil and good were alike sown in his nature; and if either of these was developed by favorable circumstances an evil or a good result followed of necessity. That man was not depraved by nature is seen by the fact that in the general evolution of things instead of growing worse he has continued to improve—from the low, brutal and immoral creature of the past to the purer, loftier, nobler beings—the highest that can be found to-day.

In his natural state, it is true, man was a wicked being. He had no intuitive knowledge of right and wrong. He had to perform an act, and he was never sure until he felt

the results whether it was good or bad. In his natural state he was dirty, untruthful, unjust. No god came to tell him that "cleanliness was next to godliness;" nor admonish him to be truthful and just in all his dealings. He was left alone to use his own unaided intelligence as best he might.

To test the truth of these assertions one has only to turn to savage races existing to-day. It will be found on investigation that not only are they unclean in their habits and destitute of any idea of justice, but for the most part they are unblushing liars and ingenious thieves.

All the characteristics in human nature that are called virtues are purely of artificial growth, and result from man's cultivation of his better self; or in other words, from his improvement upon nature's spontaneous course of action.

In support of this view I may here quote J. S. Mill, who says ("Essay on Nature," p. 48): "Children and the lower classes of most countries seem to be actually fond of dirt: the vast majority of the human race are indifferent to it: whole nations of otherwise civilized and cultivated human beings tolerate it in some of its worst forms, and only a very small minority are consistently offended by it. Indeed, the universal law of the subject appears to be that uncleanness offends only those to whom it is unfamiliar, so that those who have lived in so artificial a state as to be unused to it in any form, are the sole persons whom it disgusts in all forms. Of all virtues this is the most evidently not instinctive, but a triumph over instinct. Assuredly neither cleanliness nor the love of cleanliness is natural to man, but only the capacity of acquiring a love of cleanliness." On page 57 the same writer declares that, "Savages are always liars. They have not the faintest notion of truth as a virtue."

Having then all these bad qualities of nature, how is it that man has been able to put them into subjection along the road, and advance to civilisation even at the pace that we have seen? Such advance has been wholly dependent upon the energy and skill with which he has opposed the destructive forces of nature, using one law to counteract another, and upon the determination with which he has striven to improve upon human nature itself.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

(To be continued.)

A SCENE IN HELL.

ELDER KNAPP, an American revivalist, recently set forth the sin of profane swearing in the following manner:—"I will give you, my dear friends," he remarked, "a picture from a scene in hell. The Devil is sitting in his private office, receiving the souls as they are brought to him from the upper world. In comes an infernal gaoler, conducting a soul to everlasting flames. 'Who were you?' asked the Devil, as the culprit was brought to where he was sitting. 'Secretary Benjamin, of the Confederate Cabinet,' was the reply. 'Oh, yes, I knew you were coming,' said the Devil, as he turned the leaves of his ledger, and made an entry of the secretary's name. 'I always show consideration to those that have showed it to me. I've got to take you in, but I'll try and make you as comfortable as possible.' To the attendant: 'Show Mr. Benjamin to a place as near as you can get him to a current of air.' The next arrival was a man who had killed his mother-in-law. He was hung in Cincinnati. 'Take him away,' said the Devil, 'but treat him kindly. The chances are two to one that he isn't much to blame. I remember his case. His mother-in-law came here three weeks ago. She looked as though she wanted killing. She's over in No. 63. Put him there, and set the old woman in front of the furnace. No. 63 is too cool for her.' Very soon another victim arrives. 'What has brought you here?' asks the Devil. 'My case is a hard one,' was the reply. 'I am here just because I swore.' 'Because you swore?' asked the Devil, rising angrily from his chair. 'Yes, that's all the sin I ever did.' 'All the sin,' echoed the Devil; 'all the sin? Why, you mean, despicable, contemptible, low-lived vagabond,' said the Devil, as he brought his fist down on the table, 'there isn't a corner here that's hot enough for you. Of all the sixty thousand preachers that spend their Sundays in black-guarding me, not one of them ever accused me of swearing. Blasphemed your maker, did you? Profaned the holy name of your savior that forgave his enemies upon the cross, and died to have saved you from here? You did this, did

you?' The trembling culprit made no reply. 'Why,' continued the Devil, whose voice arose as his wrath intensified, 'why there's no excuse for you. A man by an unlucky blow may kill another. In pressing temptation a man may steal; he may lie to save his neck or cheat his neighbor. There's some excuse for him. The profane swearer has no excuse! Attendant, take this accursed scoundrel out of my sight. Put him up to his neck where the coals are the hottest, and then put somebody to sit on his accursed head.'

JONES' MISHAP.

(A Brand-New Vision of Judgment.)

ONCE on a time there lived a pious man whose name was Jones,
And when he died, beneath the sod they laid his lifeless bones;
In certain hope that when the resurrection morning came
His scattered fragments would unite and answer to his name.

When Mr. Jones beneath the ground a certain time had lain,
His bones and muscles gradually returned to earth again;
The particles and gases to the surface found their way,
And turned in time to edibles, man's hunger to allay.

Another man, named Smith, some of these edibles consumed
So part of Mr. Jones defunct a living form resumed;
But, by a slight mistake of the controller upon high,
The atoms were identical which formed each man's left thigh.

The promised Day of Judgment, long expected, came at last,
And like a million hurricanes there blew the trumpets' blast;
Both Smith and Jones rose slowly and, forgetting where they were,
Awakened suddenly, began with one accord to swear.

But, seeing all the heavenly host clad in their best attire,
They both remembered that the world was doomed to final fire;
And so in haste began to put their fragments into form,
Lest they should both be left behind to face the coming storm.

The saints on every side were fixing up their worn-out frames
anew,
And crowds of angels helped them on with paste-pots and
with glue;
But oft in the confusion the materials got mixed,
And so it was a long, long time before they all were fixed.

"Where is my head?" "Who's got my teeth?" "I'll swear
that is my nose!"
And such like cries from nervous ones on ev'ry hand arose;
Until the judge, kept waiting long, began to get quite hot,
And said, "If you folks don't make haste I'll burn the
blessed lot."

But Smith and Jones, as you may guess, are in a sorry
plight,
For each one grabs the same thigh-bone, and over it they
fight;
The pious two aim blows and utter "cusses" without end,
And all the saints come round and each cheers his respective
friend.

But soon the judge the sight perceives and from his throne
jumps down—
"Hallo! what's all this row about?" he asks with holy frown;
But the frenzied fighters pay him not the smallest of
attention—
Still struggling and contesting o'er the thigh-bone of con-
tention.

"I can't stand this," then said the judge. "Ho, Michael,
ring the bell,
And summon my friend Nicholas to come at once from hell;
You really have disgraced yourselves and are not fit, you know,
'To enter into heaven with us. You both must go below."

But Smith a final effort made and gained the fought-for
thigh,
He fixed it in its place and quickly mounted up on high.
The judge gave chase, and Nicholas too, but they were both
too late,
For Smith had gained the clouds and shut himself within the
gate.

When Nicholas returned and saw the still dismembered
Jones,
He said unto the judge, in very loud and scornful tones:
"I'm awfully particular about the men I take,
So, if you please, I'll leave him, and he'll roost instead of
bake."

So Jahveh then admitted Jones, but stowed him out of
sight,
And made him sweep the streets of gold and light the lamps
at night;
He also had to feed the beasts and polish up the throne,
And work for ever on one leg because of that thigh-bone.
N. R.

PROCLAMATION TO ALL FREETHINKERS.

IN view of the recent disreputable proceedings of one William Booth (fortunately there is only one), commonly known (the adverb is well-chosen) as General Booth, and taking into consideration the fact that he is now through the agency of another, even as his god works evil through the agency of Satan, selling spirituous liquors at the Eagle Tavern, City Road, be it enacted that he be known henceforth as

PUBLICAN BOOTH.

Like his master he eateth (and drinketh) with publicans and sinners. All Freethinkers and other enemies of humbug are hereby requested to use every effort to replace in the vocabulary of decent people the assumed title of General Booth by the more accurate one of Publican Booth.

ACID DROPS.

GEORGE W. PITMAN, of 140 Gower Street, W.C., adjoining the station, shall have an advertisement, gratis, in our columns. He supplies every description of literature "except atheistical, infidel, or republican." This is carrying out the censorship of the press with a vengeance. Every Freethinker who can possibly manage it, is earnestly requested to make a point of calling on Pitman as often as possible during the next few weeks and asking him for our paper. This impertinent bookseller, with his presumption in dictating to his customers, will regret that he ever issued his impudent circular. Remember, friends! G. W. Pitman, 140 Gower Street.

THE Midland Railway Branch of the United Kingdom Railway Temperance Union can have but a limited knowledge of the meaning of words. The association is entirely unsectarian. Yet in both the declarations, one of which is to be signed by its members, the words "my duty as a Christian," occur, and, "each meeting is to be opened with hymn and prayer and closed with the doxology." Thus the Union closes its doors to that large and ever-growing number of men who are not Christians, who hate hymns, prayers and doxologies, but who love temperance and, we will venture to say, are among the most temperate and best-conducted railway servants.

THE following advertisement appeared a few weeks back in the *Tiverton Gazette*—

Public Notice.

BELIEVING that it is the lord's will that I should Discontinue the Sale of Tobacco, I shall give up the sale of it from this date.
FREDK. SNELL.
Bridge Street and Gold Street, Tiverton, July 21, 1883.

A CLERGYMAN, the Rev. Mr. Cotton, was on Tuesday fined £10 by the magistrates sitting at Kilmearag, county Kildare, for cruelty to children at an orphanage at Caragh, of which defendant was manager. It appeared that he had chained two of the boy inmates together by the legs, and tied a log weighing nearly five pounds, round the leg of a little girl to prevent her from running away. This log had been kept on the girl night and day for nine days.—*Daily News*.

THE SALVATION ARMY.

(To the Editor of the *Christian World*.)

Sir,—I promise you hell in this world and hell and everlasting damnation in the next, if ever again Christ's army you abuse with your tongue, pen, or paper. From Christ's ambassador,
WILLIAM ENGLAND.
18 Boundary Street, Liverpool, September 10, 1883.

CAPTAIN R. H. DYAS forwards to us a copy of an Italian newspaper, *L'Italia Terminale*, in which appears an article by him on the Salvation Army. He speaks in very uncompromising, but we fear in very truthful terms of the grotesque nature of this body, of the indecency and immorality that follow in its wake. He has the courage to quote our paper: "Who will care," he says, "to imitate that brave London paper, the *Freethinker*, in its comparison of the infamy of the Salvation Army meetings to that of the Agapae (love feasts) of early times."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Dr. Edward B. Aveling (interim editor of the *Freethinker*) will lecture in the Belmont Hall, Birmingham, on Sunday, September 23, at 11, 3, and 7 o'clock.

CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL business communications to be addressed to the Manager, 28 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, E.C. Literary communications to the Editor of the *Freethinker*, 13 Newman Street, Oxford Street, London, W.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, directly from the office, post-free to any part of Europe, America, Canada, and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

RECEIVED.—R. Bradbury, G. Woods, H. Hensolt, E. Macloghlin, G. Foulger, M. Plackett, W. Macintosh, Rough'un, W. Studdard, Nellie, F. Oliver, S. Bellechambers, Silo, E. Sharpe, M. Bunton, J. E. B., F. H., H. Kitchener, J. Masterton.

LIPPO.—Received. The writer in your local paper is only having a little joke, and is probably a staunch Republican.

EVOLUTIONIST.—The account of the religious views of Chas. Darwin, given in Dr. Edward Aveling's penny pamphlet on, "The Religious Views of Charles Darwin," is the only work that gives a clear idea of the position of the great naturalist with regard to Atheism and Christianity.

C. M. J.—You are not the first and will not be the last person fogged by the absurd Bible accounts. They are cooked accounts—Joseph Cooked—and no person, not even those of the trinity, can understand them.

J. MCCARTHY.—Petitions for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws should be sent to Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Gladstone's address is 10 Downing Street; Sir William Harcourt's address is 7 Grafton Street, W.

JOHN W. GRANSHAW.—Send us the sermons, please.

THOMAS A. WILLIAMS, of 12 Franklyn Street, St. Paul's, reports that he forwarded a memorial to Mr. Gladstone on behalf of our martyrs. Mr. Gladstone "regrets that he cannot interfere."

JUAN C. DRENON has for disposal the following numbers of the *Freethinker*:—Nos. 14, 41, 44, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, Vol. II.; 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 31, Vol. III., to be sold to the highest bidder, half the sum realised to go towards the Testimonial Fund. Wanted the following:—Nos. 10, Vol. I., 1881; 30, 32, 33, Vol. II., 1882. Will give 8d. for each number.

W. J. LEEKEY.—Can you give us exact details of your accusation? The author of "Biblical Arithmetic" is requested to send his address to R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street.

B. BIGGS.—No. Unfortunately, they are not to be had at the office.

D. J. O'DOUGHER.—The *Freethinker* is to be had from March 18 up to date.

In the account of the clerical ignorami, who gave such various and inaccurate translations of the classical "*Ecce tua Vinfame*," the name of the place should have read, Hanney, Wantage.

SYMPATHISER.—We shall advertise the date of Mr. Foote's release.

A DOUBTER.—An Atheist is one who is without god. He has no conception of the meaning of the word. To him the final things, as far as his knowledge goes, are matter and motion. He sees no evidence of the existence of a being outside the universe.

You will see in our next issue that Dr. Edward Aveling asked to be allowed to discuss with Mr. Thomas Cooper on the occasion of his lectures at Westbourne Park Chapel, but no opportunity for discussion was granted.

FRIENDS desirous of aiding the circulation of this paper can obtain thirteen copies of back numbers for sixpence. By the new parcel post 3 lbs. can be sent for 6d.

IT is particularly requested that all orders for literature should be sent to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, to whom all Post-office Orders should be made payable. Considerable delay and annoyance are caused by the disregard of this rule. In remitting stamps halfpenny ones are preferred.

AGENTS wanted in town and country to sell this paper and other Freethought literature.

SUGAR PLUMS.

FREE fight in Stannington Church, near Sheffield. The Rev. Samuel Parkes, Rufus Gill, George Wagstaff v. George Dyson. The parson and his allies clearly took a hint from the doctrine of the trinity.

THE Conditional Immortality Association have decided to oppose the orthodox teaching on future punishment. By all means. Only let us remember that the evidence for hell is of exactly the same value as that for heaven and for god.

FIFTEEN of the Council of Hanley, Staffordshire, are bigots. Nine are honorable men. An application for the use of the Town Hall for a Secular lecturer was ultimately rejected by the votes of the fifteen against the nine. Of course it was done in the interests of the true liberty and morality of the country, of which the fifteen, including Alderman Powell, are the representatives and guardians.

"MR. HOMERSHAW COX, county court judge, giving judgment

in a case at Llanidloes, said the infamous perjury committed all over Wales made one's blood boil. It was simply sickening the perjury he met with, whilst the place was scattered with churches and chapels, and people thought themselves so religious, and at the same time told such lies."

A SALE for the recovery of extraordinary tithes took place on Sept. 11, at Swanley, Kent. An indignation meeting was held. Mr. John May explained that the extraordinary tithes were taxed upon the farmer's industry and capital. Why should the parson claim a charge upon his industry? Mr. E. Vinson spoke in the strongest terms against the imposition of this tax, which he maintained affected the well being of the working class as well as it did the growers. The clergymen of the parish might doubtless get a hundred a year more; but he would ask, Did the people get an extra sermon or a visitation for it? We hope not. That would be adding insult to injury.

MR. M. J. SHAW STEWART sends us a kindly letter, stating that he has written to Mr. Gladstone on behalf of our imprisoned friends with, as result, the receipt of the following letter:—

"10 Downing Street, Whitehall, September 7, 1883.

"Sir,—Mr. Gladstone has received the letter with which you favored him on the 31st ult., and desires me to express his regret at the report you there give of the health of Mr. Ramsey, now in prison for blasphemy. The matter, however, is one in which it is impossible for him to interfere.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

E. S. LYTTELTON.

A RAILWAY servant writes to us as follows: "I am a Freethinker and railway servant of some fourteen or fifteen years' standing, and with a tolerably wide experience. I am unable to call to my mind any instance of such pressure upon railway men as a class. Since the men commenced to form associations and fight for their own hand, very great consideration has been exercised towards them, and they are protected from anything in the shape of tyranny. The paper you speak of I have never seen, nor do I know of any religious paper got up specially for railway servants." As a curious comment on this letter, which is without doubt *bonâ fide*, we receive by the same post a copy of the *Railway Signal*, with which we deal in our next issue.

THE article in last week's issue, signed "M. H. B.," has called forth the following letter:—

"St. Thomas', Regent Street, W.

"Dear Sir,—As a clergyman of the Church of England and a regular reader of the *Freethinker*, I venture to address you. I have been much interested by 'An Address to Christians,' in last week's number, signed 'M. H. B.,' and I now write to ask you if it cannot be published in a pamphlet form. I should be glad myself, though I am a poor man, to do what I could in a pecuniary way towards forwarding its publication and circulation among professing Christians. Even if my request cannot be granted I know that you will pardon me for addressing you, for I am sure we have this in common at least—that we set before ourselves the truth as the object for which we seek at all costs and hazards.—Yours etc.,

"September 17. W. E. MOLL."

ONE of our London friends, Mr. Hartmann, intends giving away twenty-eight copies of the *Freethinker* weekly. These are placed in Mr. Forder's hands and sent this week to Mrs. Bowers, of Dewsbury for sale or distribution. For those sold others will be sent. Friends in towns where there is no agent can have a share of Mr. Hartmann's generous gift on application. Cannot some of our other friends second Mr. Hartmann in this method of extending our circulation?

SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS.

ARE bazaars played out, or are they no longer effectively attractive for religious purposes? Have fancy fairs, graced with rank and beauty, lost their earlier influence, or have the fairs another fancy? Be the solution of the above problems what it may, certain it is that these devices for replenishing exhausted church exchequers have been abandoned, or perhaps have been tried with unsatisfactory results by the god-fearing folk of Bagshot.

Pious Bagshotites want an edifice in which to worship; and determined to prove a soul of good exists in things evil, they the other week employed a section of the British army (by special permission of the Commander-in-Chief) for church-building purposes, and converted life-guardsmen for the nonce into pillars of the church. Bagshot church has not yet advanced beyond the scaffold-pole skeleton stage; and to raise funds for the furthering of this religious enterprise a grand tournament was arranged to take place

under the presidency of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, surrounded by all the nobility and gentry of the district. The rattling of single-sticks and quarter-staves, and the clashing of steel, were supplemented by such sword-tricks as the cutting of a handkerchief, the cleaving of an apple, the severing of broom-handles, lead bars, and sheep; and the object of this chivalrous display was to obtain money to go *in pios usus!*

But lest these interesting and edifying exhibitions should not appeal with sufficient force to the religious instincts of the godly and curious, or should fail to touch deeply enough their purses, a yet further spectacle was provided, well calculated to interest the concourse of aristocratic and military idlers in the church militant. Quoth the reporter: "A novelty for most of the fair spectators was afforded by eminent professors of the 'noble science,' and great was the merriment caused when Macfarlane and Pat Condon, or Jem Goode and Symonds closed in a rally." *O tempora! O mores!*

It was but a few short months since that a handsome donation to a religious institution was actually rejected because the donor had but lately retired from the honorable profession of book-making. Ah! but Jacob wrestled at Jabok, was hit somewhere below the belt, and got a blessing.

The reporter continues: "Before commencing hostilities they were photographed with the pavilion and its occupants as a background; but whether this photograph will be sold in further aid of the Church Building Fund, did not transpire." Of course it will; and perchance some eminent artist will use it in illustrating the "History of the Church of Christ" as the groundwork of an anglicised "*Pollice verso*." Why should not expounders [*Ex*, and *pound* to beat or bruize; expounder = *ex-bruizer*. Cf. also Eng. *libell-thumper*] of the "noble science" have their part and lot in church work? Gentle Jesus wielding a scourge drove peaceful vendors of doves from the Temple; and what possible objection can reasonably be raised to modern Tipton-Slashers and Benecia Boys dedicating their skill to the service of god? The ring could be kept by the Salvation Army; the spectators would cheer the combatants and arouse their own enthusiasm by singing "Stand up! stand up for Jesus!" and the sidesmen, or backers, could encourage a wavering professor by quoting John vi., 20, "It is eye; be not afraid." The gate-money (some of the Bagshot celebrities had previously achieved successes at the Agricultural Hall) would be divided between the "thrifty and irregular worshippers of the gods" who provided the entertainment, and the father of the son of the holy mother of god; and on the succeeding holy sabbath the eloquent pastor who fleeced the local flock would illustrate his exposition of the doctrine that there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood by a reference to the "tapping of claret" and the liquidation of church debts.

Apart from that aspect of this subject to which the finger of ridicule may justly be pointed, and without regard to what the British taxpayer would say could he obtain a hearing for his complaint about the army, supported by all sects compulsorily, being engaged in Established Church service, the Freethinker is encouraged by such an incident to hope that spontaneous contributors to religious objects are diminishing, and that insofar as giving to the church is stimulated by such means, the Christian religion will be discredited.

ABE.

JOSIAH GIMSON.

Born, Nov. 29, 1818. Died at Leicester, Sept. 6, 1883.

JOSIAH GIMSON is dead. He was an Atheist. His life was pure, honest, real. He lived as few men live, loved and honored by those who knew him. His genial heart stimulated weaker men; his sympathy was without bounds. He did every good that was in his power, had ill-feeling for none, and pitied those who needed but whom he could not aid. An ardent worker, with a powerful mind, he was a tower of strength against the evils with which he contended. Smaller minds took courage from him. Men whose thoughts were as his, but whose life and language had not the force of his, gladly welcomed him as exponent of their thoughts against class interests and the mis-statements of Christians. He was an admirer of Jesus, whom he took as a man, while he threw away Christ the god. The teachings of Jesus he was proud to promulgate, though he readily acknowledged Jesus to have been in error upon some points. Jesus was in his day, he maintained, a reformer whose general teachings might be en-

dorsed by men of this hour. He based his opinions on what Jesus said. What others said of Jesus he would not entertain. These were the principal grounds upon which the bust of Jesus was placed upon the front of the Leicester Secular Hall with those of Socrates, Owen, Paine and Voltaire.

Imperfect as he called himself, his life was good and his actions sincere. His sympathy with our imprisoned friends was shown by his ready contributions to the Prisoners' Aid Fund. Fear was unknown to him. Thus has he left us. We cannot hope to meet him again, we cannot even hope that our words may reach his ears. But we give to his memory respect, and this is all his living self would have asked from us. This we can best do by our renewed action, by our constant striving after the objects he had in view. We should further the cause he so nobly worked to advance. Let us do that which his death in more solemn fashion lays upon us; raise our voices loudly for justice, use our strength in constant fighting against error, and show by our lives that the path he so honorably trod shall not be sullied by us as we pass along. May the work he leaves to others be carried out by them, and the truth, justice, freedom and love he strove to attain grow rife among mankind as they learn to follow in the way made easier and sweeter by his passing!

M. H. B.

PRISONERS' AID FUND.

For the support of the families of the men now in gaol, for the protection of their interests, and for the aid of any others who may be in similar case; any balance to be used in the discretion of the Executive.

Two Secularists who object to the *Freethinker*, past and present, but to persecution more, 2s.; — and Mrs. Avern (Edinburgh), 6s.; Three Auld Reekies (4 weeks' don.), 2s. Per T. Monk: G. Bowerman (3rd don.), 4s.; T. Ford (3rd don.), 2s.; N. S. W., 5s. 2d. Per W. Liversedge: A Few Working Men, 3s.; A. Wallis, 10s.; J. Ireland, 6d.; N. W. (Plymouth), £1; D. B. (Wandsworth), 4s.

The Prisoners' Aid Committee, appointed by the National Secular Society, have more than sufficient money in hand to meet all probable expenses up to February 25, 1884. They therefore desire to announce the closure of this fund. They propose, before resigning their trust in February, 1884, to present to the Executive a complete balance-sheet, showing the moneys received, and the payments made, and to pay over to the Executive any moneys remaining in their hands, thus rendering a full account of their stewardship.

The Committee desire to call the attention of friends to the Testimonial Fund, now being raised for presentation to the imprisoned Freethinkers. Those who desire to help Messrs. Foote and Ramsey are requested for the future to send all contributions to swell this gift to them. The party has guarded for them their homes and provided for their wives and families during their cruel imprisonment; this work is accomplished; it remains now only to prepare a welcome for them on their approaching release.

ANNIE BESANT,
CHARLES HERBERT,
GEORGE STANDING. } Committee.

ANNIE BESANT, *Treasurer*, 19 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, London, N.W., to whom all remittances should be sent. Collecting sheets will be sent to any Freethinker on application to 28 Stonecutter Street.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SECOND LETTER FROM MR. FOOTE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

DEAR SIR,—I have just let fall from my hand the *Freethinker*, having read several times over Mr. Foote's letter to your good self.

Freethinkers, and the many admirers of our brave editor, must have, as I did, looked very anxiously and impatiently for publication day, feeling persuaded that it would contain some of the old wit, fire, and a few arrows for the enemy, a commodity with which he is so well stocked. Those who have read the letter could not help, I think, feeling a trifle womanish in reading the first portion (so touching) which deals with Mr. Wheeler's renewed break down, and its effect on Mr. Foote. Our sympathy goes out towards both in this sore affliction. One cannot realise the extent of their sufferings. Only those similarly situated can do that. The fifteen years of what Mr. Foote is pleased to call pure and perfect friendship, sounds truly beautiful and real, and the temporary severance must inevitably, as we have seen, produce painful results.

A tinge of bitterness pervades our nature in taking leave of a friend under ordinary circumstances. What shall we say of fifteen years sweet friendship, so extraordinarily and inhumanly cut off by a creed so revolting and alien to the justice, freedom, and love, of which it makes its boast?

We have witnessed instances of its present atrocities, and history glaringly reveals to the world its past infamies. Still with overwhelming, though much weakened, odds against it, the *Freethinker* and Freethought live and grow steadily, firmly, surely, and, as our brave champion once wrote: "The flag will not fall because one standard bearer is stricken down; it will be kept flying proudly and bravely as of old—shot-torn and blood-stained perhaps, but flying, flying, flying!"

Our best wishes for the future follow him and his two journals, which have been so ably and efficiently buoyed up and sustained in his absence. We look forward to the time when *his terrible bantering will be a greater terror than ever*, and ere long to see the bigots rage impotently. What we have had promised will surely come to pass, and it becomes our duty to further aid their spread, and Freethought generally. This I consider the best and most effectual means of showing the death-stricken Christian creed that the day of mental freedom has visibly dawned and the mist of superstition is rapidly rising. Presently the brilliant sun of truth will burst forth in splendor, shedding its golden rays upon, and emancipating a people hitherto held in priestly subjection and sunk in mental chaos.—Yours very truly,
A YOUNG FREETHINKER.
September 9, 1883.

FATALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—If not encroaching too much upon your valuable space, will you permit me, through your columns, to assure Mr. A. B. Moss of my acceptance of his confession of error in the sense in which it is meant. *Errare humanum est*. It was his fate to err, it is mine to grant him ready absolution. Philosophy says, Necessity knows no law. But are there not things, neither necessary nor lawful, yet big with the fate of humanity?—Yours truly,
A FATALIST.

PROFANE JOKES.

OUR irreverent young man, who has been staying at the seaside and reading Shakspeare's "Julius Cæsar," understands now why Casca was so rich a Roman. "Sea-water rent the envious Casca made."

OUR irreverent young man has been reading Shakspeare of late. He wants to know whether, when Hamlet says, "There is special providence in the fall of a sparrow," he refers to the fall in the price that occurs when a quantity of these perfectly useless birds are taken, as demonstrated in the *Freethinker* of July 8.

OUR irreverent young man wants to ask the Christians at Ventnor and other old-fashioned places, if they really believe that Christ has "come to seek and to save that which is lost?" Because, if they do, what's the good of a town-crier?

STAGE direction to Mr. Righton in the "Wilson Barratt play bill scene" from the "Silver King": "Let thine eyes look Righton and let thine eyelids look straight before thee" (Prov. iv., 25).

THE coachman's unconscious satire on the ordinary religious man is worth remembering: "That horse is a knowing one," he said. "Why if anybody was to use him badly he'd bear malice like a Christian;" by which he meant the beast would kick on the first opportunity.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT has just given another proof that he can be merciful to crime and cruel to opinion. He has "remitted three years" out of five years penal servitude, to which a Dr. Storey was sentenced in the winter of 1881 for arson with intent to defraud. In this case he did not sneeringly say, as to Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P., that it was not his business to interfere with sentences; nor did he complain that he should be urged to interfere before half the sentence was expired. It is an impertinence to ask for the release of a heretic who has been in prison five months out of a sentence of nine, but Sir William rushes to open the prison doors for a criminal who has served less than two years out of a sentence of five. The Home Secretary's leniency to crime stands in instructive contrast with his brutality and untruthfulness towards non-criminals, convicted of heresy under a cruel law and sentenced by a vindictive and persecuting judge.—"Day-break," *National Reformer*.

COLONEL INGERSOLL INTERVIEWED.

"The ministers say, I believe, colonel, that worldliness is the greatest foe to the Church, and admit that it is on the increase."
"What is worldliness? I suppose worldliness consists in paying attention to the affairs of this world; getting enjoyment out of this life; gratifying the senses, giving the ears music, the eyes painting and sculpture, the palate good food; cultivating

the imagination; playing games of skill and chance; adorning the person; developing the body; enriching the mind; investigating the facts by which we are surrounded; building homes; rocking cradles; thinking, working, inventing, buying, selling, hoping. All this, I suppose, is worldliness. These worldly people have cleared the forests, ploughed the land, built the cities, the steamships, the telegraphs, and have produced all there is of worth and wonder in the world. Yet the preachers denounce them. Were it not for worldly people, how would the preachers get along? Who would build the churches? Who would fill the contribution boxes and plates, and who (most serious of all questions) would pay the salaries? I believe in the new firm of Health and Heresy, rather than the old partnership of Disease and Divinity, doing business at the old sign of the Skull and Crossbones. Some of the ministers that you have interviewed, or at least one of them, tell us the cure for worldliness. He says that god is sending fires, and cyclones, and things of that character, for the purpose of making people spiritual; of calling their attention to the fact that everything in this world is of a transitory nature. The clergy have always had great faith in famine, in affliction, in pestilence. They know that a man is a thousand times more apt to thank god for a crust or a crumb than for a banquet. They know that prosperity has the same effect on the average Christian that thick soup has, according to Bumble, on the English pauper—"it makes 'em impudent." The devil made a mistake in not doubling Job's property, instead of leaving him a pauper. In prosperity, the ministers think, we forget death and are too happy. In the arms of those we love, the dogma of eternal fire is, for the moment, forgotten. According to the ministers, god kills our children in order that we may not forget him. They imagine that the man who goes into Dakota, cultivates the soil, and rears for himself a little home, is getting too 'worldly'; and so god starts a cyclone to scatter his home and the limbs of his wife and children upon the desolate plains, and the ministers in Brooklyn say this is done because we are getting too 'worldly.' They think we should be more 'spiritual'; that is to say, willing to live upon the labor of others; willing to ask alms, saying in the meantime, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' If this is so, why not give the money back? 'Spiritual' people are those who eat oatmeal and prunes, have great confidence in dried apples, read Cowper's 'Task,' and Pollock's 'Course of Time,' laugh at the jokes in *Harper's Monthly*, wear clothes shiny at the knees and elbows, and call all that has elevated the world 'beggarly elements.'—*Extract from*

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