

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.

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FEBRUARY 3, 1884.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

FREETHINKERS AND POLITICS.

It is high time that Freethinkers recognised that, despite the boasted enlightenment and religious toleration of our age, we are still aliens before the law, debarred by statute from all offices and liable to punishment for the simple expression of our opinions. Such opportunities of meeting and of speech as we possess are only ours because the bigots who would suppress us cannot rely on a jury to convict. They are not rights, but permissions. Such tolerance is intolerable. Contracts are legally void and legacies of no effect if designed to propagate views in opposition to the Christian religion as by law established. We have seen how bad old laws, the offspring of an age of intolerance and persecution, have been revived and severely enforced by a judge worthy of the olden time. Honest men, whose only crime has been too bold a challenging of the legends and creeds which all cultured people have outgrown and ceased to believe, have for their want of hypocrisy been doomed to a punishment befitting only the worst malefactors. The imprisonment of Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp will be a sign by which future ages will judge of the boasted tolerance of our time. This, though the most striking effort of the persecuting spirit, is by no means all. Every disgraceful artifice possible to malignant opposition has been put into play to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from taking the seat in Parliament to which he has been thrice elected, and this avowedly on the ground of his heresy. His daughter has been debarred from attending a so-called free college; and, worse still, Mrs. Besant has had her daughter taken from her. These penalties falling so strikingly on our leaders are only the more prominent effects of a persecution which more or less visits all who dare to openly oppose the popular creed. Under such circumstances it behoves every one who has the interests of freedom at heart to bestir himself, and be unceasing in his efforts until religious equality, extending to all, becomes a reality, and not, as at present, a sham. No dissenting sect has gained this justice till they have taken up a position to demand it, and it is time that Freethinkers showed they are a party whose just demands cannot be overlooked with impunity.

Although it is quite true that Freethinkers are not necessarily Radicals, it is an undoubted fact that the majority are so. Since the time of that great apostle of liberty, Thomas Paine, the questionings of arbitrary authority in all matters political and religious have gone together. Men like Carlile, Watson, and Hethrington have carried on the tradition. The Freethought spirit is naturally opposed to a conservatism which would keep things stagnant both in Church and State, and the hopes of Freethinkers being placed not upon any fabled heaven, but upon the amelioration of man's lot upon this earth, they are ever found earnest supporters of political and social reform. Were this not so our laboring under legal disabilities would naturally make us gravitate to that section of politicians who think least of privilege and hold out most hopes of their removal. It has been the boast of the Liberal party that they have been always on the side of religious freedom and national progress, and the advanced Liberals have always had the political support of Freethinkers. Not only so. In very many boroughs Free-

thinkers are the very backbone of Liberalism. Knowing where they are going they are ever most active in forwarding their principles in however slight a degree, and in numerous towns Freethinkers have worked early and late for the most Liberal candidate, sometimes with the result that, when elected, the so-called Liberal would not as much as vote for the Sunday opening of museums. Ever when an election approaches there is a cry for the subordination of little differences, and the result has been that the claims of Freethinkers have been invariably overlooked. This should and need no longer be. If there are few towns where Freethinkers could elect a candidate of their own, there are fewer still in which they cannot make their claims heard, and very many in which by united action they can turn an election. It only needs the outspokenness of a few, and the ballot-box will prove how large a section of unavowed Freethinkers are ready to support the candidate who goes in for the removal of disabilities. We shall, of course, be told of the necessity of unity for the sake of carrying such important Liberal measures as the county franchise and municipal reform. Our answer is that we, as a body, are suffering from political injustice, and that our claims have been too long deferred. Two questions may easily determine the reality of a candidate's Liberalism. Is he ready to support the electoral rights of Northampton? Will he vote for the repeal of the laws against blasphemy? These questions should be pointedly put to every candidate. Any so-called Liberal whose voice is indistinct on such test questions as these is unworthy the name, and we should give him no vote. Better be misrepresented by an open foe than by a pretended friend. A Tory régime would only result in a Radical reaction, but the rule of inconsistent Liberals means the indefinite postponement of reform. Our advice to all who value Freethought is that in future they play for their own hand. When the many who repudiate Christianity are recognised as a power in the land, and a factor which must be counted in politics, we shall soon see not only the repeal of the odious blasphemy laws, but be recognised as one of the most powerful of dissenting bodies. Not only should parliamentary constituencies be attacked, but every vacancy in municipalities and school boards should be made the occasion of putting forward a secular candidate.

The ballot will usually show a larger following to such a one than may be expected, and, at any rate, a vigorous policy, such as we commend, even where success is hopeless, serves to draw attention to the fact that Freethinkers will not be ignored. That one can do but a little is never any reason for doing nothing at all. The fact of Mr. Bradlaugh representing Northampton in Parliament and Dr. Aveling being a member for Westminster on the London School Board, by no means ensures the policy we desire pursuit of, but it does speak of our becoming a power, and may on occasion prevent the quiet smothering of Freethought claims. We are glad to know that Mr. Ramsey intends to offer himself to the electors for the Hackney School Board. Mr. Foote, who in less than a month will be amongst us again, will probably follow his example in regard to the Finsbury School Board. He will also contest the seat of the Home Secretary at Derby, and we may be assured will carry on the Freethought agitation with a vigor which may make our enemies regret their employment of brute force for the suppression of our freedom.

J. M. WHEELER.

A CHALLENGE TO DEBATE.

THE following correspondence has recently passed between Stockton and London.

"32 Dovecot Street, Stockton-on-Tees.

"Dear Sir,—I am directed by the members of the Stockton Branch of the N. S. S. to say that the Rev. W. W. Howard made a public statement that he would discuss the subject marked on circular enclosed with any Secularist we would put forth. We should very much like you to meet him, if you could by any means make it convenient. If yes, kindly say how many nights and what dates will suit you the best. With best wishes.—Yours truly,

"WILKINSON HEATH."

"To Dr. Aveling."

The subject on the circular was "The bible account of the first day's work of creation." Dr. Aveling wrote accepting the challenge, and received a copy of Mr. Howard's letter to the Stockton branch.

"Vine Cottage, Grove Hill, Middlesbro', Jan. 14, 1884.

"Sir,—I am in receipt of a letter from you giving the information that Dr. Aveling is willing to meet me in debate on the work of creation as described in the bible. The points discussed, it seems, are to be limited to three—viz, the origin of matter, form and light, as dealt with in the lecture to which you refer. I have written to Mr. Taylor instructing him to form a committee to arrange, and you will perhaps wait upon him. You had no need to write to the secretary of the Y.M.C.A. What had he to do with the subject? Why did you not write to me? You ask me if any body of Christians will put me forward. This I take to be an insult. It implies that I am so little known, or respected if known, in Stockton, that I require a testimonial of ability and character. Now, I ask you if this be so? Why you are aware that it is not? I should object to be put forward by any body of Christians. Such a thing would bind me to uphold and defend their peculiar views, and this I would not, because I could not, do. A debate should have for its object the defence of truth and the exposure of error, unfettered by party and sectarian views and influences. If you are against this view, then I desire to have nothing to do with the matter. I am not shirking the debate. I have no fear of my opponent. There is no doubt in my mind as to me having the truth, then why should I seek to retreat? I have not written this from a conviction of the impossibility of finding a party to put me forward, and you and all your friends must know that I have not. I dare say that the whole Christian public of Stockton that believe in debates will rally round me. This you must know to be the truth.—I am, yours very truly,
"W. W. HOWARD."

"13 Newman Street, Jan. 18, 1884.

"My dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter and its enclosure of a copy of one from the Rev. W. Howard. The discussion is to be on the subject named in the title of his lecture, as given on the circular you sent to me—"The first day's work of creation, as recorded in the book of Genesis, explained, and shown to be strictly scientific; dealing with the creation of matter, order and light, and showing how light existed without the sun." The points are therefore not limited to three. I intend to attempt to show that the Genesis account is inaccurate in more than three points. It would have been more satisfactory had Mr. Howard been a representative man, say of the Christian Evidence Society, as I may be regarded as representing the N. S. S. But I am willing to meet him as representing himself only. Proceeds of debate, after payment of all expenses, to be divided between Mr. Howard and myself. I enclose draft of plan of debate. I should prefer May for the time, but I could come in March. Two nights, say any two but Monday or Tuesday. Please write again at once.—Yours,
E. B. AVELING."

Plan as arranged by Dr. Aveling—

PLACE—	TIME—8 p.m. to 10 p.m.	Stockton.
8.0 to 8.30	...	Rev. W. Howard.
8.30 to 9.0	...	Dr. Edward Aveling.
9.0 to 9.15	...	W. H.
9.15 to 9.30	...	E. A.
9.30 to 9.45	...	W. H.
9.45 to 10.0	...	E. A.

Chairman for first night to be chosen by the Rev. W. Howard and approved by Dr. Edward Aveling.

Chairman for second night to be chosen by Dr. Edward Aveling and approved by Rev. W. Howard.

No new matter to be introduced in the last speech on each night.

"29 Craister Street, Stockton, Jan. 22, 1884.

"Dear Sir,—I have to inform you that our committee met Mr. Howard's last night. After a warm discussion as to how

the proceeds should be applied, we were informed that without we were willing that the proceeds, after paying all expenses, including railway fares of yourself and Mr. Howard, be given to some charitable institution, the same to be chosen by the joint committee, no debate should take place as far as they were concerned. We tried to reason with them, pointing out to them the sacrifices you would have to make, but to no purpose. Their answer was that Mr. Howard would have to make sacrifices as well. We gave them to understand that you were of opinion that if only three points were to be discussed one night would be sufficient. They were of a different opinion, as you will see by the slip of paper which I enclose from Mr. Howard. They would not hear of a two-nights' discussion of the whole chapter, and were of opinion that a month would hardly suffice to discuss it thoroughly. We are wishful to know if you are willing to waive these two points."

SUBJECTS FOR THE TWO EVENINGS' DEBATE.

As written out by Mr. Howard—

First Night—"The bible account of the first day's work of creation."

Second Night—"The account Dr. Aveling has to give of the Facts." The points to be dealt with are three: the origin of matter, form and order, and light; and he in rejecting my account is bound to supply a better.

"13 Newman Street, W., Jan. 26, 1884.

"My dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 22nd. It is evident that Mr. Howard dreads the discussion. It is nothing short of an impertinence for him to expect me to travel 472 miles, and to lose at least four days of valuable time, for nothing. My science classes, my work on the London School Board, my literary labors, would all have to be placed on one side for two-thirds of a week. I am a poor man and I cannot afford this. Mr. Howard, doubtless, has a regular stipend from his congregation, payable whether he attends to his work or not. I am wholly dependent on my work for my bread. However, I accept Mr. Howard's offer, and will discuss with him for two nights on any part or parts of the first chapter of Genesis he may choose, proceeds, after payment of all expenses, including his and my railway fares, to be given to some charitable institution—if the debate takes place in London. I need hardly point out to Mr. Howard the many advantages, in the way of publicity by means of the larger audiences, and the reports in the London newspapers, we should thus obtain. He will have an opportunity of crushing once for all the objections of Atheists to the inaccuracy of the Bible in matters of science in the metropolis itself. I shall be glad to hear from Mr. Howard not later than Wednesday morning.—Faithfully yours,

"E. B. AVELING."

SAINTS AND SINNERS.—I.

WITH that shrewd insight into human nature which always characterised him, Thomas Paine pointed out that it was impossible in dealing with humanity, to draw a line and say "these are the sheep and these are the goats," and therefore a distinct line of demarcation between "Saints and Sinners" could never be drawn.

The greatest saint was not without faults and the vilest sinner had his good parts. Many of the men and women who were heroes and heroines in their day would doubtless seem very disreputable characters if they could appear upon the stage of life now and re-enact before the wondering gaze of man the parts they played in former days. Like the villain of the melo-drama of seventy years ago, they would appear very curious creatures, with a strong appetite for human gore. Even the virtuous lover would not seem such a model of purity, large-heartedness and chivalry, when seen in other scenes than those in which his sympathy and valor are to be rewarded by the possession of the hand and heart of a fair, innocent, but much-persecuted maiden.

To properly test a man's worth you must not look only at the great things he is able to accomplish, but also at many small things he deliberately neglects. Some only appear well when you know them at a distance, and see them in all their glory. Publicly these appear noble, courteous and sympathetic, but their nobility is merely veneer, their sympathy a sham.

Know them in every-day life and you will soon find the hollowness of their pretensions. A great man's wife or secretary seldom thinks him so magnanimous a person as he vainly imagines himself to be. It always was so I imagine, and human nature, though somewhat improved, has in this respect not altered much.

I propose now to sketch the characters of some of the biblical "Saints and Sinners," and though the biographers

have no doubt left out a great deal that was bad concerning them, they were sure to put in all that was good. Let us then hold up the mirror of common sense before these bible heroes, and see what sort of characters, considered apart from all prejudice, are reflected thereon.

Begin then with the gentleman and lady who were supposed to have had the honor thrust upon them of being our first parents.

Adam and Eve.—Evidently the biographer did not think it worth his while to give us many particulars respecting these important personages. Childhood they had none; so that their characters were not built up by a long series of efforts to do good, resulting often in failure, which again inspired them with determination to persevere until success was at last accomplished. They were born men and women, but clearly they possessed the simplicity of children. They believed in a deity whom they never saw; and were told not to eat of a particular fruit because if they did they would surely die; and as they knew not what death meant, and apparently did not care, they partook of the fruit and found it very nice. They were saints for little less than a day, and afterwards the most depraved of sinners.

Except that Eve had a conversation with a talking serpent and Adam gave names to every "living creature" save his wife; and that they were both turned out of the garden of Eden—total darkness reigns supreme over the rest of their long and important career. Both lived to a good old age, and contributed appreciably to the increase of the human family; but the biblical biographer did not think it of sufficient importance to let us know how our first parents brought up their progeny; what principles of morality they instilled into the youthful mind; whether Adam believed in corporal punishment, or thought that the presence of Cain would awe Abel into submission; what Mrs. Adam's opinion was on vaccination; and sundry other matters which modern biographers never fail to record in giving a faithful narrative of the life and character of some hero belonging to an obscure place on the earth, the very existence of which the majority of the human race are in sublime ignorance of, and the remainder care little about.

From our reading of the sacred book we conclude that had Adam and Eve remained saints they would have been the only saints the earth would have ever known; and as the result of their disobedience was the propagation of their species, our sincere thanks are due, and are hereby tendered, to them for the courage in which they sinned, and afterwards brought forth sinners. And for myself I think that it were better that a thousand forbidden apples had been devoured than that there should have been no human race, bad as many of the early specimens undoubtedly were.

Cain and Abel were the first fruits of Adam and Eve's sin. Cain seems early to have taken to farming, and Abel did the less difficult work of minding sheep. Unhappily, both of them paid too much respect to the Hebrew god, who for obvious reasons formed a manifest partiality for Abel and frowned contemptuously upon poor Cain. No doubt Jahveh showed this favor to the younger brother because he fed him well on roast lamb, while Cain thought the fruits of the earth would satisfy Jahveh's wants just as well, without incurring so much expense. Jahveh's disapproval of this proceeding was soon shown in unmistakable fashion. Cain knew it, and felt it. His blood was up; and in a fit of rage, instead of laughing to scorn this petty exhibition of a deity's favoritism—he met his brother in a field, doubtless wrangled with him, and in a moment of uncontrollable passion, murdered him.

Abel was a Saint. What good thing he ever did is buried with him in the silent tomb of oblivion. Poor Cain was a sinner! Who, having read his story, has not pity for him? Who has not thought that after all Abel may have been a provoking fellow. At all events it is certain that Cain would never have assaulted his brother if it had not been for his sensitive nature and the keen feeling of injustice he experienced from Jahveh, to whom we must refer as the primary cause of the murder.

Turning his back for ever upon the lord, Cain wended his way into the land of Nod, and committed the horrible offence of marrying a woman who was not his mother when there was no other woman in existence; for which offence theologians, who have often since been asked to solve the enigma, have never forgiven him, and never will till the crack of doom.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

THE TREATMENT OF WOMAN.

ST. PAUL v. SHELLEY.

THE truest test of the civilisation of a people is the manner in which they treat women. England, with its wearisome clog of bigotry, is a long way to the rear in this, as in many other matters. Politically, socially, and morally, a woman's rights are unrecognised. And in all countries where Christianity is a part of the state the same treatment of them obtains; whereas in a country like America, where god does not meddle with state affairs, they exercise their privileges as component parts of the state.

The reason of this is not far to seek. We are a Christian and free country—the Christianity, bear in mind, being considered as of infinitely more importance than the freedom. Our laws are supposed to be based on those of Moses; and, as a matter of fact, our morals are but little better than those taught by that worthy.

We are taught in our youth that the best guide for our conduct is the bible, and if we look into its pages we can find many texts which support the oppression of the "weaker sex," and this in the New Testament, for which a higher civilisation is claimed than for the Old. St. Paul, as a crusty old bachelor, was particularly "down on" them.

In bright contrast to this inspired tyrant, read the lessons of the emancipator of man, Shelley, sweetest songster of liberty, purest teacher of humanity, whose poetical harmony thrills the heart with noble aspirations after freedom, and whose noble advocacy of woman's rights is one of the brightest jewels in this immortal crown.

"Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest."

St. Paul.

"The head of the woman is the man. . . . For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was man created for the woman; but woman for the man."—1 Corinthians xi., 8-9.

Shelley.

"Never will peace and human nature meet
Till free and equal man and woman greet."

("Domestic Peace," *Revolt of Islam*, cant. ii., stanza 37.)

St. Paul.

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii., 11-14.

Shelley.

"Through Penury's roofless huts and squalid cells
Will I descend, where'er in abjectness.
Woman, with some slave her tyrant dwells.
There, with the music of thine own sweet spells,
Will disenchanted the captives and will pour
For the despairing . . . Reason's mighty love."

Ibid. Stanza 42.

St. Paul.

"Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands."—1 Peter iii., 1.

Shelley.

"Can man be free and woman be a slave?

Can they whose mates are beasts, condemned to bear
Scorn, heavier far than toil or anguish, dare
To trample their oppressors?"

Ibid. Stanza 13.

C. J.

ACID DROPS.

E. DE PRESSENGE continues to write to the *Christian World* on the "Perils of Democracy." Alarmed by the notorious fact that the French workmen have entirely given up their allegiance to Christianity, he declares "A democracy without god would be a veritable pandemonium upon earth." He apparently considers god a valuable celestial auxiliary to the police.

BISHOP WILBERFORCE, recently preaching at Newcastle, said "one of the characteristics of the age was that though there never was more wealth there never was more concurrent poverty. Side by side with the increasing luxury among the rich there was the terribly multiplying misery amongst those from whom that wealth was withheld, and if England could not find a solution for that state of things, there were not wanting signs that a solution might be forced upon her in an

unforeseen shape." What would the bishop say to a confiscation of his episcopal salary to relieve the terribly multiplying misery? Yet this is a remedy proposed by Prof. Symes, a clergyman of Nottingham.

A COURT of inquiry has been instituted by the Bishop of Chester to investigate eleven charges of drunkenness alleged against the Rev. John Wesley Aldom, rector of Thornton Hough, Chester.

A SIMILAR case is that of the Rev. Henry Francis Limpus, of Twickenham. In the proceedings instituted by the Bishop of London, various witnesses have deposed to seeing Limpus both on Sunday, Nov. 11, and on another occasion in the autumn of last year in various parts of the parish, in a hopeless state of intoxication.

A BOY of tender years and heart has drowned seventeen kittens, tied pans to the tails of nine dogs, brushed his father's new silk hat against the grain, and blown up a pet canary with a fire-cracker—all in a month, and still his mother intends him for the pulpit.

THE *New York Sun* has the following:—"In the National Museum in Tokio have been placed some old paintings of the Virgin Mary and the infant Christ, after the style of the orthodox conception of the old masters who painted for the Catholic church. These were probably brought from Spain or Portugal by the Jesuit priests who penetrated Japan. They are now used, however, to glorify one of the gods of Japan, who was not only miraculously conceived, but was born in a manger, according to Japanese belief. It is related that he suffered all the pains and penalties meted out to the rebellious wicked in the deepest dungeon in the prison-house of King Yemmas, in Jigoko, or the hell of the Buddhists. The name of this self-sacrificing god is Yata-No-Iizo. How many centuries he has been in torture is a matter of conjecture only, as the period of his incarceration is not stated. It seems that in the olden times visitors were allowed to enter hell and view its system of torment."

SOME time ago the Christian Knowledge Society published an account of Buddhism by T. W. Rhys Davids, which surprised everyone by its liberality of sentiment and disposition to do justice to another religion. This was of course a fault in the eyes of the orthodox, and accordingly the rival Religious Tract Society has put out its account of Buddhism, written by Dr. Titcomb, late Bishop of Rangoon. It is needless to say that it has no such fault. Buddhism is made as dark as possible to serve as a foil to show off the superior merits of the one divinely-revealed system.

It is amazing how clearly theologians can see the flaws in another faith than their own. Dr. Titcomb reminds his hearers that "in the sacred books of the Buddhists there is a vast amount of childish nonsense." Could not a Buddhist say the same of the Christian sacred books? What is the story of the talking snake, the woman turned into salt, the speaking ass, the sun standing still, the floating axe-head, the voyage inside a whale, the birth from a virgin, the casting of devils into pigs, and the levitation into heaven, but childish nonsense?

BUDDHISM can at least claim that it recognises the immensity of the universe, that it has no such stupidities as a three-in-one deity, no vicarious sacrifice, and no eternal hell; and that it anticipated Christianity in inculcating universal charity and the return of good for evil.

THE three articles by Dean Burgon, trenchantly attacking the work of the New Testament revisers, which attracted so much attention when they appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, have been reprinted under the title of "The Revision Revised." We wish to call attention to the Dean's quotation and endorsement of the statement of Dr. Scrivener (p. 30) that "the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed." That is to say, those who lived near the time of their composition thought so little of their divinity that they tampered with them more than those who came afterwards. As no manuscript of the New Testament dates earlier than the fourth century, this statement throws much light on the boasted reliability of the Vatican, Alexandrian, and Sinaitic MSS.

AN evidence of the continued superstitious belief in magical charms may be found in the latest freak of Publican Booth, who has ordered that at half-past twelve every day every Salvation soldier is to make the sign of the letter "S" as evidence that he is saved. We should think it afforded very much better evidence that he is silly.

WM. HARTLEY, the Salvation postman who had been committed to trial for stealing a £5 note from a letter which he should have delivered, was tried at the Central Criminal Court

on Monday. It will be remembered that he had purchased a Salvation uniform with the note he had stolen. Hartley, in defence, said he had been led away by the Salvation Army, stating that he was being constantly told that he could not go to heaven unless he had a uniform, and was thus prompted to steal the note to purchase one. The prisoner was sentenced to eighteen months' hard labor. Many of the Salvation soldiers buy their uniforms and tamborines with money that they get by means similar to that which Publican Booth obtained his gin-palace—in a manner that is ill-Eagle. Not a few of his soldiers go to prison before entering the kingdom of heaven. To be uniform, perhaps he will follow their example.

A SECTION of the Salvation Army is at present engaged in making converts in New York. A local journal sent a reporter to one of the meetings. The unfortunate scribe was busily engaged taking notes, when the preacher stood up and said: "We have a reporter here, a miserable reporter, a sinful servant of the unholy newspapers. The Prince of Darkness has made him stubborn; he will not join us. Oh, the wicked reporter! The devil holds the fort in his brain; he is going to the kingdom of flames, and he is a type of all reporters, who are a wicked lot." The speaker paused to allow time for the heart of the sinner to be moved to repentance; but, as the reporter remained standing, in spite of solicitations to kneel, and was in no way melted, the soldiers, male and female, lifted up their voices and wept over the dreadful man, whilst the lieutenant shouted, "Oh, kill this reporter; kill him. He is too obstinate to yield. He is proud. All reporters are proud. Oh, strike him down, for he is the devil in disguise." Without waiting to hear more, the representative of the Philadelphia newspaper quitted the meeting-room, the Salvationists greeting his exit with the cry, "He is gone; he is past praying for." Then the reporter went back to his editor and said to him, "Look here, sir; you may send me to fires, earthquakes, murders, inquests, explosions, railway accidents, and even to do a special about a brigand's cave, but in future I draw the line at a religious meeting. Wild horses would not drag me there again."

NAI PLENG (a Buddhist) and T. W. Rhys Davids both write to deny that the so-called sacred white elephant is worshipped by any Buddhist. Mr. Davids compares the proceedings of Barnum's "Burmese priests" to that of impostors who should dress up in Roman Catholic canonicals to make a pretence of worshipping images for a show in Burmah.

THE *Hampshire Evening News* says anent the alleged "terrible warning": "The private of the 1st Hampshire Regiment, who was last week received at the Station Hospital, Haslar, suffering from temporary loss of sight, is gradually recovering. He steadfastly maintains that he made use of no blasphemous expression, such as was stated to have resulted in his being 'struck blind,' and affirms that he has for some time been suffering from an affection of the eyes. Brigade-Surgeon Faught, the senior officer of the hospital, has been literally inundated with letters from clergymen, scripture readers, and others, inquiring as to the truth of the statements which appeared in the *London Daily Telegraph*."

THE number of letters written on this subject and the wide circulation which this pious lie has obtained, equally speak of the unsatisfactory nature of ordinary evidence for Theism. So little of god's work can be seen in nature that all believers are agog to find him showing himself after the old fashion in Palestine, when he slew over fifty thousand people for looking into his travelling-trunk (see 1 Samuel vi., 19).

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD, Earl Shaftesbury, Mr. M'Culloch Torrens, and the other scientific patrons of Dr. Kinns, are to be pitied, whether they can or cannot discern the incompetence of that would-be-defender of Moses, for it has been abundantly manifest to all others. Even the *Christian World* says: "It is now only too evident that in appointing Dr. Kinns to lecture up and down the country on the scientific accuracy of the bible, the committee of this new mission have sadly blundered." The letter of this impostor to the *Times*, defending himself against the charges of Messrs. Carruthers and Woodward, has only drawn upon him a flagellation from Dr. Huggins, who declares that Dr. Kinns' book "does not represent modern science, and that every lecture based upon it can only bring disgrace upon the name of religion." As to the attack of the learned botanist, Mr. Carruthers, being "unprovoked," Dr. Huggins asks whether if a philanthropic committee were ignorantly giving away to the poor milk from a farm where typhoid existed Dr. Kinns would consider interference as "unprovoked" and "uncalled for," and pass by on the other side.

ON the door of a local Methodist chapel were chalked these words (probably by some profane joker)—"Insurance against fire effected here."

SPECIAL NOTICES.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

February 27, Hall of Science. March 2, Claremont Hall; 5, Hackney; 9, Milton Hall; 12, Hall of Science; 16, Manchester; 23, Plymouth. April 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 24, Hall of Science. May 4 and 11, Hall of Science.

DR. E. B. AVELING'S LECTURES.

Dr. Edward B. Aveling (interim editor of the *Freethinker*) lectures on Sunday, Feb. 3, at Ball's Pond Secular Hall, Newington Green Road, at 11 and 7.30. On Thursdays, Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28, Hall of Science, at 8.30; "Tennyson's Poetry."

CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL business communications to be addressed to the Manager, 28 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, E.O. 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.

MR. W. J. RAMSEY'S ENGAGEMENTS.—February 3, Milton Hall; 6, Hackney Radical Club; 18, Luton. Open for engagements any Saturday or Sunday in the provinces, or any night, excepting Wednesday, in London and vicinity.—Applications to W. J. Ramsey, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

RECEIVED.—J. Tate, H. Gordon Swift, E. G., "Aut vincere aut mori," S. J. B., G. Dowling, T. Feeney, W. C., *Liverpool Echo*, *Reading Observer*.

W. SHAW.—If Canon Westcott will permit opposition, some representative Freethinker will attend his lecture at Hampstead on February 14.

S. BURTONHOLE.—The Christmas Number is quite out of print, so your subscription is carried on to April 15.

W. PIKE.—The story of Thomas Paine's having cried out, "Lord have mercy upon my soul," is without foundation and has been refuted, but truth is not the only thing which "crushed to earth will rise again." Ask the Rev. R. Sampson what authority he has for the statement.

J. COLLINS.—Mr Job is known as an able Freethinker, and we are sorry if he thinks any slur was cast upon him by Mr. Moss.

ACTUATOR.—No.

J. WRIGHT.—Has appeared already.

A. BLASEBALK offers to sell to the highest bidder, for the benefit of the Foote and Ramsey Testimonial Fund, Nos. 36, 39, 40, 43, etc., to end of Vol. II.; a complete set of Vol. III., and all out of Vol. IV. He has also of Vol. III, three copies; of No. 10, two copies; of Nos. 12 to 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37 to 40, three copies; of 34, 36, 41, four copies; of 42 to end of Vol. III.

J. H. C. surmises man must have been higher than god before the Fall, since after it the latter declared—"Behold, man has become as one of us."

T. PENROSE.—We are always glad of cuttings. The extract sent is scarcely worth reproducing.

W. WRIGHTON.—The "Diagnosis" is being reprinted, and will be ready in about three weeks.

J. H. ROGERS.—Miss Howell's "Life of Christ" is 1s. in paper covers, or 1s. 6d. cloth.

VERITAS ODIUM PARIT.—"Supernatural Religion," 2 vols., £1 16s.; Paley's "Evidences," 3s. 6d.; Buckle's "History of Civilisation," 3 vols., £1 11s. 6d. May be had of the Progressive Publishing Company.

Mrs. POWELL, of 1 Basing Road, Peckham, has been appointed agent for the sale of Freethought literature by the Peckham and Dulwich Branch of the N. S. S.

A. MOONEY.—*Protestant Times* not to hand.

R. GILBERT.—Tickets for the breakfast on the 25th can be obtained at the Hall of Science. We expect to see a large crowd at Holloway.

It is particularly requested that all orders for literature should be sent to Mr. W. J. Ramsey, 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.

MR. FOOTE'S RELEASE.

ACCORDING to the prison arrangements, Mr. Foote will be liberated soon after 8 a.m. on the morning of Monday, February 25. Brakes will start from all the London Secular and Radical Societies to Holloway. Mr. Foote will proceed to the Hall of Science, where a breakfast will

be provided. Tickets, price 2s. each, can be had from R. O. Smith at the Hall of Science. A banquet will be held, and the testimonial presented to Messrs. Foote and Ramsey on Wednesday, March 12, Mr. Bradlaugh in the chair. Intending subscribers should send their contributions to Mrs. A. Besant, 19 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, London, N.W.

SUGAR PLUMS.

ON Sunday morning last, at Milton Hall, Dr. Edward Aveling finished his course of four lectures on the Darwinian Theory. These can now be obtained in pamphlet form, price 6d. In the evening his lecture on the "Origin of Life" was attended by an audience larger than any yet seen in the hall since the commencement of the new campaign.

THE Free Science Sunday School opens at 3 p.m. on Sunday next at Milton Hall.

MR. W. J. RAMSEY will lecture on Sunday at Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town. Morning, "Prison Labor;" evening, "In Prison for Blasphemy," which will be illustrated with diagrams. Prior to the morning lecture Miss Minnie Evelyn will give some pianoforte selections, and the evening lecture will be preceded by some choruses and part-songs by the Norwegian and Swedish Choral Society, which rendered such a good account of themselves at the Freemasons' Tavern a week or two since. We hope all friends in Camden and Kentish Towns will rally round one who has suffered so much for conscience' sake.

Mr. Moss is indefatigable. He is now publishing a new penny pamphlet of sixteen pages, entitled "Natural Man."

THE Rev. W. Sharman lectures next Sunday evening at Claremont Hall on "The New Reformation." In the morning Mr. Haslam will discourse on "Miracles."

ON Thursday evening, February 7, the second of the course of Thursday evening lectures at the Hall of Science will commence. The lectures will be given by Dr. Edward B. Aveling. Subject: "The Poetry of Tennyson." Tickets for the course of four 2s., 1s., and 6d., can be obtained from Dr. Aveling, 13 Newman Street, or at the hall.

JUSTICE MELLOR has put forth a timely pamphlet entitled "Suggestions as to Oaths." He says: "Profoundly convinced by a long judicial experience of the general worthlessness of oaths, especially in cases of which their falsity cannot be tested by cross-examination or be criminally punished, I have become an advocate for the abolition of oaths as the test of truth; but I would retain the punishment for false declarations wherever at present the law prescribes a penalty for a false oath."

INSTEAD of the oaths of allegiance, which he holds to be "unnecessary and therefore profane," Sir John Mellor suggests that a Roll of Parliament should be made up and signed by every member upon taking his seat, that he professes "true allegiance to the Queen, her heirs and successors, according to law."

SAMUEL P. PUTMAN writes as follows to the *Boston Investigator* concerning the new Freethought lectures introduced to the American public by Colonel Ingersoll: "Miss Gardner is a cultivated and earnest lady; her voice is clear and charming, her delivery natural and effective, and her thought bright and winning. An opportunity for great usefulness lies before her, for we need the voice of woman to express the intensity of her own feelings, the indignation that must burn within her in view of long ages of suffering, and the aspiration she must have for freedom in order to achieve the noblest heights. To this most excellent service we give a cordial welcome to the new laborer."

MONROE's *Ironclad Age* is a thorough-going Freethought weekly published at Indianapolis. It professes to be the only paper in the Great West that is able to run without a god, or devil, or ghost. By heaving these overboard the *Ironclad Age* is enabled to teach "good news without a god, happiness without a heaven, and redemption without a redeemer."

THE wicked proprietor of the *Ironclad Age* is paying five dollars a head for ghosts, little or big, old or young, male or female, holy or unholy, and he wants all he can get. He is also paying fifteen thousand dollars a head for virgins who are mothers. He has furthermore a standing order of fifteen million dollars for just one sane man who will say he really

believes there ever was a father who was the son of himself, or a son who was the father of himself, or a ghost who was both of 'em, or either of 'em, or all of 'em.

SPEAKING at Boston, on the recent occasion of the unveiling of a statue erected to the memory of Harriet Martineau by the women of Boston, Wendell Phillips, the great Abolitionist orator, said: "Veil your faces, Christians—the early friends of the slave in this very city were driven from your churches to find liberty of speech only in Infidel halls. *But the Infidelity of that day is the Christianity of this.*"

WHAT CONSTITUTES A SECULARIST?

THE army of heterodoxy may roughly be divided into two camps: the destructive and constructive. These, though not necessarily antagonistic, have their special and distinctive utilities, and are clearly distinguishable both in theory and in fact. While destructive heterodoxy (*i.e.*, Freethought proper) deals out death and ruin to the base superstition of Christianity; constructive heterodoxy (*i.e.*, Secularism) builds up those positive ethical principles which are the sure foundation of all human happiness. Both heterodoxies are essential requisites for the emancipation of humanity from the darkness and delusion of supernaturalism, and both tend to achieve that end by separate special, but equally important, methods, which in the one case are of a negative, in the other of a positive, order. The judicious combination of both methods is of paramount utility and necessity in carrying to a successful issue the warfare of heterodoxy with orthodoxy.

In the past, heterodoxy has chiefly availed itself of the negative mode of attack. Whether this line of policy has been too exclusively taken, and the positive method too little adopted, is a disputable matter on which we are not called upon now to enter. We will only remark that whether our policy in the past be wise or unwise, it behoves us, at the present time, either to lessen our concentrateness upon purely destructive work, or (what, doubtless, were better) without diminishing our quantum of iconoclastic effort, to expend more labor and love upon the positive constructive work of Secularism.

In order to be in a position to faithfully discharge this most essential part of our duty it is incumbent upon us to be prepared with a clear explicit answer to the question with which this article is headed. Unfortunately, many of the ideas on this question, current among the orthodox—and not a few of the notions which, on the same question, obtain even with some of the heterodox—are full, in some instances, of wilful and mischievous representations, and in others of involuntary, but no less mischievous misconceptions. To clear away some of the intellectual fog which obscures the minds of so many in regard to this matter, would be a task no less agreeable to the true Secularist than useful to true Secularism; and we shall therefore attempt, in what follows, to shed a little light upon a subject which, wilfully by some and involuntarily by others, has been made unnecessarily obscure.

At the outset, we must insist that mere membership of the National Secular Society or British Secular Union, or of any of the local branches of these organisations, cannot suffice to make one a Secularist. Nor can any amount of destructive anti-theological work, however useful to Freethought or honorable to the worker, confer, of itself, the distinction of being a true Secularist. It is useless to deny that one may be a good Freethinker and yet be a bad or indifferent Secularist.

Freethinking is, primarily and essentially, an attitude of intellectual hostility towards certain theological beliefs. Secularism, on the other hand, is a philosophy of life, and inculcates practical daily devotion to certain high moral principles. To use the language of metaphor, Freethought is an affair of the head, Secularism of the heart. The one deals with the mental, the intellectual, the other with the moral, the emotional, aspect of humanity. Even as the perfect man is only perceived in the sublime union of the highest intellectual and moral qualities, so he alone exemplifies the true ideal of a Secularist who combines untiring destructive activity against the delusions of the Christian superstition with ceaseless labors of useful secular constructiveness. We must not neglect, in the eagerness of our anti-theological strife, the vast complexity of moral evil and social barbarism that confront us at every turn, nor

forget that, while the mission of Freethought is to subdue the giant forces of the Christian god-creed, the evangel of Secularism is specially charged with the duty of mitigating, or minimising, the moral sores and plague spots of humanity. The intellectual and moral regeneration of man can only be achieved by the harmonious unison of the negative and positive methods of Freethought and Secularism, and this end can only be partially accomplished if the one method be exclusively relied upon.

If, then, our contention is right, that mere freethinking is not *ipso facto*, and does not, *de facto*, constitute abstract Secularism pure and simple, it follows that the various attempts to confound Secularism with Atheism, or with other phases of anti-theological destructivism, are vain, unfounded misrepresentations. Whilst Atheism is an intellectual attitude of unbelief towards the Theistic hypothesis, Secularism is a philosophy of life and conduct—the one a negative speculation, the other a positive system of morals. Ethics, which are of the essence of Secularism, have no more necessary connexion with the conclusions of Atheism than with the law of gravitation. The confounding of Atheism with Secularism is, therefore, a confusion of terms arising from a confusion of thought.

Our ideas concerning Secularism become necessarily obscure when we attempt to give it a definition which is applicable not to it, but to some near related, though not inextricably connected, subject. This obscurity will never be dispelled until we learn to differentiate Secularism from Atheism, to draw the distinguishing line of demarcation between the two, and to rightly appreciate their precise point of relationship. For, though Secularism is not Atheism, it is not incompatible on the one hand with Atheism, or on the other with any form of advanced theological belief—such as pure Theism and belief in the soul's immortality—which does not bind its adherents to creed or conduct inconsistent with the highest performance of the duties and obligations imposed by Secularism. This is the sole theological test put forward by Secularism. That there are phases of Theism and animism answering to the moral requirements of Secularism is a point set beyond all but cavilling dispute by both the professions and practice of a vast number of moderate Freethinkers in all times. To exclude from the army of Secularism the excellent recruits which the ranks of moderate Freethought might supply on account of some difference in speculative opinion would, we venture to affirm, be both unwise and unjust. We refuse to believe that the portals of the temple of Secularism are too narrow to admit the Voltaires, the Rousseaus, the Paines, or the Francis Newmans, and that only full-blown Atheists can squeeze an entrance therein.

For Secularism to embrace the Atheist, however immoral, and to disdain the Theist, however moral, or to detract from the meritorious life of the secularising moderate Freethinker would be an act unworthy of the religion of humanity, and fit only for a narrow-minded sect of bigotry.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

(To be concluded.)

EVOLUTION AND MORALITY.

"ALL things change," said the Greek philosopher, Herakleites. "Behold, all things are becoming new," said Jesus, the Hebrew visionary. True, indeed; but a greater than these men, Herbert Spencer, the Anglican prophet, was the first to show why these words are more than words, that they represent facts. We Freethinkers, who are disciples of this great master, come to his feet and gladly learn the good tidings he has to tell us. We hear that freedom of thought is not enough now, and will not suffice without increasing freedom of action. Repressive authority must pass away if slowly, yet certainly never to return, for man is becoming more fitted for self-government in social as in political matters. Shall we believe this? Yes. And why? Because evolutionists have supplied a trustworthy account of the origin of the moral sentiment. Having, then, found our teachers truthful as to the past, we will deem them also truthful as to the future.

It has been shown by the investigations of sociologists that the idea of duty, which in its first beginnings must have been more or less imperfect, acquired strength and form by the exercise of a feeling of common interest among the primitive tribes of our race. Its development was gradual in the extreme. The evolutionist is able to take

up the history of our planet and trace it through physical changes right on till he discerns the advent of humanity, the expansion of families into tribes, of tribes into nations, and the slow growth of morality in the midst of them.

Thus we are taken by the evolutionist to the cradle where duty was nursed. These primitive communities, these little families would easily come to reprobate acts which had been found by experience to be injurious; they would similarly perceive that mutual or concerted action undertaken for a common purpose, was attended by the most desirable results. A community finding that if one of its members suffered, the whole band suffered; also felt, naturally, antipathetic towards all acts prejudicial to the welfare of any individual among their number; and this antipathy their descendants would feel more or less instinctively, in the form of an idea of wrong. The results of the accumulated experiences of one generation were through education—that is, tradition, handed down to the following generation, and so perpetuated. An immense number of cases having shown the utility of honesty as between members of the same tribe, the idea of duty towards one's neighbor sprang up, and at length found expression in such sentences as "Thou shalt not steal."

The followers of Moses, however, were not forbidden to commit theft on surrounding tribes, and, indeed, do not seem to have felt any remorse after butchering or robbing anybody within reach.

There was a moral sense limited to the duty of one Israelite to another. And after many centuries we Europeans have reached a stage of moral development not much higher. But the national morality of the future will be a great improvement on the ethics current among the "civilised nations" of to-day.

It was but slowly that man became more suited to his physical surroundings, and social man is coming more into harmony with himself only by a gradual process. Large portions of the human race have outgrown the family and the tribal, and have reached the national stage; some few among the more highly developed of these seek to go beyond the limits of national morality. They desire an international code of ethics; they look forward to the time when "Cosmopolitan" will be no longer a term of contempt. And evolution assures us that so great has been the development of early moral ideas that we are justified in expecting greater progress than ever in the ages to come.

After many, many lessons the overwhelming majority of this planet's inhabitants will learn that virtue is an advantage. Men will no longer do their duty painfully and as in defiance of their will, for it will not be obvious to them why they should behave unsocially. Thus in the distance Utopia is dimly seen.

But what has the evolutionist to offer to the people of to-day? Can the practical precepts of the modern philosophers really satisfy the needs of a century like our own? The evolutionist will first remind people of a fact which they seem seldom to realise—namely, that morality has been made by man for man. He utterly refutes the curious old notion still held by some—that man was made or created for the purpose of being "moral." The standard of ethics, he will urge, to which men should be invited to adhere, must be stripped of every arbitrary element. All local prejudices are to be dropped; thus any ideas that are unverified and unverifiable will be excluded from the new morality. Inquiries into the origin and growth of the moral sense, comparative study of conduct and of moral ideals among many nations are indispensable. If it is objected that verification and inquiry are surrounded by great difficulties, the reply can only be—"Yes, but conduct itself is as difficult, and at the same time as important, a matter as any that can be named."

J. E. R.

(To be concluded.)

"SAL," cried a young girl, looking out of the upper story of a small grocery, and addressing another girl who was trying to enter at the front door, "we've all been to camp-meeting and been converted; so when you want milk on Sundays now you'll have to come in the back way!"

A GREENWICH correspondent thinks that the reason Elijah took so kindly to the food brought up by the ravens, was most probably owing to the good man's stomach being in rather a ravenous condition at the time.

A YOUNG lady belonging to the Salvation Army described her state of mind at the moment when her lover offered himself. She said, "It seemed as though every nail in the house was a Jew's harp, playing, 'Glory, hallelujah.'"

THE CYNIC REBUKED.

O TELL me not thou misanthrope,
That flowers bloom but to decay.
Does not their beauty grace the slope—
Their perfume scent the air to-day?
And are their seedlings not as sweet,
As good, as fair, as gay?
And will to-morrow's sun not greet
Blossoms bright as they?

O stop for e'er those cynic ears
That hear but in the lark's glad cry
The echo of their own sad fears—
That all that lives, lives but to die!
Will not the songster glad the air
To-morrow with her melody?
Will not her nestlings love and pair,
And sing as happily?

O tell me not the memory
Of deeds of kindness "fades away."
That works of love will ever be
Condemned to wither and decay.
True worth brings immortality;
The words of wisdom live alway.
We live to help the world to be
The better ere we "pass away!"

EDGAR T. BENTON.

PROFANE JOKES.

"TALK about there not bein' room in the whale's belly for Jonah," said a big river county granger as he stood looking at the skeleton of the eighty foot whale in the exposition building. "Talk about Jonah's bein' crowded for room, why he must a hed apartments ter let."

"Good morning, Brother Bony. Has you any gift to gib de lawd dis mawnin'?" "Yes, parson, sartin I has; heah's a dollah." And he pulled out an old greasy pocket-book' from which he fished out a greasier greenback and reached it toward the expectant parson. Drawing it back again, he said: "Does you expect to see de lawd yourself, parson?" "Course I does," said the preacher. "When will yer run acrost him, d'ye tink?" "Oh! sometime in the sweet bimbeby," responded his reverence. "Well, den," said Bony, "I jes keep dis greenback till the sweet bimbeby, an' han' it to he myself." And he stowed it away.

"ONE of these days you'll be a cardinal," said a friend to a backsliding priest, whose convivial habits were notorious. "You flatter me," returned the holy man, his face beaming with satisfaction. "No, I don't," added the other; "you've a cardinal nose already!"

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