

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

TO OUR READERS.

TWELVE months ago I was pressingly invited to stay at her Majesty's Holloway Hotel, and although I strove to decline the hospitable invitation I was obliged to take a seat in the carriage sent to convey me there. I was courteously received by the manager; a solid if not spacious apartment was provided for me, liveried attendants administered to my needs, and an elaborate bill of fare apprised me of the extensive and varied choice of viands which the establishment afforded. These arrangements were very admirable, but they had one great drawback—they prevented me from doing my work; and I soon discovered how true are the words of the American gentlemen who said "Doing nothing's the hardest job I know, if you keep at it." Alas! I had to keep at it for a whole year. During that dreary period I could neither speak nor write to my friends in every part of Great Britain. Yet I find they have never once forgotten me through all the weary weeks, and I am glad to know that the silent eloquence of my sealed lips and arrested hands has been more powerful than any possible utterance of my tongue or pen.

Now I am once more a free man. I am no longer pestered by the delicate attentions of her Majesty's servants; I am at liberty to go where I please and do what I like. My first step is to return to my post as editor of the *Freethinker*. Judge North has not converted me. I am sincerely impenitent, and mean to do exactly what I was punished for doing. People who look in at the *Freethinker* office will be able to say "Things are just as they were before—and a little more so."

I have not time or strength just yet to add much to my address to the friends who greeted me so heartily on Monday morning. But there are a few things I must say at once.

First I thank the Committee who stepped in when my interests were imperilled, and preserved them. Above all I thank them for keeping this flag flying when I lay stricken and helpless. That act has done more for the right of free speech than any words could do. It snatched victory from the ruins of defeat. It proved that the Freethought party is still true to its old tradition of defending honest publications when they are attacked, where they are attacked, and because they are attacked. Messrs. Hilditch, Smith, Standing, Grout, and Herbert, did their duty, and I am sure they desire no prouder praise. Mrs. Besant has shown the finest womanly tact and sensibility with the temper of a hero. I cannot thank her as I would, for words are weak, and I dare not trust myself to write more.

I thank Mr. Bradlaugh for his legal assistance during my trials, and for his cordial welcome on my release in the name of the party for which he has a right to speak. I thank Mr. Wheeler for the brave way in which he tried to bear a burden which was greater than his strength, though not so great as his heart, and for his steadfast labors at the old task since he recovered his strength. I thank Dr. Aveling for his editorial conduct of the *Freethinker* and of *Progress* for so many months; and I take this opportunity of saying that his pen will still be active in the *Freethinker*, and his name associated with mine in the future of *Progress*.

The friends who wrote to me while I resided at Holloway must understand that they obtained no replies because I was not allowed to receive and answer any more than a felon's number of letters—one every three months. And all those who sent me telegrams or letters of congratulation on my release must kindly accept this summary acknowledgment of their kindness. I cannot enumerate them, for the list is too long, but I shall particularly deal with a few of them next week.

Mr. Robert Forder deserves my warmest thanks for undertaking all the hard work at the shop in Stonecutter Street. I am afraid he overtaxed his strength, but I am sure he is not the man to regret any exertion in the defence of Freethought.

Mr. Arthur Moss, Mr. Bowtell, Mr. Heaford, and all the contributors to the *Freethinker* whose names I cannot mention, will not be forgotten by me, or by the readers of this journal; and we shall all retain a grateful remembrance of Mr. Symes, who is now advocating Freethought at the antipodes. Nor must I omit Mr. A. Watkin, who has steadily stuck to the printing-office through all the turmoil and danger, and done more than the readers could know to provide their "weekly treat." I shall have an opportunity elsewhere of thanking the many friends who have rallied round *Progress* in my absence, and so admirably assisted Dr. Aveling in sustaining its character.

My physical, and therefore my mental, strength is far from its old level, but I am gaining force every hour, and I have no doubt that, with proper care, I shall be able to go straight on with my work. I shall extend my lecturing engagements without hesitation; and I promise the readers of the *Freethinker* that they shall, so far as my powers avail, find no diminution in the vigor and vivacity of its attacks on the shams and superstitions of our age. Not only the writer's pen, but the artist's pencil, shall be busy in this good work; and the absurdities of faith shall, if possible, be slain with laughter. Priests and fools are, as Goldsmith said, the two classes who dread ridicule, and we are pledged to an implacable war with both.

G. W. FOOTE.

RELEASE OF G. W. FOOTE.

THE founder and editor of this paper is free. As early as seven in the morning of Monday, February 25, 1884 (a day that will become historic), a crowd was waiting outside Holloway Gaol. For nearly an hour it grew, not in favor with god, but steadily. By ten minutes past eight, when the doors that have been closed upon our friend for a year of young life opened, not less than 3,000 people were thronging the roads and alarming the tram horses by their numbers.

Those that drove down to the gaol were able to tell who were hastening to swell the crowd, often afar off. When you saw a sturdy, neatly-clad working man, often accompanied by wife or sweetheart, pegging away in the direction of Holloway, as if his life depended on his being there within the next five minutes, you were certain as soon as you caught him up to see the hat whirled off with a sort of triumphant arm-wave, and an honest smile, often perilously near tears, light the whole face, and seem to join fellowship with the sunlight.

For, mark you! it was, all round, a good morning. When W. J. Ramsey was freed the day was dull and rainy, as if it knew that the last of our men was still not free. But last Monday was as bright and sunny as the best of early spring mornings can be even in England.

Brakes galore (this is the sort of excellently vague word one is allowed to use under strong excitement) were drawn up in each of the four roads that meet in front of Holloway Gaol. I cannot but think that the man who chose the site of the prison had in view the possibility of an imprisonment for blasphemy, and made provision for the location of hundreds of people and scores of vehicles just outside the gates.

It is said that all the London branches of the National Secular Society were represented. Most notable among

them were the Finsbury and the North-West London. The former immortalised itself and delighted everyone by showing a huge banner bearing the words—"Thank you, my lord; it is worthy of your creed." The latter was to the foremost in the number of its brakes and in the large proportion of women in them. The South London Branch had on its first brake a banner bearing the words, "Welcome to G. W. Foote, the Freethought martyr."

Only two carriages were admitted within the prison gates. In these came Mrs. Besant, the two Miss Bradlaughs, Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Foote, Mr. Angel (her father), the Rev. W. Sharman and Dr. Edward Aveling. By a courtesy similar to that shown on the occasion of the release of Mr. Ramsey, Mrs. Foote, together with Mrs. Besant and Mr. Bradlaugh, was admitted within the prison before the prisoner came out. As he emerged a great shout went up, the first fruits of the cry with which the working classes of England will greet this, the most recent victim of our class legislation. The two carriages, with "a redistribution of seats," made for the gates. In the first were G. W. Foote, Mrs. Foote, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Bradlaugh, and on the box Dr. Edward Aveling. In the second were the two Miss Bradlaughs, Mr. Sharman and Mr. Angel.

It was slow and not very sure work making a way through the dense crowd outside. But our drivers were skilled workmen, and I think the horses had been, with the remembrance of the scene on the release of Mr. Ramsey, judiciously selected on the score of age and discretion. Even with all this, how some of the men and women in the nearest ranks escaped injury I should call a miracle if I were not writing in the *Freethinker*. Everybody had but two objects in life for the time being—to get as good a view of him as they could, and to shout themselves hoarse.

The shouting hardly ceased along the whole route until the Hall of Science was reached. There was no reminiscence of the celebrated pillow in "Box and Cox," "a handful and a half of feathers at each end and nothing whatever in the middle." At both ends of the journey there was an indescribable enthusiasm, and throughout its length there was (in many cases literally) a running fire of congratulation.

For not every one was in a vehicle. The brakes, traps and cabs must have numbered at least a hundred, even if I don't reckon the one tricycle that had come up all the way from Guildford—not by itself, but with a man and a dog with a stick in its mouth. But besides these there were many foot-passengers, who joined in the procession. Some of these only took a temporary part and soon ran and shouted themselves out of breath. But some held on with an interesting pertinacity. Two young fellows in especial I noted, who reminded me of the two runners in "Tom Brown's Schooldays," who keep the coach company for a mile (done in 4 minutes 56 seconds). For one was slim and slightly built, and I think German, while the other was thick-set, rosy-faced, and unmistakably English. Whenever I looked up these two boys were visible within a yard or two, and the last I saw of them was as they both dived into the crowd awaiting us in Old Street.

Omnibus and tram drivers and conductors, cabmen, men working on the roads, shop-assistants, clerks on their way to business, all hailed the released man, and in the whole of the long journey I heard but a single hiss.

Two women, clad in strange garb of some religious sect, met us early on the route. They looked at us with strange lack-lustre eyes. What, I wonder, was their thought as they saw all this enthusiasm on behalf of an Atheist freed from a wicked punishment? Perhaps some dim idea stirred in their unhappy minds, dulled and deadened by religion, that there was after all something in the godless creed that could thus move a vast multitude. At least they—did they know anything of healthy human life—might hesitate as representatives of the Christian religion, to call themselves hereafter sisters of "mercy."

With that religion no truce or even parley must be held. It and it alone is answerable for the wrong that has been done—a wrong not to be condoned by our friends' release, nor forgotten in the midst of our joy that they are again free.

EDWARD B. AVELING.

A large crowd assembled at the Hall of Science, and friends were eager to press in and shake Mr. Foote by the hand. The tables only permitting the comfortable entertainment of between three and four hundred at breakfast, a large number who had neglected to provide themselves with tickets early were sent disappointed away.

SPEECHES AT THE BREAKFAST.

At ten o'clock the breakfast took place at the Hall of Science. Mr. Bradlaugh presided, and amongst a numerous company (numbering about 300) were Mr. and Mrs. Foote, Mrs. Besant, Miss H. Bradlaugh, Dr. Edward Aveling, the Rev. W. Sharman, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Kemp, Mr. Truelove, and representatives from Birmingham, Manchester, Hastings, Derby, Brighton, Worthing, Kingston, Norwich, and nearly all the Radical and Secular clubs in London.

The CHAIRMAN, on the conclusion of the repast, said: With reference to the speaking this morning I will ask you kindly to leave the matter in our hands. For many reasons it is desirable that Mr. Foote should get away to quietude as quickly as he can. Therefore, after a few words from myself and the Rev. W. Sharman—(applause)—representing the movement for the repeal of the blasphemy laws under which Mr. Foote has suffered imprisonment, and of course a few words from our friend—(cheers)—we will conclude the proceedings.

The CHAIRMAN, addressing Mr. Foote, then said: Mr. Foote, we meet informally this morning to welcome you on your release from an imprisonment which, if it had been only for one week, we should have considered petty persecution—(hear, hear)—but which, being for twelve months, we hold to be infamous in its harshness and severity. (Cheers.) This morning our greeting is informal. On the 12th of March we shall formally testify, to you and your co-prisoners, our view of the whole persecution and imprisonment. But though the greeting to-day is informal it is none the less hearty, real and thorough. (Cheers.) The cheers which commenced to greet you, when Holloway Gaol doors first opened, were the first words of the judgment of reversal of the highest court of appeal that civilised nations know—the court of public opinion, which thus reverses, annuls and destroys the sentence passed upon you by Mr. Justice North. (Cheers.) The friends who gathered at Holloway were numerous enough I hope to delight you, and are numerous enough here to show their earnestness; but they are only the few who represent the scores of thousands who in every part of England permit me to be their mouthpiece to-day. (Cheers.) Since you have been here you have received from them, by letter and by telegram, testimonies to speak for themselves. But during the last twelve months I have stood face to face with very many hundreds of thousands of your countrymen, and wherever your name has been mentioned there has been hearty, earnest, complete sympathy with you in your suffering, and desire for your release. (Cheers.) You come out of Holloway Gaol this morning enrolled in the martyr-list, which in old times was headed by Bruno, Vanini and Lezycynski—men who had none of that which you have this morning as recompense and reimbursement for their pain; for about their cinders none gathered save those who were hostile. You come out enrolled in the list which in our own century has written upon it the names of Richard Carlile, Robert Taylor, Henry Hetherington, Matilda Roalfe, James Watson, and scores of other brave and enduring Freethinkers, who all endured as you have endured, but had not the pride to be greeted as you are greeted; for then opinion was so strong against them that it required daring to meet the prisoner on his release. To-day public opinion is working for you every hour, and your friends who meet you are proud to be able to do it. (Cheers.) We meet to honor you for your brave and able defence of Freethought—(cheers)—on your three trials; we meet to bear testimony to the great moral courage you have shown—(cheers)—we meet to wish you health and strength in the future which is now open to you as it is to few men—(Cheers)—we meet to assure you that the whole Freethought party throughout England looks to you to maintain the position which you fought for before Mr. Justice North—(hisses)—and which you won before Lord Coleridge. (Loud cheers.) And I may tell you that when I and my colleague, Mrs. Besant, represented England at the International Freethought Conference at Amsterdam, we were charged most earnestly by the representatives of many nations to tender to you as I do tender to you to-day their warm sympathy with you in your struggle and suffering, and to express not only to you but to the English people, as I do now express their indignant protest against the severity of an imprisonment which at the present time is without parallel for such an offence in any civilised community in the world. (Cheers.)

The Rev. W. SHARMAN, who was received with cheers, said: Ladies and gentlemen, I rise simply for the purpose of conveying to Mr. Foote the assurance that his imprisonment shall not be a fruitless one. We mean that, as he is the latest, he shall also be the last victim (Hear hear.) We mean that the iniquitous state of the law which condemned him to twelve months' imprisonment shall soon be changed, so that such an imprisonment shall be an impossibility. (Cheers.) I wish to remind Mr. Foote that in this movement for the abolition of the blasphemy laws—a movement with which his name will always be chiefly associated—there are many workers to be found in the ranks of the faith that has

been disgraced by his persecution. (Hear hear.) I specially mention the great services rendered by Mr. Stewart Headlam—(cheers)—by Canon Shuttleworth—(cheers)—and also by Mr. Verinder, and those associated with him in the Guild of St. Matthew. I will not presume to stand between you and Mr. Foote another moment, but I will simply repeat my assurance of sympathy, and my determination to press on in the work we have undertaken, so that Judge North—(hisses)—and any other judge like him, shall have no opportunity of again disgracing English justice. (Cheers.)

At the suggestion of the Chairman three hearty cheers were then given for Mr. Foote, the whole audience rising and cheering with great enthusiasm.

Mr. Foote said: Friends—for I think I may call you so who have assembled to give me such a hearty and enthusiastic greeting this morning. (Hear, hear.) I perceive that my friends, Mr. Bradlaugh, and the Rev. W. Sharman are in excellent form. (Laughter and hear hear.) They have not had the disadvantage I have labored under of being out of practice for twelve months. The prison rule is silence. Fortunately, nowadays, the silence is not perpetual as it was in old times, and when a man is outside the prison walls there is no law that I am acquainted with to gag him. (Cheers.) I have looked forward to meeting my friends and the lovers of Freethought and justice from the very moment I entered those subterranean apartments which lie beneath the dock of the Old Bailey. I heard then the roar through the thickness of the walls and the earth, of an indignant crowd of my fellow-countrymen outside—(hear hear)—and to-day I am privileged to hear more than their indignation; I am privileged to hear the voice of their acknowledgment that when I stood before a judge who so far forgot the dignity of the Bench as to act as counsel for the prosecution—(Shame)—I did not altogether disgrace the cause which I had the honor then to represent. (Cheers.) If I were to consult my own feelings instead of the calendar I should say I had been in gaol twelve years instead of twelve months. To the ordinary criminal confinement is painful; to a man accustomed to such an active bodily and intellectual life as I enjoyed, such confinement was simply horrid. But still, Freethinkers, as Mr. Bradlaugh's enemies have found, take a deal of killing—(laughter and cheers)—and I am happy to say, that, although naturally my imprisonment has somewhat reduced my dimensions, I am still not unwell, and I mean, with a due regard to my health, to plunge at once into the work which Mr. Justice North—(hisses)—or perhaps, I should say, Judge North, took me; and from which Gaoler Harcourt has ever since kept me. (Hisses and shame.) I have been for twelve months locked up day and night in a brick vault about twice the size of a grave, and nearly as sombre. It is quite a treat to see daylight. My time has not been altogether wasted, it is true; so far as the prison light permitted, I have read a good many books. I have made use of my time for study ever since the Commissioners allowed me to have books, and, so far as I could, I have done justice to what victuals were provided me. (Laughter.) There is a deal of monotony you know in having exactly the same thing for breakfast every day, exactly the same thing for dinner, and exactly the same thing for tea—especially tea—(laughter)—for I can assure you that until I drank the very excellent cup of tea provided for me here this morning I did not know how bad prison tea was. (Laughter.) Now I have been imprisoned in a felon's cell for twelve months—(shame)—without having committed a crime. (Hear, hear.) I have deliberately never injured man, woman or child. And permit me to say that if the law of a country will imprison men who are guilty of no real crime, it is not the alleged criminal, but the law which must bear the disgrace. (Hear, hear.) During the whole of that time I have been able to ponder the glorious truth that England is a free country—("Oh, oh," and laughter). My friends, you frequently hear this boasted of on platforms, especially before a general election; but it is not quite true. Mr. Bradlaugh, although for the fourth time, as I am happy to hear—(cheers)—elected by the same constituency to the same Parliament, cannot get inside—(shame)—because, as I heard one of the rough, uneducated prisoners say in Holloway Gaol, the men in the House of Commons—to use his very expressive words—"is like a lot o' kids." (Loud laughter.) Well, it is idle to talk about a free country so long as Mr. Bradlaugh cannot take the seat to which he is entitled. (Hear, hear.) It is idle to talk of a free country when we have Mr. Truelove here this morning, who suffered four months of horrible imprisonment for a man of his age, for simply giving publicity to ideas which every man should have the right to publish. (Hear, hear.) Nay, it was not very long before that, that Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant were both within the very shadow of the walls of a gaol, and only secured exemption from imprisonment by a very happy legal technicality, which did not in my case arise, because, profiting by their fault in drawing up the indictment against Mr. Bradlaugh, they took care to make mine all correct. And I say, too, it is nonsense to talk about England being a free country while men and women such as I see before me now, and such as I saw outside Holloway Gaol, have to welcome a prisoner from imprisonment for no crime. I have pondered that

truth for twelve months, and I can assure you it is profoundly impressed on my mind. Shall we as Freethinkers and Radicals, and justice-loving English people, submit to this? ("No, no," "never.") I for one, fresh from the horror of a Christian gaol, say—No! (Cheers.) Now let me say a word or two—and only a word or two—about the trials and their results. One grand result was the recognition by the Lord Chief Justice of England of the fact that Freethinkers are entitled to courtesy. (Hear, hear.) Unfortunately another judge—whose name would scarcely be known except it had figured in connexion with the blasphemous trials—had shown an opposite example; but Lord Coleridge told the jury, and showed by his own example in court, that Freethinkers were entitled to courtesy, and what is more, that they were entitled to justice. I do not, however, wish anyone to understand that I consider freedom of thought is in any safer position because of the judgment of Lord Coleridge. It was a very humane decision; but it was one which makes it possible for any unscrupulous judge in the future to play fast and loose with the principle of persecution and the principle of freedom, and to persuade the jury that they may send a Freethinker to gaol, not because he has impugned their opinions but because he has outraged their taste. And I am afraid the ordinary common jury of the Old Bailey, consisting perhaps—with no disrespect to those trades, but with a recognition that men in those trades have usually not much time to study the niceties of free speech—I say it is to be expected that a jury consisting of half a dozen greengrocers and half-a-dozen tallow-chandlers should easily take the judge's view, and send a man to gaol simply because they do not happen to like the cut of his opinions. One grand result, however, is that Mr. Justice Stephen has drafted a Bill for abolishing these laws. (Cheers.) In a memorable conversation in Shakespeare a question was asked: "Stands Scotland where it did?" Fortunately, I have not got to ask whether Judge North stands or sits where he did. I say stands or sits, because during the trial he stood about as much as he sat. He is removed to another sphere, I am happy to know, where both his bigotry and his eccentricities, while they may possibly inflict injury on the rights of property of his fellow-countrymen, can no longer endanger either their liberties or their lives. (Cheers.) Judge North sent me to gaol; Gaoler Harcourt has kept me there. I wish it to be distinctly understood that no mitigation of the rigor of my sentence has ever come from Sir William Harcourt. I have had books to read during the last nine months simply by the kindness of the Commissioners. When on my entering gaol I wrote to Sir William Harcourt on an official sheet of paper, asking amongst other things that I might have books to read, the cold, formal answer came a month afterwards that the Secretary of State for the Home Department saw no reason to accede to my request. (Hisses and "shame.") I have had some change in diet, but I had the ordinary prison fare until after my trial before Lord Coleridge; and I owe nothing of this to Sir William Harcourt. I owe it to the kindness, rather, I will add, to the lofty humanity of Lord Coleridge—(cheers)—and the voice of public opinion throughout the country, which had even reached the ears of people within the walls of Holloway Gaol. Sir William Harcourt, not satisfied with maintaining the rigor of our imprisonment so far as he could, took the opportunity of libelling us in the House of Commons—a position where a man can be as libellous as he pleases without any danger. There is not a word of truth about Sir William Harcourt's statement that we were imprisoned for indecent libel. (Hear, hear.) If we published an indecent libel, why did they not prosecute us for that? They knew they had no case. They prosecuted us for a blasphemous libel; and it is a villainous thing that, in order to justify himself, a member of a "Liberal" ministry, who looks after prisoners and another class of people of the opposite sex, beginning with a "p," and who may be called, considering his duties, the common scavenger of the Government—(laughter)—should be able, from the shelter of his official position, to libel men who at any rate have shown their readiness to make some sacrifice for their principles, which I do not think he ever showed much readiness to do. Of my treatment in gaol I have already said something. I must, however, add that I shall ever bear a grateful recollection of Colonel Milman, the governor of Holloway Gaol—(cheers)—who has shown himself throughout a gallant gentleman. The doctor also has done his very best for me, as well as for my fellow prisoners. Of the chaplain—(laughter)—I may say that he was so much exasperated and cut up by the reception which my friend Mr. Ramsey met with on his release that he has thought it prudent to go away for the benefit of his health. (Laughter.) His visits to me in gaol were not like angel's visits—few and far between. (Laughter.) Shortly before the time when I was entitled to read books—when I had been in prison two months—he called promising to let me have some books fit to read; but I never saw anything of him after the time that I was entitled to them, and, on the whole, I am very glad that I was under no obligation to him. (Hear hear.) I have studied pretty thoroughly the operation of his teaching and the doctrines of his faith on

prisoners in Holloway Gaol, and I shall have an opportunity of saying something on that on Wednesday evening. The chaplain is a gentleman very anxious, according to his own account, to be "at home in heaven," as he phrases it, and yet he is always particularly anxious about his health. During the twelve months of my imprisonment he has had about three months' leave of absence. On the last occasion, when he addressed us before leaving the gaol for the seaside, he stated he was going away to see what the lord intended to do with him—(laughter)—and I have heard several of the prisoners in their muttered conversations wonder what the lord was doing with him. (Laughter.) But I will leave him, contenting myself with repeating what I have already said, that I am exceedingly glad I am under no obligation to him. There has been a great gain, I am glad to know, to our cause. (Cheers.) The "blood of the martyrs," it was said, was the "seed of the Church;" and we know very well that all persecution, unless it absolutely exterminates, must give more strength and fervor to the persecuted party—(cheers)—and I verily believe that if our opponents will only continue to persecute us for a whole generation, we shall have won a decided and irreversible victory over them. Mr. Bradlaugh has well said that no such greeting as this welcomed men in bygone days who suffered for Freethought. True, and it is a melancholy reflexion; but it has also its bright side—because if such a welcome as I have met with this morning is possible now, it shows that our principles are spreading. (Cheers.) It shows that it is considered no longer a disgrace to testify one's love, not only of freedom, but of the principles that are actively assailed by those who profess themselves lovers of freedom. There has been a great gain to our cause, and I hope I shall live long enough to assist in a still greater gain to our cause. (Cheers.) I thank you friends for the welcome you have given me this morning. You will never know until you stay twelve months in Holloway Gaol, the great joyous truth of Robert Burns' saying, "Liberty's a glorious feast"—the most glorious of all feasts. I thank you for your greeting. I am not played out. (Hear, hear.) I am thinner. The doctor told me I had lost two stone, and I believe it. But I do not think the timbers of the ship after all are much injured. (Cheers.) The rogues ran me aground, but they never made me haul down the flag. (Bravo.) Now I am floated again I mean to let the old flag stream out on the wind as before. I mean to join the rest of our fleet in fighting the pirates and slavers on the high seas of thought. (Cheers.) Mr. Justice North might have thought that he was silencing Freethought at the Old Bailey; he might also perhaps have thought that he was silencing or at least converting me; but he has done nothing of the kind. He has not silenced Freethought, because that is a task which a million Norths would fail before. (Cheers.) He has not silenced me, because I am speaking to you in the same old strain this morning, and I hope that health and strength will be mine to go from one end of the country to the other to ask my fellow countrymen what they think of my imprisonment. I shall ask them whether they do not think that the persecuted cause, which always, so far as I am aware, speaks out on behalf of the most precious rights of humanity, should have a warmer place in the affections of all men and women who contribute something to the national greatness by the sweat of their brows or the labor of their brains, than the parties who simply live upon the fruits of others' industry and use old, effete principles and bygone, but not yet utterly dead, prejudices, to cripple those they have not the strength to meet in a free and open encounter. (Cheers.)

The proceedings then terminated.

ACID DROPS.

THE good folks of the Isle of Wight are still much concerned with the absconding of their sky-pilot, the Rev. J. Middleton, of West Cowes, who, it seems, in addition to his nameless crimes with boys, has seduced his servant, who is likely to become a mother. The rev. blackguard has a wife, as had also the Rev. Mr. Pound, who was guilty of similar offences in the same island.

ANOTHER case of clerical bankruptcy, the Rev. S. Charles, a clerk out of holy orders. Also another clergyman charged with drunkenness, the Rev. A. G. Grace, vicar of Wellington, Shropshire.

A DISTRESS for extraordinary tithes, at the instance of the Rev. W. B. Pusey, rector of Langley, near Maidstone, took place at Mr. S. Skinner's farm, Langley, last Monday. After the sale an indignation meeting was held and resolutions passed protesting against these obnoxious priestly imposts.

THE Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham wants to give us a little more Christian treatment. In his Lenten pastoral he complains that "until recently the laws against blasphemy and open Atheism were enforced in this country, now these destructive crimes have almost unlimited license, and carry

on an open warfare against god and all religion"—Judge North and Gaoler Harcourt notwithstanding.

LET the believer in the invariable triumph of justice contrast the treatment of the poor old woman Antonia Speke, who has just received at the Thames Police Court a month's imprisonment with hard labor for fortune telling, with the emoluments derived by sky-pilots for telling us our fortune in another world.

THE Lord Mayor, however, presiding at a meeting of the "Friends of the Clergy," declares that the fatal profession is very ill paid. He contrasted the payment of ministers with that of well-to-do barristers, but forgot to mention that the latter are paid not by a yearly salary but according to their work and merit. Everyone knows that the fool of the family is made a parson because the black-coated business demands no knowledge either of nature or of men. It is calculated that upwards of twenty-five millions are wasted yearly on priestly parasites, yet they continually complain of inadequate payment.

MEANTIME, that venerable fossil, the Upper House of Convocation of the Church of England, finding that even the hope of fat livings will not draw young men of promise, talent and honesty to enter the Church, at the threshold of which they have to solemnly constitute themselves impostors, has passed a resolution declaring that "in view of the overwhelming need of increase in the number of the ministry, and the impossibility of providing sufficient endowments for the purpose, it is expedient to ordain to the office of deacon men possessing other means of living who are willing to aid the clergy gratuitously." What results this offer of the title of deacon to Dives will have remains to be seen.

THE comments of the religious press on the unhappy Egyptian affair are very funny. The *Christian Herald* of course takes the palm for idiocy by calling the Madhi "the third evil spirit from the false prophet of Mohammedanism going forth according to Revelation xvi., 13." More apropos in its quotation is the Baptist organ, the *Freeman*, which cites Ezekiel xxx., 6, as a warning to Britain—"Thus saith the lord, They also that uphold Egypt shall fall," overlooking the fact that in verse 10 the curse to Egypt is said to come by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon.

If we were not nerved in our attacks on the Christian superstition by feeling its intolerance, we might be by witnessing the plentiful crop of hypocrisy, humbug and superstition which follows in its train. Observe, for instance, the success of the lunatic *War Cry* and of this *Christian Herald*, edited by the author of "Louis Napoleon, the destined Monarch of the World." His wife, by the way, edits another nice specimen of Christian work, the *Healer*, a bi-monthly devoted to recording the faith cures said to be wrought at Betsam House by the Rev. W. E. Boardman, M. Baxter and Co.

THE Hobson case at Epping affords another instance of clerical high-handed intolerance. Mr. Isaiah Hobson more than fifty years ago was left a widower with three young children, of whom his wife's sister took charge. By the advice of his clergyman he married this lady before the passing of Lord Lyndhurst's Act, 1835, which expressly left all previous marriages valid. A new vicar of Epping, however, the Rev. Mr. Fort, hearing of this, spurned Hobson when he presented himself at the communion table, and had the cheek to recommend him to separate himself from his wife. Hobson thereupon communicated with Bishop Cloughton, of St. Alban's, who of course supports the priest in his arrogant interference with the lawful married life of this aged couple.

WITHIN the past few months two important works dealing with the criticism of the manuscripts of the New Testament have seen the light. The one is Dean Burgon's "The Revisers Revised," the other Dr. Scrivener's third edition of his "Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament," enlarged and brought down to the present day. Both are thoroughly orthodox, yet make the most fatal admissions as to the unreliability of any single text of their god-given revelation.

THE whole controversy that ranges round the old manuscripts of the New Testament, the earliest of which cannot be dated before the latter part of the fourth century, is very instructive. Dean Burgon and Dr. Scrivener unite in censuring the Greek text compiled by Westcott and Hort, and published in 1881, and the Dean is unmeasured in his denunciation of the revisers for having listened to these critics rather than to Dr. Scrivener; yet while the latter declares the Vatican manuscript to be "the most weighty single authority we possess," the Dean declares that a text based upon the Vaticanus would be "by far the foulest text that had ever seen the light." He also calls it, and the much boasted of Sinaitic manuscript discovered by Tischendorf, "two of the least trustworthy documents in existence."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Literary communications to be addressed to the Editor of the "Freethinker," 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, 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.—Applications (*pro tem.*) to G. W. Foote, 28 Stonecutter Street, London.

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*, 28 Stonecutter Street, London.

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RECEIVED.—F. Claydon, T. Redburn, A. Hillerby, J. Ferguson, A. A. H. M., Effactem, J. Mowbray.

T. LONGLEY.—5th Elizabeth, cap. 1; 7th James I., cap. 6; 30th Charles II., cap. 2.

R. CLAPPERTON.—The lato Dr. Travis was a native of Durham. He was appointed literary executor to Robert Owen.

R. J. RESTIEUX.—Though personally interested in your letter we cannot find space for it in our little journal.

T. SMITHSON points out that infirmaries for the sick existed in Mexico until destroyed by the Christian invaders. In Sir G. W. Cox's "Aryan Mythology," p. 429, we read that the temples of Æsculapius were practically large hospitals devoted to works of mercy; a statement corroborated by Smith's "Classical Dictionary," p. 19.

St. O.—Many thanks. We are overcrowded at present.

W. BRUTSCHER.—Coming from the Black Forest, we cannot expect your English to be perfect. Your German writings are not likely to be of use to us.

R. DAVIES.—As a member of Parliament may not legally resign his seat, he can accomplish that object indirectly by applying for the nominal office of the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds. In ancient times the steward was supposed to keep the peace in that district. There is no salary, although the warrant says the steward is entitled to all the emoluments pertaining to the office.

J. R. C.—The story of Voltaire having given a written profession of his adherence to Roman Catholicism on his death-bed is false. See Mr. Foote's "Death's Test."

A. MOONEY.—You had better inquire of the post-office.

M. A.—Apply to the London Linguistic Institution, 39 Lombard Street, E.C.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

The subject of Mr. Foote's lecture at Claremont Hall next Sunday morning will be "How I Fell among Thieves." The evening's discourse will be founded upon the twelve months' experience of "The Gospel of Holloway Gaol."

On Wednesday, March 5, the Political Council of the Hackney Workmen's Club present a separate testimonial to Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp for their suffering on behalf of the cause of free speech.

The Manchester Freethinkers have taken the St. James' Hall, which holds nearly 4,000 people, for Mr. Foote, who lectures morning, afternoon, and evening on March 16. They hope that all the friends in the district will make this the occasion of a great demonstration.

The March number of *Progress* contains an address to the readers by the interim editor, Dr. Aveling, as well as a paper by him on "The Rottenness of the Press." Captain Bingham, whose contributions are always interesting, has a humorous paper on forming a zoological garden in India. Another interesting sketch is that by R. B. Holt, of William Buckley, an Englishman who spent thirty-two years among the savage natives of Australia. "Herds of Humanity," by J. H., deals with the condition of the poor. The "Translations from Heine," by the late James Thomson (L.V.), are continued,

and other good verses on Optimism, Pessimism and Meliorism are supplied by Norman Britton. J. R. draws attention to a new novel, "Bishopspool," by Wm. Renton, author of a very heretical psychological study of Jesus. E. Belfort Bax writes on "Toleration and Religion," from the standpoint of "scientific socialism." Mr. Bax contends that toleration should only extend to those who are willing to base their claims on reason. Instead of allowing our Moodys and Booths to preach delirious nonsense directly tending to produce insanity, he would offer them a cell gratis. This recital of but a portion of the contents will show that the March number of *Progress* is a varied and entertaining one.

SIR JAMES FITZ-JAMES STEPHEN contributes a paper on "Blasphemy" to the March number of the *Fortnightly Review*, which will receive our early attention.

PROF. ROBERTSON SMITH is engaged on a popular critical review of the Old Testament, which it is expected will considerably alarm the Scotch divines.

The Rochdale Branch of the N. S. S. have a tea party and entertainment in the Temperance Hall, Smith Street, to commemorate the release of Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp. Councillor Slater, of Bury, Councillor Cleetham and the Rev. S. Carter, of Rochdale, will address the meeting.

The Paris town councils have resolved to christen, or shall we say paganise, one of their streets by the name of Darwin. How long will it be before the great teacher gets as much recognition in his native country?

The New York *Sun* is responsible for the following:— "Robert G. Ingersoll's father was a minister of the last generation, and for a long time pastor of the Congregational Church at Madison, Ohio, and at Ashtabula, the place of the memorable railroad disaster. He was successful as a revivalist, and finally gave up the settled pastorate in order to spend his time in evangelistic work. He was capable of arousing the emotions to a high pitch of ecstatic enthusiasm. This description is by a man who sat under his ministry, and who also tells how little Bob used to engage his father in long disputations, bringing up the familiar sceptical puzzles of the whale, the frogs, and the sun standing still. He was always elated at cornering his father."

On Wednesday, March 5, at 8 p.m., Dr. Edward Aveling, will give an evening of readings grave and gay, at the Progressive Club, Johnson Street, Notting Hill Gate. Tickets, 2s., 1s., and 6d., can be obtained of Dr. Edward Aveling, 13 Newman Street, or at the club.

The pink *Globe* is wrath with me for comparing "Justice North with Judge Jeffreys" (*sic*). I own it was rather rough on Jeffries. But I don't see why even an advocate so adapted to defend Jeffries as the *Globe* should expect the Government to prosecute me for defaming the character of the departed judge.—E. B. A.

In the annual report of the South Place Religious Society the committee state: "Perhaps the most striking event of the year was the prosecution for blasphemy, resulting in the condemnation of three men to various terms of imprisonment, the shortest being in excess of that frequently inflicted for crimes of brutal violence. While it is discouraging to find that such things are possible in the boasted land of religious liberty in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and still more so to see the last jot and tittle of the cruel sentence exacted in spite of many protests, whilst other offenders, who, in their zeal for an ancient creed, had committed actual outrage, had a large portion of their sentences remitted, it was satisfactory to notice the very general outburst of indignation which the whole proceedings evoked. More especially, it may be remarked, that on the second trial the law upon the subject was laid down by the Lord Chief Justice in a more liberal spirit than had ever been done before; so liberally indeed, that it may be doubted whether, if this ruling is generally accepted by the judges, any future prosecution for blasphemy can be successful. At the same time, as this is by no means certain, and as the result depends so much upon the presiding judge, as was shown in this case, no effort should be spared to so alter the law as to make the punishment of any man for the free expression of his opinions impossible."

SAINTS AND SINNERS.—V

SAINT JACOB.

ON his journey to Padan-aram, whither he was going to get out of the reach of his elder brother, and also in search of a wife, Jacob "lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night." Taking a number of stones, he arranged them in order and used them for a pillow. Upon these he

laid down to rest, and being no doubt in uncomfortable posture, he dreamed a dream—or perhaps it would be more correct to say he had a pleasant sort of vision.

In this dream Jacob beheld a wonderful sight. He saw a ladder stretching from earth to heaven, and upon it were a number of angels ascending and descending by way of amusement.

The lord, too, comforted himself gracefully upon the topmost rung, and from this elevated position delivered to the dreaming Jew below a short lecture, in which, among other things, he told him that he would give to his seed the land whereon he then lay; that it [his seed] should be “as the dust of the earth,” and spread in all quarters of the earth, and sundry other promises that have not yet been fulfilled.

When Jacob—who attached a great deal of importance to his dream—awoke he made this sapient remark, “Surely the lord is in this place, and I knew it not,” which clearly shows that the deity in whom this cunning Jewish saint believed had not the characteristic ascribed to him by modern theologians—of omnipresence.

After anointing and naming the place whereon he had slept, or rather had dreamed, Jacob ventured to strike a bargain with the lord, which, upon the face of it, looks more true than many of the statements in the inspired biographer's record.

Here it is. Our Jacob vowed a vow, saying, “If god will be with me and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the lord be my god.”

Reasonable enough, from Jacob's standpoint, was this bargain. All he required was that, before he should own any indebtedness to the lord, the lord, as a guarantee of good faith, should provide him with food and raiment, and if he refused to fulfil this requirement, he was a god who was not worth having.

At length Jacob reached his destination, and having made sundry inquiries for the abode of Laban, was introduced by some shepherds to Laban's youngest daughter, Rachel, who had come down to a well to water her father's sheep. Gallantly rolling away a stone from the mouth of the well, Jacob assisted Rachel to water the flock, and when this was accomplished he kissed the young lady, and then, as though reproving himself for what he had done, “he lifted up his voice and wept.”

Jacob in tears must have been, indeed, an impressive sight! An honest Iago snivelling is something for the gods to exult over. Rachel's tender heart was touched in a moment. When Jacob had explained to Rachel that he was related to her and sundry other matters, the young lady brought him to her father, who embraced him, and soon Jacob was comfortably established as a lodger in Laban's house. And being a very good business man, Laban at once made a most sensible proposal to Jacob. He said: “Because thou art my brother, shouldst thou therefore serve me for nought? Tell me what shall thy wages be?” What could be fairer?

Now, Laban, who was as sagacious an old Jew as ever made a bargain or took an oath, had two daughters, Rachel, the younger, being fair and beautiful to look upon, while Leah, the elder, had some unpleasant defect in her optical organs, or, as the inspired writer delicately puts it, “was tender-eyed.” Jacob, it would seem, at first sight, had fallen desperately in love with Rachel, and when the above question as to the wages he should require for his labor was mooted, Jacob said that he should be satisfied to give seven years of service in return for the hand and heart of Laban's youngest daughter.

Laban readily assented. At the expiration of the seven years, however, he gave a feast, and at night, in the dark, or while Jacob was unusually elated with the holy spirit, Laban palmed his eldest daughter upon him, and he did not discover the deception till he awoke next morning and found, to his amazement, that he had married the “tender-eyed” girl after all.

Naturally Jacob was very much annoyed, not only at finding that he had taken the wrong woman for a partner, but probably his annoyance was increased by the horrible thought that it was possible for anybody to dupe so intelligent a “child of god” as he flattered himself to be.

On seeing Laban next morning, Jacob, doubtless, had “a few words” with him on the subject, and Laban

ingeniously replied that it was not customary for parents in that part of the world to allow the young daughter to be married until the elder ones had been “got off their hands,” and that therefore, if Jacob wanted Rachel, he must perform another term of service in order to win her. This Jacob consented to do. At the termination of another seven years Jacob found himself the happy husband of two wives, master of two handmaids, and the father of a young and increasing family. By a dexterous elimination of the “specked and spotted” among Laban's cattle, Jacob managed, in a brief period, to amass a considerable amount of wealth, and having offended his father-in-law by robbing him wholesale in most pious and saintly fashion, departed from Padan-aram to journey back to the land of his birth. Rachel also acted very shabbily towards her father, for while he was gone to shear his sheep she purloined “his gods,” and, what was worse, was actually wicked enough to sit on them.

Laban learning that his son-in-law had secretly fled, pursued and overtook him, and had not god paid Laban a visit in a dream, he would no doubt have had the thief, Jacob, handed over to the local police, and charged him with felony; and if the stealing of gods is criminal offence, his daughter might have been included in the charge. But the lord persuaded Laban not to be rash, and whatever he did, not to speak harshly to his dishonest son-in-law.

Having then arranged matters satisfactorily, Jacob was released, and took his departure; but had not proceeded far before he was met on the way by “the angels of god,” whom he saluted in familiar fashion.

Though the inspired record does not say so, it seems that these angels communicated the fact that if Jacob continued his course he could not avoid meeting his brother Esau. Coward to the last, Jacob dared not boldly face his brother; he therefore sent messengers to him offering to bribe him with oxen, etc. Having offered up a short prayer to the god of his fathers, in which he promised to deal well with him if he was protected from the assaults of his brother, Jacob continued his journey; and on his way he met either an angel of the lord, the lord himself, or a man, with whom he had a wrestling match, and was defeated, his antagonist unfairly kicking him in “the hollow of his thigh.”

Shortly after, the two brothers met face to face—the Saint and the Sinner; and Esau had now an opportunity of reeking vengeance upon his brother, but, like the good, tender-hearted fellow that he was, forgot all about his early hatreds, and generously forgave pious Jacob and “fell on his neck and kissed him.” What splendid magnanimity! What admirable forbearance!—and this the first meeting after the great injustice committed against him at his dying father's bedside! And no word of praise to be found throughout the whole Bible of this generous conduct.]

Think of it, you modern saints, and exult! Think of it; and when you see an infidel whose life is pure, whose aims are lofty, struggling against overwhelming difficulties, slander him, deprive him of his birthright as a citizen, assume yourself to be made of better stuff than he, and assuredly the lord will be with you to comfort and praise you in your saintly undertaking wheresoever you go.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

REVIEW.

The Darwinian Theory: Its Meaning, Difficulties, Evidence, History. By EDWARD B. AVELING, D.Sc. Price 6d. London: Progressive Publishing Company; 1884.

DR. AVELING must be congratulated upon having supplied a distinct want in putting out this cheap exposition of Darwinism. The doctrine of Evolution is the key-note to the thought of the age, and thousands who are unable to afford the works of the master, or even Dr. Aveling's “Student's Darwin,” are anxious to possess a clear and complete knowledge of the teachings of the great naturalist. Dr. Aveling's qualifications as a scientist, and his experience as a teacher, enable him to give this in as concise a manner as is possible to so wide-reaching a subject. His work is throughout a model of clear statement and accurate reasoning. The last chapter, which tells of the reception accorded to the new views of the origin of various forms of life by the clerical and religious press, is of special interest to Freethinkers. The little book is well got up in a tasteful cover, and we predict for it a large sale and an extensive sphere of usefulness.

DISCOVERY OF JONAH.

NEARLY two years ago a correspondent of the *Freethinker* announced the discovery of the whale which swallowed Jonah, whose identification was proved by a pocket-book found in its interior. The *Dundee Telegraph* improves on this by publishing the following, received by "extra special wire":—"Extraordinary excitement prevails in Glasgow owing to the discovery this afternoon of a live man in the stomach of the Tay whale. The stomach and over three tons of intestines were sent from Aberdeen a week ago under the direction of Professor Struthers, but it was only to-day that preparations had been completed for the opening of the stomach. A number of University Professors and other scientific gentlemen were present by invitation, as also several clergymen and prominent citizens. About noon a large incision was made, and the stomach partially opened, when something in the nature of a solid obstruction was encountered. Curiosity changed into utter amazement, when, on the incision being enlarged and the upper portion of the stomach drawn back, the obstruction was found to be a human being, lying in an easy position, as in sleep, with the body bent; the right arm, which was underneath, doubled at the elbow; and the side of the nose resting on the forefinger. It was supposed at first that the man was dead, but on closer investigation by the medical men present it was discovered that he was actually alive, but in a torpid or comatose state, resembling catalepsy. Besides the man, the stomach contained scores of dead herrings and sprats, and several articles of different kinds, including a large pocket book and the glass funnel of an old lamp (blackened with smoke) exactly similar to those used in the Tay Ferry steamers. It was thought prudent not to extricate the sleeping figure till the Procurator-Fiscal should be summoned; but attempts were made to waken him up by shouting. The Rev. John Smith, who was present, succeeded, with the assistance of two other gentlemen, in so bending over as to get his mouth close to the sleeper's ear; but, though he shouted at the pitch of his voice, not the slightest effect was produced. Mr. Smith expressed his conviction, in the most solemn and emphatic manner, that the man was no other than the prophet Jonah, and that the whale and the unfaithful prophet had both been preserved miraculously, and been directed to these shores as a triumphant refutation of modern scepticism. The objection was urged by several that Jonah, according to the bible narrative, had been vomited out of the whale upon dry land. Mr. Smith, however, held that Jonah must on some subsequent occasion have again fled from his post of duty and been again swallowed. He appealed somewhat excitedly to all present whether there was any record either in the bible or in natural history of any whale having a throat large enough to swallow a man, except the one that swallowed Jonah. It had been specially created to swallow him when he was refusing to attend to his duty, and was no doubt kept in readiness to swallow him in like circumstances again. Meanwhile more vigorous efforts have been made to get the sleeper aroused. Two powerful galvanic batteries of sixteen horse-power have been applied, but without producing the slightest effect. The doctors have made a further examination, and report that the structure and condition of the sleeper are both remarkable. The pulsation and everything else is exceptionally slow; and the bump of aggressiveness covers the entire area usually occupied by the moral faculties. Guns are to be fired this afternoon close to the exposed ear; but the doctors doubt if they will produce any movement or response."

THE believers in faith cures in America call themselves by the grandiloquent name of "Christian Scientists." According to their theory a healer is a person who is full of superfluity of a divine health-giving influence, and who is willing for a consideration to give his, or more generally her, superfluity to another whose ill-health declares the absence of the lord. The process is simple. The healer sits down with his, or her, back in contact with the corresponding portion of the patient's person, and for the moderate price of a dollar per hour allows the divine influence to filter from vertebra to vertebra. This is an excellent specimen of Christian science.

On Friday afternoon (February 22), at the Royal College of Surgeons, Professor W. K. Parker concluded a course of lectures on "Mammalian Descent." The syllabus announced the topic of the afternoon to be "Man, Conclusion." All technical aspects of man's descent from lower Mammalia were, however, set aside, and the thread of the discourse, if indeed it had any thread, was immortality. It was quite affecting to see this distinguished zoologist, advancing towards a venerable age, piteously hoping for a life beyond the grave; one moment extolling the Palmist David in language such as Matthew Arnold might use, and the next moment expatiating like an ardent youth on the indescribable beauties of Professor Huxley's "unlucky lay sermon" on "The Physical Basis of Life"; now applauding Darwin and his triumphs, and now quoting, with much of the grandiose, a "poem" by one Moses.

OF another mould is Professor John Fiske, whose "Excursions of an Evolutionist" has just been published. This gentleman thinks that Professor Clifford may have been wrong in believing that our souls and bodies die about the same time. At any rate, consciousness and the brain are to some extent independent, and for maintaining otherwise, materialists, headed by "sciolists like Büchner," are doomed to Professor Fiske's iterated vituperation. Blasphemy, too, is a shocking crime; we must not either "chide" or "call foolish" the holders of the grossest superstition, "for in the presence of the Transcendent Reality the foolishness of one man differs not much from the wisdom of another."

AND who, pray, is this? Professor Fiske is supposed to be an Agnostic, yet his acquaintance with "god" is astounding. He speaks of the "flexibility of mental constitution with which god has endowed" man, and of "the way in which god works through the world of phenomena," and "god" turns up again in the dedication, which, by-the-bye, is to a "Rev." Is the Professor afraid of the blasphemy laws?

PROFANE JOKES.

IN spite of all that can be said in favor of Adam and Eve, they were undoubtedly a shiftless pair.

A BURLINGTON mother has miraculously cured her youngest hopeful of smoking by the laying on of hands.

AT a prayer-meeting the other night the burden of the remarks was about those who had died recently. There was some smiling, when the deacon in charge then said: "We will close by singing 'Praise god from whom all blessings flow'"

A WOMAN'S JOKE.—Mr. Oscar Wilde's American story, which we noticed recently, was first introduced to England, or at least to London, by Sir Charles Bowen, at a great bar dinner about this time last year. It was then given as happening in a church, and the notice was, "Please do not shoot the organist; he does his best." This remote American town, which possessed at least one church and one organist, and evidently a high standard of taste in ecclesiastical service, was not, improbably, the same which on another occasion boasted of three places of worship. Each of these, as a rule, was crowded, till on one Sunday morning, when the assembling worshippers found each church or chapel fast locked and inaccessible. There was, for the moment, no resource but to disperse. Later in the day, however, the mystery was solved. A young lady in the town had sent an anonymous letter to each clergyman in the following terms: "Fly! all is discovered." And they did fly.

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A Monthly

Magazine.

"PROGRESS."

Edited by

G. W. Foote.

Interim Editor, EDWARD B. AVELING, D.Sc.

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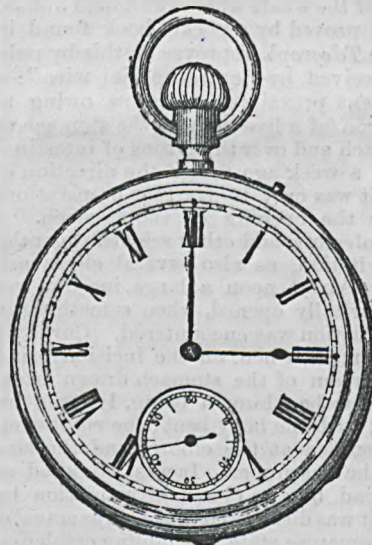
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