

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

DAYLIGHT AGAIN.

TEN days ago I was the inmate of a miserable little cell in one of the darkest corners of Holloway Gaol. The light, which poets so often describe as "streaming," did anything but stream through the thick corrugated glass of my spacious window, measuring about three feet by eighteen inches. It crept in reluctantly, and looked exceedingly glum when it got there. I found it difficult to read for an hour at a time, even at broad noon on the brightest days; and when the days were not bright, as is generally the case in our winters, the place was as gloomy as a sepulchre or an orthodox sermon. Even when out at exercise I was in the shadow of the prison walls, and I can truthfully aver that for four whole months a ray of sunlight never fell on my face. No wonder so many friends remarked the ghastly pallor of my skin on the morning of my release. And during the entire twelve months of my imprisonment I, of course, saw no more of the sky than the small patch immediately over the prison yard. Sometimes, when the weather was fine, I could see the white clouds sailing slowly across the high blue roof, and I almost regarded them as living things. They were at least pure and sweet in the beautiful and holy calm of heaven; they looked like messengers of joy and love; and my heart yearned towards them, as though they could understand my voiceless feelings, and convey them to my loved ones in the great world beyond those hideous walls.

The moon and stars I never saw at all. How I used to long for a glimpse of the infinite night and its eternal lamps, to stand bareheaded under the solemn and tender scene, to drink in the stillness and serenity of Nature as she lies revealed when day has withdrawn its obscuring light. But this was impossible. I had to satisfy myself with the glare of gaslight on bare whitewashed walls, and wait patiently until I could, as on the first evening of my freedom, look up and see the glittering hosts of heaven, the "army of unalterable law," wheeling with the patience of power, and glowing with the splendor of greatness, as they did before all the gods were born, and as they will when all the gods are dead.

All that is changed now. I can salute the Night and steep myself in the light of Day. I can stand in it and be happy, soaking it in like a sponge. True, it is only the daylight of March in England, but that is like June in Italy after twelve months in a felon's cell. And the fresh air expands my lungs and puts oxygen in my blood. My face is getting a little color, my step is growing elastic, and I feel ten years younger than I did ten days ago.

As my bodily strength increases my mental faculties recover their tone. I feel a little stiff in writing; but that will wear off in a few weeks, and my friends throughout the English-speaking world may look forward (if they care to look forward for anything of mine) to far more trenchant articles against "the infamous" than any I have ever penned. The *Freethinker* shall, as I promised from Holloway Gaol, be a greater terror than ever to priests and bigots; they shall hate it with the hatred of fear. I defy as I despise their power, and I would rather return to the loathsome brick vault I have tenanted for a whole long year than suffer them to divert me a hair's-breadth from the policy I have pursued since this journal was started.

The woodcuts will be resumed next week, and will be regularly continued until I go to prison again, which I do not think will be very soon. It strikes me that the bigots have had enough of the game for a good while. They have made a miserable mistake, and cannot help seeing it. They tried to put down the *Freethinker*, and they have only succeeded in making it a national power. But, whatever

their views may be, my duty is clear. The *Freethinker* shall be illustrated precisely because they say it shall not. If there were no other reason that would be quite sufficient.

Perhaps my readers will bear with me if, while I am at it, I finish talking about myself once for all. I intend to write a full account of my prosecution and imprisonment for blasphemy, so that the future historian of our time may know exactly the facts of the case. The Tylers, Norths and Harcourts shall, if I am able to do it, be pilloried as they deserve. They never spared me and I will not spare them. And I shall give complete details of my prison experiences, with the observations of an unusual prisoner among prisoners on the vile system which, in my opinion, is a huge manufactory of crime. This publication will probably run into a hundred pages or more.

As soon as I have seen that through the press I intend to complete my "Bible Romances," which have had an extraordinary sale. They will be followed by a series of "Bible Heroes," and those by another series of "Bible Women." After that I hope to publish a really classic work on "The Heroes and Martyrs of Freethought," the title of an old volume of mine long out of print. Many of the Lives will be written by myself, but I think it desirable to engage assistance for special departments of the work. And still beyond that I am preparing materials for another work, which I hope to write in conjunction with my friend Mr. Wheeler. It will be an historical exposure of Christianity from the cradle to the verge of the grave, in which it will be our aim to lay under contribution the best scholarship of Europe and America, and in especial to draw from the vast stores that have been accumulated during the last ten or fifteen years.

In co-operation with my friend Mr. Ramsey, at our shop in Stonecutter Street, I intend to keep the Freethought party constantly supplied with fresh literature, in addition to that from my own pen. We have a variety of projects in view: well-edited reprints, translations, works by new writers, and other publications. There can be no fear of our aspiring to too much in this way, for the harvest is indeed great and the laborers are all too few.

Progress will have my careful attention. I am persuaded that it has a fine future, as it certainly has no discreditable past. My labors will be lightened by the assistance of Dr. E. B. Aveling, whose name will appear as joint-editor with mine on the title-page. His admirable and disinterested conduct of the magazine during my imprisonment deserves a public recognition. This is the only one I can make, and, let me add, the only one he desires.

My activity as a lecturer will certainly be increased instead of diminished by my long silence. I will do my best to visit every town in the kingdom where a hall can be obtained. Invitations to lecture are pouring in far faster than I can accept them, and if many are disappointed just at present, they must kindly remember that I am not ubiquitous, and not yet as strong as I was before North tried to convert me with his Old Bailey gospel.

And now, in conclusion, let me recur to the subject of my release. Having reached daylight again, I can read the newspapers, and I am delighted to find the press taking such notice of our movement. The proceedings of February 25 were reported by all the London journals, from the *Times*, which gave half a column, to the *Echo*, which gave a few lines. The *Tory Standard* and *Globe*, the *Referee*, the *Weekly Times*, and the *Dispatch*, devoted long or short leaders to the subject; and the provincial press almost unanimously broke through the old conspiracy of silence. Such manifestations as my greeting outside Holloway Gaol, my reception at the breakfast, and the vast gathering at the Hall of Science two days later, cannot be ignored. The Freethought party is becoming a

recognised power in the land, and its voice will soon be heard in Parliament demanding liberty and justice for all.

I cannot notice all the letters and telegrams I have received, but, as I promised last week, I will notice a few. The British Secular Union sent me a vote of congratulation, and I gladly acknowledge "Saladin's" sturdy support from his fierce article on my trial and sentence to his paragraphs of welcome on my release. The first telegram I opened was from the Melbourne Secular Society, 12,000 miles away. Secular Societies from Glasgow to Plymouth sent their opportune messages; nor must I omit those I received for our young rising lecturers, Mr. Arthur Moss and Mr. W. Collins. The letter from the Derby Branch of the N. S. S. was doubly welcome, coming from Gaoler Harcourt's borough. Battersea Radicals sent the following resolution:—

"That this meeting of the combined political council of Battersea desire heartily to welcome Mr. G. W. Foote on his release from a long and unjust imprisonment, and trust that he will continue to persevere in his honest attempts to further the Freethought cause, while they are also strongly of opinion that the time has arrived when the 'so-called' blasphemy laws should be irrevocably repealed."

The Three Town's Radical Association, of Plymouth, sent a similar resolution by the hand of the Rev. W. Sharman.

But I was most deeply touched by two private letters. One was from a gentleman who knew nothing of Freethought until North's malignant sentence set him thinking and inquiring. He was a Christian then, he is a Freethinker now, and I rejoice to know that he is but one of a long list of such converts. The other was from a little girl, at Birmingham, only ten years old. "I have," she says, "inquired every Sunday from my pa how long you would be still left in gaol." Bless her dear young heart! May she grow in grace and wisdom with her years, and be the brave wife of a brave Freethinker. Courage! The world can never be lost while one child's heart throbs with indignation at injustice.

G. W. FOOTE.

G. W. FOOTE'S FIRST LECTURE.

I MEAN his first after his exit from the Christian hands. His veritable first I had not the pleasure of attending. But I made up my mind to hear the lecture with which he would recommence the campaign against the horrible creed, and whose active conduct had been suspended for a year. The day was Wednesday, February 27; the hour 8.30; the place the Hall of Science. The day was the best chosen of the three. It was two days after the release from Holloway, and thus time had been given for the speaker to become in some measure accustomed to the novelty of his recovered freedom. The difficulty about the time was due to some accidental confusion as to the hour or half-hour. Certain of the advertisements had given the time as 8 instead of the actual hour that had been determined, 8.30.

The majority of the audience not being believers in eternity, had made up their minds to be in time, even on the earlier supposition. By 7 o'clock the crowd had begun to collect, and when I arrived in Old Street at 7.15 the side-walk in front of the Hall of Science, and for some distance to the right and left of it was overflowing with people. Indeed, the side opposite was also beginning to fill as early as this, and by 7.30 there were as many people over the way as would have made a tolerable audience themselves.

I was among these, and watched, Lucretius-fashion, the struggles of the vast crowd on the opposite side who were filtering through the narrow doorway into the Hall. The entrance to the Hall of Science is a general contradiction to the Biblical statement that the narrow way leads to eternal life, and on this particular evening afforded a particular contradiction to the words "and few there be that find it."

I had the selfish satisfaction of knowing that I should get in somewhere myself, a feeling by no means shared by many of my companions. For, as the time wore on, and the crowd around the door, despite continuous in-filtration, grew ever larger, it became evident that a great many would be disappointed. This fact, that a very large number of people failed to obtain entrance leads to the

obvious comment, after the event, that St. James's Hall itself would have been in every sense, save that of associations, a better place of meeting. However, I hear it more than whispered that an opportunity of greeting the persecuted men in that more central building may ere long be forthcoming.

Several cabs drove up during the time of waiting, and after a series of futile dashes across the road, at last I came upon one containing Mr. and Mrs. Foote. We had a hard two or three minutes getting Mrs. Foote and a friend of hers of the same sex through the crowd. The people were kindness itself in their efforts to make way for us. The spirit truly was willing, but the crush was strong. I think the two women thought that the crowd's idea of making a way for us was almost to make away with us.

However, we pushed, and were pushed in at last. And then we had to wait some three-quarters of an hour for 8.30 and the chairman's arrival. When exactly to time the hall was entered, we found it packed to an extent that did equal credit to the enthusiasm of the people and the managing skill of Messrs. R. O. Smith, Anderson, and their assistants. Mr. Anderson tells me he never had such an evening before. It was not the numbers alone. Everyone was so excited. 1,650 beings were by some means packed into a hall that looks full with 800 in it.

When G. W. Foote appeared everybody rose and went mad for some minutes. I have heard some cheering during the last few years, but never anything more thorough in the way of solid shouting than the greeting given to him.

The platform was as full as the hall, and on it was one specially noticeable figure, that of the Rev. Stewart Headlam.

Mr. Bradlaugh prefaced the lecture—I can't use the formula "introduced the lecturer"—with a few simple words. Then Mr. Foote spoke for about 75 minutes. The quiet of the huge audience told through all that time of the intensity of their interest. Not that they were quiet all the time. They seized and made the most of every chance they had of shouting.

At the end of the lecture Mr. Bradlaugh said a few words upon the legal aspect of the position of Freethinkers to-day, and then dismissed the meeting, whose enthusiasm was by no means exhausted even at the end of an hour and a half's listening in a crammed hall that was in the proverbial *Oliver Twist* condition.

Such a beginning promises grandly for the reception our editor will receive all through England, and for the fresh impetus that his release will give to Freethought, and we rely confidently on the men and women in the country places to aid in the realisation of the promise.

EDWARD B. AVELING.

PRESENTATION TO MESSRS. FOOTE AND RAMSEY.

THE sub-committee appointed by the Executive of the National Secular Society to make the arrangements for the presentation to Messrs. Foote and Ramsey, on Wednesday, March 12th, have arranged the following programme:—Supper at 8 o'clock; 9 till 10.30, speeches, songs, and recitations; 11 o'clock, dancing. Tickets for supper and entertainment, 2s. 6d. each; admission to galleries from 9 till 10.30, 3d. each. Tickets for the supper will not be sold after Sunday, March 9th; it is impossible for the Committee to make proper provision unless they know how many they have to provide for. Tickets can be obtained at 63 Fleet Street, 28 Stonecutter Street, Hall of Science, and of members of the Executive of the National Secular Society.—R. O. SMITH, Secretary.

MR. T. F. BLANCHARD, of Paris, will lecture on the evenings of March 11th at Newington Hall, York Street, Walworth, on March 16th at the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Branch of the N. S. S., the subject being "The Friends of the Working Man."

IN the debate in the French Chamber last Monday on the Primary Instruction Bill, the Atheist deputy, Paul Bert, had a sharp passage of arms with Monseigneur Freppel, the Bishop of Angers, over a clause forbidding State schoolmasters to take any engagements in connexion with the Church. On a division the Bishop was beaten by a huge majority of 386 to 95. Our readers must not suppose that Paul Bert and the French Freethinkers are in this matter interfering with liberty of conscience, for the Church is State-paid, and therefore only a branch of the public service.

ACID DROPS.

THE sword of Justice at the Old Bailey fell down lately. It is said to have been loosened by Judge North a year ago.

THE peers are certainly peerless for stupidity. They trooped to Westminster Abbey on Ash Wednesday and heard the Commination service and a hymn, "Thine for ever, god of love," without any protest against the contradiction. Perhaps they thought the god of love was Cupid and the curses of the Commination Service like lovers' perjuries, at which as Jove laughs, the political Olympus may smile.

THE Church of England Assurance Institution certainly deserves the fourth word of its name. Its secretary, Mr. H. M. Baker, has had the assurance to forward to Dr. Edward Aveling a circular inviting his attention to all sorts of profitable facts. As the circular was headed "Reduced rates" it was hoped that it might contain some comfort for householders. But the phrase only referred to "policies." A reference to "ordinary assurances" seemed a little out of place in connexion with a Church of England Society that could apply to an Atheist for custom. But there is something soothing in the statement that "in the Fire department a reduction of 10 per cent." is allowed to teachers. Education does away with the notion of hell.

THE erudite *Globe*, in its article recommending the prosecution of a writer in the *Freethinker* for comparing Judge North with Judge Jeffries, aired a "little Latin" that its staff has under control, by printing our spelling of the name of the prototype of North with a (*sic*) after it. The *Globe* writers are ignorant of the fact that the name of the seventeenth-century judicial bully is spelt in at least three different ways. Hume has it Jeffries; Green, Jeffreys; Burnet ("History of my own Time"), Jefferies. As an instance of the doubt as to the true spelling, the old edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" has Jeffries, and the new (1883) Jeffreys (see Dorchester).

THE *Globe* called the *Freethinker* "obscure." The only evidence in that direction is that our paper is noticed by the evening weakling. We can punningly console ourselves even in that sad strait, by saying that we are read over the whole *Globe*—and that whilst we are read our assailant is only pink.

DOWN Bond Street we noticed an announcement that this was "The last week of the Vale of Tears." We thought the news too good to be true, and paced on, only to be soon confronted by another bill, declaring that next Tuesday "a solemn testimony will be delivered in Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, concerning the approaching Second Advent." Our sceptical shoulders shrugged. The aforesaid Second Advent was to have followed immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, and is consequently 1800 years overdue. Taking up our charming Christian contemporary, the *Rock*, however, we read that at the second session of the London Diocesan Conference the Rev. Robert Eyton will move "that in the opinion of this conference it is desirable that museums, libraries and picture galleries should be open on Sundays." Surely something wonderful is going to happen when a clergyman ventures to argue for common sense and justice before his fellow craftsmen.

A POPULAR edition of Archdeacon Farrar's highly rhetorical romance, entitled "The Early Days of Christianity," is about to be published. The Archdeacon's work is about as historical as "The Seven Champions of Christendom," who may be called "The late (k)night of Christianity."

A MINISTER of the New Church, named Gunton, has been lecturing at Smethwick on the subject "If god is love, why is there a hell?" We give it up. It would puzzle all the bigwigs of the Christian Church to answer Mr. Gunton's conundrum.

THAT eminently pious warrior General Gordon, according to the *Christian World*, declares that "Nothing can be more abject and miserable than the usual conception of god. Imagine to yourself what pleasure would it be to him to burn or to torture us! Can we believe any human being capable of creating us for such a purpose? I quite wonder at the long time it has taken us to see that the general doctrine of the Church is erroneous."

THE Rev. Dr. Potter, who gets his living by lecturing against the iniquities of Roman Catholicism, says "it is no infringement of liberty to restrain such blasphemers as Foote and Bradlaugh." According to this worthy, persecution is odious and abominable when it proceeds from Papists and is directed against Protestants, but highly laudable when inflicted by Protestants upon Freethinkers.

It has been thought that Noah sailed over America when he started on that forty days' go-as-you-please cruise, for it is recorded of him that he looked out of the Arkansaw land. The report lacks confirmation, and Noah not being here to publish a card, we must accept the statement with a grain of allowance.

WHEN Wendell Phillips commenced his anti-slavery crusade he considered it expedient to educate and convert the North instead of sowing his good seed on the barren soil of the South, where the slavery existed and where it would be impossible to make any headway among the slaveowners, whom he was seeking to destroy. One day as he was in a small town of Massachusetts, the parson of the town—who of course believed in the Bible and consequently slavery—sarcastically asked him: "Mr. Phillips, may I ask of you what is your mission in life?" "My mission," said Phillips, "is to save the nigger." "Then don't you think," said the parson, "it would be better if you went south to save him?" Phillips made no reply, but turned on him his calm and steadfast look, and said, "May I ask you, parson, what your mission in life is?" "Oh mine," said the parson, "is to save souls from hell." "Then," quickly said Phillips, "don't you think it would be better if you went there to save them?"

PUBLICAN BOOTH, like the renowned Silas Wegg, occasionally "drops into poetry." Here is his latest effusion in the *War Cry*—

"Pray, pray, every day
At 12.30;
And don't forget to kneel
After every meal.

Cards of the above can be had price one halfpenny."

THE chairman of the Watford Agricultural Hall Company has complained of the nuisance caused by the Salvationists who had engaged the building for Sunday performances. He mildly remarked that wherever these people had been in the district "it was one scene of blasphemy and horrible row." What do the local Judge Norths think of this? Why don't they send a few of the offenders to pick oakum and eat skilley? Perhaps they think that blasphemy is only a crime when Freethinkers commit it, and that Christians have a just claim to the full monopoly of that recreation.

A GAY and festive young Christian, a few days ago, presented himself at the house of a Freethinking publican (no relation to Matthew) in Finsbury, and exhibited a bad shilling, which he roundly swore had been given to him by the landlord himself the previous evening, and three times desired the lord to strike him blind if he spoke a word that wasn't true. It happened that the worthy host had been away from home all the previous day, and yet the pious young fellow's visual organs are not in the least affected up to the time of our going to press. Can Stafford Northcote or Randolph Churchill explain it?

EXAMINER in the Oxford schools: "How many Mary's are recorded in scripture?"

Examinee (*confidentially*): "Well, there's the Virgin Mary."

Examiner (*encouragingly*): "Yes, and —?"

Examinee (*as a happy thought*): "And Mary, Queen of Scots."

Examiner (*sarcastically*): "Yes, sir?"

Examinee (*as a yet happier thought*): "Oh, ah, yes, to be sure, I recollect now, there was the Bloody Mary."

He did not land his *testamur*.

SIR JOHN BENNETT accuses the Corporation of the City of London, which he knows pretty well, and perhaps too well, of "opposing national education," and being a "senseless enemy" of the people. True, Sir John; but why didn't you plainly say so when the City Fathers prosecuted the *Freethinker*? Still, 'tis better late than never; and we hope you will screw up the slow-going aldermen to keep as good time as your own clocks and watches.

MR. BRADLAUGH has addressed a long and able letter to Sir Stafford Northcote, but we doubt if it will produce any effect on that canny old gentleman. Sir Stafford, like Joey B., is sly. Mr. Bradlaugh trusted him once, and it was just once too often.

BEECHER says four-fifths of the people in heaven will be women. "That's all right enough," says George Peck. Nobody ought to peck at that. "Four-fifths of the women are better than the men, anyway, and they ought to go to heaven. But, according to that story, what a stag party there is going to be standing round the fire in the other place."

A CHURCH in Chelsea being under repair and about to reopen, the choir has started practice in a spare room of a public-house—no doubt Church property. A waiter is in attendance; and there are plenty of orders for "twos of Irish" after an anthem, and glasses of stout after the *Te*

Deum. Churchwardens are there in abundance, the smoke from which would make one think they were offering up a sacrifice to the lord—yea, even the lord of hosts.

REUBEN MAY, the professional philanthropist and compiler of lying tales about dying infidels, writes to a lady complaining that he is "in urgent need of 65 or £70, and that the Charity Organisation Society will give no relief." The lady seeing that the C. O. S. has taken Reuben's measure properly, sends the begging letter to *Truth*.

THE Rev. Allan Grace, vicar of Wellington, Salop, is to be hauled before his bishop for drunkenness. There has been a great falling from grace in the district.

AT the recent London Diocesan Conference, Prebendary Whittington, said that "the committee had read all the tracts issued by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Foote, Dr. Aveling and others, and they were for the most part mere perversions of scripture." It was then agreed that leaflets should be circulated in answer to "these coarse attacks on Christianity." We shall be glad to see some of them. They will help to brighten a dull hour. No doubt this is another effort of the clergy to promote the cheap amusement of the people.

THE Rev. J. A. Rentoul has been lecturing at Woolwich upon "The value of Christianity, even if it were a delusion." There can be no doubt of its value to one class of people—the priests. Incidentally Dr. Rentoul declared that, "All the best stories in the *Freethinker* I heard told at college, or at tea-meetings to thoroughly Christian audiences." Now, although many of our profane jokes are old, and may have been originated by bishops, a considerable proportion are original. Whatever truth there is in Dr. Rentoul's statement only shows the little scruple "thoroughly Christian audiences" have in laughing at the faith they pretend to believe.

"TILL about twenty years ago I had been rather in doubt as to whether a deluge had really occurred," writes the Duke of Argyll. How horrible to remember that his grace might have died rather in doubt upon this all-important topic. It is some years now since we made up our minds, not only that many deluges have occurred in the history of the world, but that the particular one related in Genesis is a revised version of the Babylonian legend.

THE following advertisement is cut from the *Mexboro' and Swinton Times*:—

A BARGAIN.—Motherless Wives and Pharaoh's Daughters have the chance of the joys of maternity without the pain. Twin daughters are on offer. Households yet unblest can have the presence of little Sarah, three weeks old, a ministering angel consecrated to the service of General Booth and the Salvation Army. Deep blue eyes, dark hair, and rosy lips, which seem to be chanting Hallelujah. Would make any home happy. On view at Mr. Geo. Barnett's, Orchard Place. Further particulars at 13 Church Street, Mexboro'.

They must be nice Christian parents who, after consecrating little Sarah to the service of Booth, offer her for sale a bargain.

AN Irishwoman was called as a witness at Hammersmith the other day. On being sworn, she was asked what book she had kissed, but she could not tell. The witness said she had heard of the Bible, but could not tell what it meant. Knew that if she took a false oath she would suffer twenty-four hours in purgatory. The magistrates said he could not take the evidence of a person who thought that the consequences of telling a lie would only be twenty-four hours in purgatory. She was sent about her business, and will not be sworn again till she knows the proper number of hours.

A DIFFERENT, and equally illegal, doctrine has been laid down by the Fiscal at the Aberdeen Police Court. Upon Mr. Keith Murray, a secularist appearing as witness, his evidence was objected to on the ground of his being a disbeliever in god and a future state. The Fiscal is reported as saying:—"If this man, Baillie, tells you that he feels a conscientious moral obligation on him to speak the truth, then he is an admissible witness; if he says that the obligation to speak the truth is on utilitarian grounds, what seems best to him, if that is his motive, then I don't believe he is an admissible or credible witness, but if he feels morally bound, if he feels an obligation on his conscience to speak the truth, he is admissible." Instead of being asked this question, however, Murray was asked if he believed in a supreme ruler of the universe. Upon his answering that he believed the universe to be self-existent he was ordered to stand down. Being an unwilling witness he made no objection.

THE Chinese have evidently a poor opinion of the Christian religions. When Sir R. Alcock bade adieu to Prince Kung, the latter said, "Now you are going home, I wish you would take with you your opium and your missionaries."

GEN. OGLETHORPE, the founder of Georgia, used to tell of a missionary who, flattering himself that he had thoroughly imbued an American Indian with the right spirit in which to take the lord's supper, said, "Do you not feel a mental comfort, an inward refreshment from that holy cup?" "It is very good," said his promising proselyte, "but," with a smile, "rum is better."

THIS was almost as unpromising a convert as the Chinese shopkeeper who continually asked the agent of the Bible Society for more Bibles. It was found that he desired the precious word of god for the unhallowed purpose of wrapping up his small wares.

THE Jews usually take copies of the scriptures when offered gratuitously, but they carefully tear out the New Testament and devote its leaves to a still more ignoble purpose.

J. C. Cox, writing in the *Boston Investigator*, states that in seven months he has cut out accounts from the daily papers of two hundred preachers and priests who have been found guilty of all kinds of crimes from murder to drunkenness. The majority, as with Colonel Billing's six years' account, are for licentiousness.

THE *Essex and Suffolk News* reports at length the proceedings against the Rev. John Sharpe Ellis, curate of Boxford, who has been committed to trial for an indecent assault on one of his male parishioners. We have no pleasure in alluding to such cases, but the constant abuse to which unbelievers are subjected warrants us in showing the other side of the picture.

THE Rev. R. C. Collins has been lecturing at the Victoria Philosophical Institute on "Buddhism in relation to Christianity." He contends that the legends of Buddha, which are similar to those of Jesus, such as the pre-existence, the birth from a virgin, the fasting and temptation by Mara, the evil one, etc., are derived from Christianity. Of course it was easy for Buddhism to copy from Christianity, and utterly impossible for Christianity to copy from Buddhism, although the latter is by 500 years the older system.

MR. COLLINS spoke of the Sanskrit work, the Bhagvat-Gita, as "containing many gems of what we should call Christian truths wrested from their proper setting." This allusion is particularly unfortunate, for the whole teaching of the Bhagvat-Gita is founded on the doctrine of transmigration, and the Christian doctrine of incarnation has manifestly its proper setting in the same doctrine. There is ample evidence that Buddhist missionaries spread to all parts of the then known world above 200 years before Christ, and none whatever that Christianity was known in India before the fifth century.

CANON TAYLOR has been lecturing at Liverpool on "The Evidence of Prophecy." From the lengthy report in the *Protestant Standard* we notice that the canon in the first place laid stress on the saying that in the seed of Abraham all the nations of the earth should be blessed. He omitted to mention that they were to be as the sands of the shore, and to have Canaan for an everlasting possession, these prophecies of Russia and Germany do not think themselves blessed in having the seed of Abraham sovel among them. But, says the canon, the world is indebted to the Jews for that precious book, the Bible. Yes, and for numerous wars, judicial murders, and persecutions done at its instigation. This fetish worship of the book is as absurd as the Catholic bishop of Middlesborough, who in his Lenten pastoral declares that "Peter's throne is the basis of moral order."

CANON TAYLOR then refers to the Messianic prophecies. A sufficient reply to these is, that the Jews, who ought to know the meaning of their own revelation, do not believe they were fulfilled in Jesus. Every one of the alleged prophecies is a perversion of the meaning of the writers. The Messiah was to have brought peace. There was to be no more war, even between animals, and Gentiles were to turn Jews (see Zech. viii., 23, ix., 10; Hosea ii., 18, etc.) So many Messianic prophecies were manifestly unfulfilled by Jesus that the early Christians had to invent a second coming of the Messiah in order to fulfil them, but of this double advent there is no hint in the Old Testament.

CANON TAYLOR's trump prophetic card is the destruction of Babylon. We challenge him, however, to prove that the alleged prophecy was in existence before the event. The margin gives the date 712 B.C. to Isaiah xlii., yet chapter xlv. refers to Cyrus, who lived 536 B.C. It is impossible to date any part of the Old Testament with certainty before the time of Ezra, 450 B.C. In this prophecy, also, certain particulars were given manifestly unfulfilled, as that Babylon should be a dwelling place for dragons, and that satyrs should dance there, and that no son of man should pass thereby.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

To-day (Sunday, March 9) Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town, London, at 7 p.m. Subject—"The Gospel of Holloway Gaol." March 10, Cromwell Club, Plaistow.

March 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; 18, Claremont Hall.—Applications (*pro tem.*) to G. W. Foote, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

DR. EDWARD AVELING'S ENGAGEMENTS.

March 9, 16, 23, 30, Milton Hall, London. April 6, Manchester; 20, Birmingham; 27, Liverpool. May 4, 11, 18, Milton Hall; 25, Hall of Science. June 8, 15, 22, 29, Milton Hall.

CORRESPONDENTS.

All business communications to be addressed to the Manager, 28 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, E.C. Literary communications to the Editor of the *Freethinker*, 28 Stonecutter Street, London.

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.

A. FUDGE.—We can supply you with "Paine's Test," post free, for 1s.

C. ANDERSON.—Cuttings are always useful. Thanks.

INQUIRER.—We shall publish a verbatim report of the Banquet to Messrs. Foote and Ramsey on the 12th inst. for the benefit of the thousands of our country friends who cannot be present in the flesh.

ATHEIST BLACKSMITH.—Your brave letter has done our heart good. The thought that thousands of honest workers like yourself knew and remembered that we were fighting their battle, sustained us during many an hour of torture in gaol.

R. DALLIS.—The poem has often been ascribed to Burns, but we don't believe he ever wrote a line of it. At the same time, this is a free country, as Tory orators would say, and we cannot help it if other people like to print the verses as the composition of the great Scottish songster.

H. SEYMOUR.—We scarcely think it advisable to reprint the indicted Christmas Number of the *Freethinker*, but we intend to include most of the illustrations in a little volume which we hope soon to see through the press.

S. HATTEN.—Send to Mr. Ramsey. Price 1s. 6d.

S. HILL.—Many thanks, but we don't care for any motto. Our title is pretty significant by this time. The charge of "obscenity" is one we can afford to despise. People who make it do not believe it; they have simply read their Bibles and caught a bad trick of lying for the glory of god.

YOUNG FREETHINKER.—The "interim editor" will not be forgotten. Dr. Aveling's pen will be as active as ever in our columns; probably a little more so, as we make all our staff work like galley-slaves so that they may earn the magnificent salaries we pay them out of our "nefarious profits."

JOHN ETCHHELLS.—Write again to the advertiser, and if you receive no answer inform us at once.

M. HUMBOLET.—Your idea is good, but the allusion to oneself prevents insertion. Shall be glad to hear from you again.

CARRINGTON J. FORSTER.—Your congratulations are welcome, like the multitude we have received from all parts of the kingdom. Our intention is to begin again just where we left off. The woodcuts will be continued as soon as our arrangements for them are completed, and the *Freethinker* will, as of old, to use the language of its enemies, "reek with blasphemy." In other words, it will, as far as we can contrive it, be full of wit and common sense.

J. HENSON.—Mr. Foote will be very happy to visit West Hartlepool as soon as he can map out a tour in the North.

R. NICHOLLS.—We do mean to increase the size of the *Freethinker* soon, without increasing the price. The Christians have advertised us so well that we begin to feel able to make the change we have always contemplated. What a sensible crew they are, to be sure!

A FREETHINKER.—Yes, Mr. Bradlaugh has a brother who preaches Christianity. But it can't be helped, you know. Respectable families sometimes get a member hanged, and almost every house has a skeleton in the cupboard.

H. G. S.—We have, unfortunately, far more verse already in hand than we can possibly use.

AQUILA.—We quite agree with you. We shall probably hold a meeting in St. James Hall at an early date. Boldness and vigor are essential to success.

ANTI-JAHVEH.—Your verses are too laudatory. Our face is scorched with blushes already, and to publish the poem in these columns would out Jahveh Jahveh.

J. V. MITCHELL.—Your views concerning the discovery of Jonah (see p. 71) are too frivolous for so momentous, solemn and soul-stirring a theme.

G. EDGAR.—By the statement that "the earliest manuscripts do not date before the fourth century," Mr. Wheeler means the earliest among those now existing—viz., the Vatican, the Alexandrian and the Sinaitic. There is no contradiction in the statement that Irenæus in the latter part of the second century cited Mark xvi., 19. He was, undoubtedly, acquainted with some version of the New Testament in its then form.

G. MATHEWS.—The "Encyclopædia Britannica" is the best. Chambers' is worth having, though neither are entirely free from Christian bias.

T. C. MARSH points out that the best reports of any Radical or Freethought meetings are given in the Conservative *Evening Standard*.

R. GREEN.—The longest verse in the Bible is Esther viii., 9; the shortest is John xi., 35. If you asked us for the most stupid verse you would have puzzled us.

B. ALLAN.—Your notion that man ought to have been made with a tail and an eye at the end of it is cribbed from Fourier.

G. H. G.—The anthropoid apes have no tails.

ANXIOUS.—The "Darwinian Theory" can be sent, post free, for 6½d.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Truthseeker—Liberal—Thinker—Manchester Examiner—Lucifer—Mossley Reporter.

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.

At Milton Hall on Sunday Dr. E. B. Aveling will lecture in the morning (11.30) on "The Gradations between Monkeys, Apes, and Men." In the evening Mr. Foote will give an exposition of "The Gospel of Holloway Gaol." Dr. Aveling (president of the branch) will take the chair, and be supported by one of Mr. Foote's brother martyrs, Mr. Kemp.

MR. HEMINGWAY writes to inform us that the St. James's Hall, which the Manchester friends have taken for Mr. Foote's three lectures on the 16th, will hold, not nearly four thousand people, but nearly twice that number. All the more need, then, that the Freethinkers and Radicals of the district should unite to make the day's proceedings an imposing demonstration against the Blasphemy Laws. Mr. W. J. Ramsey is going to take the chair, so that South Lancashire friends may see both the ex-prisoners at once. Refreshments will be provided in the Hall for all visitors from a distance.

THE *Referee* devoted half its leading article last Sunday to a comparison of the twelve-months' imprisonment dealt out to Mr. Foote and the fat pension awarded to Speaker Brand.

It ascribes the difference of their treatment to the spirit of class privilege which rules so despotically in this "home of freedom." We are glad to see the *Referee* true to its old Radicalism at last, but we must dissent from its apology for the way in which it lost its head after Judge North's sentence. It says:—"If we objected to what was done by Foote and his fellow-sinners, it was because they went out of their way to be aggressive in their Atheism." In other words, Mr. Sampson thinks we have a right to be Atheists ourselves, but no right to attempt converting other people to our belief, even when we write in a journal which no man need read a line of against his will. What an extraordinary idea of freedom for the intelligent *Referee*!

MR. SAMPSON goes further, and asserts that "professional propagandism is an iniquity." This statement implies that every clergyman is a rogue, and every missionary a scoundrel. Here be truths.

THE *Weekly Times* has the following article on Mr. Foote's release: "Hardly any victory is won without the immolation of a few martyrs in the cause. Mr. Foote, who has just undergone a year's imprisonment in Holloway Gaol for an offence against the blasphemy laws, will have the satisfaction of knowing that his incarceration will have done more to secure a repeal of these statutes than any amount of theoretical opposition. After Mr. Foote's trial it was palpable that whatever may have been the technical offence against a semi-obsolete law by the opinions published in the *Freethinker* the writer was acting up to his honest convictions. The offence of which Mr. Foote was convicted, on the harsh summing-up of Mr. Justice North, is not one that commends itself to the active sympathies of a nation of church and chapel-goers, but it has always been the boast of John Bull that he could tolerate freedom of thought, even when it jarred upon his personal susceptibilities. In those cases where the law is obscure juries naturally depend for guidance upon the superior knowledge of the judge. Had Mr. Foote been tried

before a judge whose views were more in accord with the spirit of the age than those of Mr. Justice North, it is most probable that, had he been convicted at all, the sentence would have been a merely nominal one. The very severity of the sentence passed on Mr. Foote produced a reaction in his favor on the part of many who repudiated his views on sacred subjects. Mr. Foote goes further, and calls in question the capacity of the jury who tried him, because they happened to hold diametrically opposite opinions. Perhaps he was right. A jury may not be the best tribunal to decide questions of scientific Freethought!"

The *Birmingham Daily Mail* has a long and vigorous article on Mr. Foote's release, one passage from which is worth quoting:—"Mr. Justice North acted towards Mr. Foote with partiality and severity, and the Home Secretary, in a flagrantly objectionable manner, refused to modify the sentence, yet we have Mr. Justice Stephen actually drafting a bill for abolishing the laws of blasphemy, under which Foote was convicted. If men in high places, moved by a sense of what is just and right, find themselves bound to an attitude of tolerance, what is likely to occur in the case of people in other classes of the community? Why, exactly what has happened. Where Mr. Bradlaugh had one follower at the beginning of his contest, he has a hundred now. Where Mr. Foote had one sympathiser before his trial, he has a myriad now. Yet the opinions of these two men have undergone no amelioration whatever." The *Mail* charges the bigots with making popular heroes of leading Freethinkers, to the great detriment of Christianity!

The *Evening Standard* says that Mr. Foote seems to think that a branch of Claridge's Hotel should be attached to Holloway Gaol. Oh dear, no; a twopenny coffee-house would have done very well, and a bloater or a red herring would have been a sumptuous treat. The *Globe* supposes that Mr. Foote is deluded into believing that because imprisonment in Ireland leads to Parliament, it will do so in England too. Well, we shall see. Meanwhile we are glad to see that Conservative papers are obliged to notice our proceedings.

CLAREMONT HALL was crowded to excess last Sunday. In the evening every inch of standing room was occupied, and a large number could not obtain admission. The audience was extremely enthusiastic, and cheered Mr. Foote vigorously when he announced his intention to make the *Freethinker* more "blasphemous" than ever.

By THE WAY, it is well to observe that pickpockets are beginning to visit secular halls. Mr. Hilditch lost his watch at Claremont Hall on Sunday night. This is, of course, no matter for rejoicing; but as the light-fingered gentry, who used to frequent churches and chapels on the lord's day, now seek a harvest at our meeting-places, it is very evident that our growing strength is a fact of general notoriety.

ON Sunday, at Claremont Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Henry (with their daughter) will give a select musical entertainment, commencing at seven o'clock.

THE Central London Branch of the N. S. S. will hold their next *soirée* on Sunday, March 9. Dancing will commence at 9 p.m. and close at 1 a.m., with songs, readings, etc., interspersed. Tickets (6d. each) of Mr. Ramsey, 28 Stoncutter Street, or of any of the committee.

ON Monday, March 10, Mr. Foote will lecture in the large hall of the Cromwell Club, Plaistow, for the West Ham Branch of the N. S. S. Subject—"How I Fell Among Thieves."

A MEETING under the auspices of the National Sunday League will be held in the Ball's Pond Secular Hall on Monday in support of Lord Thurlow's motion in the House of Lords for the Sunday opening of our national museums and art galleries.

MR. WILLIS' resolution in favor of the exclusion of the lawnsleeves from the House of Lords will be brought before the Lower House on March 21.

WE are pleased to observe a column headed "Freethought Gleanings" in the *Boston Investigator*, a paper which has so long and worthily upheld the Freethought cause in America. As the extracts given are identical with those which have appeared in these columns, an acknowledgment would have been graceful.

THE constitutional struggle in Norway, thanks to the resolution of the people and their Storting, is likely to end in a great gain to freedom in that country. The prime minister has been found guilty of illegally obeying the king, and has been sentenced to deprivation of office and payment of the expenses of the trial. The result will doubtless be

the same in the case of the other ministers who have been impeached. Unless the king should resolve upon a *coup d'état*, which he could scarcely effect without the military assistance of Sweden, and which the hardy Norwegians would in no case submit to, he will have to capitulate with what grace he may, and only attempt to rule through ministers who conform to the will of the people.

ANOTHER young lady of talent, Miss Thornton Smith, has taken to the Freethought platform. She lectures on Sunday at Peckham on "The Creation Story," and, knowing her intellectual preparation to be sound, we expect the audience will have a treat.

It has been announced that the Rev. A. W. Hutton, a clergyman who seceded from the Church of England several years ago, and became a member of the Oratory at Birmingham under Cardinal Newman, has withdrawn from that society, and abandoned not only the clerical calling, but the Christian faith.

In our next issue will appear a review of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen's article on the blasphemy laws, to which the place of prominence is given in the current number of the *Fortnightly Review*.

GEORGE ELIOT'S ESSAYS.*

IN reprinting the articles written by George Eliot in the *Westminster Review*, before she became famous under that pseudonym, the publishers have supplied a distinct want and carried out the wishes of the author, who carefully revised them before her death.

The first essay, on "Worldliness and other Wordliness: the poet Young," is a masterpiece of scathing criticism. "The god of the 'Night Thoughts' is simply Young himself 'writ large'—a didactic poet, who lectures mankind in the antithetic hyperbole of mortal and immortal joys, earth and the stars, hell and heaven; and expects the tribute of inexhaustible 'applause.'" The religion of this pious poet is as aptly described as "egoism turned heavenward."

Following this essay is one on "German Wit and Heinrich Heine." Translations are given of several notable passages from the great Freethought poet and satirist—among others, that where speaking, of Swedenborg's notion of the development of character in life after death, Heine gives as instance that "the fumes of self-conceit mounted to St. Antony's head when he learned what immense veneration and adoration had been paid to him by all Christendom; and he who had below withstood the most terrible temptations, was now quite an impertinent rascal and dissolute gallow's bird, who vied with his pig in rolling himself in the mud. The chaste Susanna, from having been exclusively vain of her virtue, which she thought indomitable, came to a shameful fall; and she who once had so gloriously resisted the two old men, was a victim to the seductions of the young Absalom, the son of David. On the contrary, Lot's daughters had in the lapse of time become very virtuous, and passed in the other worlds for models of propriety; the old man, alas! had stuck to the wine-flask."

The account of "Evangelical Teaching and Dr. Cumming," though written in 1855, is the smartest essay in the book, and its description of the humbug, unctuous egoism and unscrupulosity of the popular preacher would not be out of place to-day. She well says: "So long as a belief in propositions is regarded as indispensable to salvation, the pursuit of truth *as such* is not possible, any more than it is possible for a man who is swimming for his life to make meteorological observations on the storm which threatens to overwhelm him. The sense of alarm and haste, the anxiety for personal safety, which Dr. Cumming insists upon as the proper religious attitude, unmans the nature and allows no thorough, calm thinking, no truly noble, disinterested feeling."

The essay fails not to point out how, in marshalling the evidences of Christianity, the Doctor, like all other theologians of whom we have any knowledge, directs most of his arguments against opinions that are totally imaginary or that belong to the past rather than the present, while he fails to meet the difficulties actually felt and urged by those who deny revelation. It says: "He seems to be ignorant or he chooses to ignore the fact that there is a

* "Essays and Leaves from a Notebook," by George Eliot, William Blackwood and Sons; 1884.

large body of eminently-instructed and earnest men who regard the Hebrew and Christian scriptures as a series of historical documents, to be dealt with according to the rule of historical criticism; and that an equally large number of men, who are not historical critics, find the dogmatic scheme built on the letter of the scriptures opposed to their profoundest moral convictions."

Freethinkers will notice how applicable are the words on Dr. Cumming to the majority of their opponents:—"In his treatment of infidels we imagine he is guided by a mental process which may be expressed in the following syllogism: Whatever tends to the glory of god is true; it is for the glory of god that infidels should be as bad as possible; therefore, whatever tends to show that infidels are as bad as possible is true." Speaking of the perverted moral judgment which everywhere pervades Dr. Cumming's writings, George Eliot remarks: "Not that this perversion is peculiar to Dr. Cumming: it belongs to the dogmatic system which he shares with all evangelical believers." Yet the *Christian World* is disingenuous enough to make it out that the Doctor is overthrown from the standpoint of evangelicalism. Those who know aught of the life and writings of the translator of Strauss know that their whole scope has been directly antagonistic to evangelical teaching. They have sought to place the grounds of duty in this life, and in human relations rather than in reference to another world or to supernatural beings. Unmeasured is her noble scorn for that other-worldliness, which would measure duty here by its supposed reward hereafter, and which expects, on the authority of Jesus, to have in return for all that is sacrificed here, a hundredfold in kingdom come.

On Dr. Cumming's—that is the evangelical Christian—theory, she says: "The deed of Grace Darling, when she took a boat in the storm to rescue drowning men and women, was not good if it was only compassion that nerved her arm and impelled her to brave death for the chance of saving others; it was only good if she asked herself, Will this redound to the glory of god? The man who endures tortures rather than betray a trust, the man who spends years in toil in order to discharge an obligation from which the law declares him free, must be animated not by the spirit of fidelity to his fellow man, but by a desire to make the name of god more known. A wife is not to devote herself to her husband out of love to him and a sense of the duties implied by a close relation—she is to be a faithful wife for the glory of god, and if she feels her natural affections welling up too strongly, she is to repress them; it will not do to act from natural affection—she must think of the glory of god."

The essay on Lecky's "Rise and Influence of Rationalism," which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, is better known. Many of our readers will be familiar with the words, and most with the truth, of the passage where George Eliot states that, "Indeed, wherever the tremendous alternative of everlasting torments is believed in—believed in so that it becomes a motive determining the life—not only persecution, but every other form of severity and gloom, are the legitimate consequences."

The other contents of the volume are an essay on Roehl, one on "Three Months in Weimar," and an "Address to Working Men" by Felix Holt, and the too scanty "Leaves from a Notebook." These we pass over because a lengthy criticism and review will appear in *Progress* from the able pen of Norman Britton. All admirers of George Eliot will get the volume for themselves.

J. M. WHEELER.

ANOTHER instance of petty persecution at Bootle, Mr. James Carruthers, confectioner, of 44 Stanley Road, being summoned for selling sweets to Sunday-school children, which it was hinted they paid for with missionary money Defendant was fined 5s., and he asked the Bench to compromise the fines for a whole year, instead of having to pay them weekly. We hope Mr. Carruthers will receive enough support to enable him to defy the old Act of Charles II., which they dare not attempt to enforce in London.

THE SOUL OF POPE PIUS.

POPE PIUS died, his soul journeyed heavenward, and, reaching the but little-used gate of paradise, kicked vigorously until it obtained admission. Jahveh, hearing the disturbance, threw up his back window and bawled for an explanation.

"I am one of your elect," cried Pius, "and claim my right." "Poor soul!" exclaimed Jahveh, "cold comfort after such a long journey, I fear; but you must seek my son, I have long retired from the business—second mansion on the left: you can't miss it." The Lamb found, Pius is passed on to the Holy Ghost, the first named being too busy to attend to him. The Ghost found; the business told. He replies in dove-like tones, which resembled stage thunder—"Oh, oh! So you are one of the lying rascals that keep up that slanderous report about me and my old friend Mary, are you? Out you go! Here, Gabriel, chuck him out!" So the soul of poor Pius was cast forth, and no man knoweth to this day where it abideth.

PROFANE JOKES.

"HAS your ma got religion?" asked little Nettie. "Yes, of course," replied Eddie. "I didn't know but she hadn't any, she speaks so sharp and ugly sometimes," continued Nettie. "Oh," exclaimed Eddie, brightening up, "I guess she's got that kind—religion of the cross."

A MOTHER was amused the other day to hear this bit of "argument" from her little boy: "Mamma, I don't see how Satan could have turned out to be such a bad fellow—there wasn't any devil to put him up to it!"

DEACON WILSON, of Evansville, was so greatly annoyed by a stranger who flirted with his daughter in church, that while praying he raised his voice to the highest pitch and said: "An' now, O lord, hev mercy on the dum idiot with the store clothes on as is winkin' at our Alice, and keep 'im a hanging round the church door when the sarvice is over till I can get to him and put a head on him! Amen."

"MR. SMITH," said a witty lawyer to his landlord, a boarding-house keeper, "If a man were to give you £100 to keep for him and he died, what would you do? Would you pray for him?" "No, sir," replied Mr. Smith, "I'd pray for another like him."

A MERRY bachelor, reaching his lodgings one evening somewhat obfuscated, and seeing a picture had been added to the wall-collection since morning, rang for his landlady and asked, "Who's th' gent'man in th' straw hat?" "What?" faintly uttered the pious old'un. "What? You wicked man, it ain't a straw hat, it's a 'alo on the 'ead of our blessed savior." "Beg pardon, I thought p'r'aps it was a relation."

A SCHOOL-BOY somewhere has achieved the following biography of Moses. Though slightly mixed, it is probably as authentic as anything we have:—"He was an Egyptian. He lived in an ark made of bulrushes, and he kept a golden calf and worshipped brazen snakes, and et nothing but kwales and manna for forty years. He was caught by the hair of the head while riding under the bough of a tree, and he was killed by his son Absalom as he was hanging from the bough. His end was peace."

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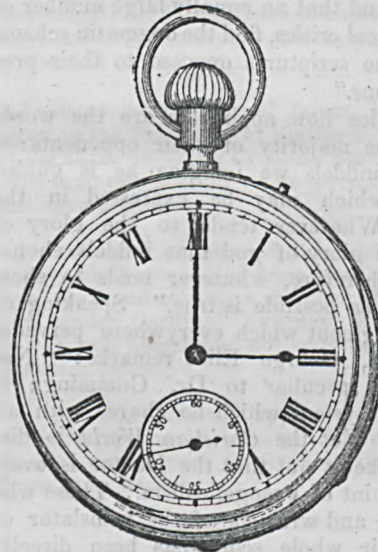
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