

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

Vol. IV.—No. 11.]

MARCH 16, 1884.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. LXI.



A FATHER'S LOVE.

“Each link a father's love.”—Popular Song.

“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”—LUKE xvi., 24, 25.

LETTER TO JUDGE NORTH.

SIR,—A little more than twelve months ago you and I were face to face at the Old Bailey. I have no doubt that you remember the occurrence, and I am not likely to forget it while I live. It was the first time I ever stood in the dock of a criminal court, although it was not the first time that I appeared before an English judge. Only three days previous I had, in the Court of Queen's Bench, applied for a writ of *certiorari* to remove my indictment from the Central Criminal Court. Sir Hardinge Giffard opposed my application, and he was assisted not only by Mr. Poland and Mr. Lewis, but by Baron Huddleston and yourself. Your learned brother, whose summing-up of the Belt case, proved him to be a judge of most astonishing candor and impartiality, never condescended to deal with my legal arguments, but held the prosecuted Christmas Number of the *Freethinker* up in open court, and vigorously denounced it as a scandalous publication, which no sane man could dispute to be a blasphemous libel, a contumelious reproach on our blessed lord and savior Jesus Christ. That was neither the place nor the time for any such expression of opinion, yet you “fully concurred in the judgment of your learned brother,” although you knew, and publicly stated, that you would have to try that very case with a jury only a few days later.

When I appeared at the Old Bailey, on Wednesday, February 28th, 1883, less than forty-eight hours after your decision in the Court of Queen's Bench, I asked you to postpone my trial until the next sessions, on the very reasonable ground that there had been no adequate time to prepare my defence. You declined to grant me another hour for that purpose; but on learning from Mr. Poland that Sir Hardinge Giffard was too busy to attend and conduct the prosecution, you obligingly adjourned the case to the next day. The delay, however, was entirely superfluous; the prosecution would not have suffered by his absence; for when, on the following morning, Sir Hardinge Giffard, after his opening address to the jury, walked out of court, you smilingly bowed him a “good day,” as though there was an excellent understanding between you, and then took up his brief and argued it for him.

You had to try me and my two fellow-prisoners twice to get a conviction. The first jury could not agree on a verdict although they retired for nearly three hours; but the second jury was more amenable to your cajoleries. I do not say they were picked, but I do say that they were admirably adapted to the end in view. No less than four names of jurymen summoned for that day, on which ours was the only case to be tried, were handed to me by friends in court as prejudiced against us. One of them was called on the jury. I objected to him, and in the witness-box he admitted that he had expressed his intention to convict us. He was a pious publican, if I remember rightly, and his exact words were, that he “meant to make it hot for the b——y Freethinkers.” One of the jury subsequently said to an intimate friend of mine, “Why didn't you tell me you were so interested in the case? If I'd known the man was connected with you I wouldn't have brought in a verdict of Guilty.” With such a jury and such a judge no man's liberty or life is secure. That jury may be guilty of further crimes against justice, but I rejoice to know that you are removed to another sphere, where, as the *Daily News* remarked, your eccentricities will no longer imperil the person and freedom of your fellow-citizens.

On the first trial you acted with such consummate dignity that everyone wondered where you had learnt your manners. Lest I should corrupt the jury, I presume, you frequently interrupted my defence in a style which admirably showed the difference between a common Freethinker and a Christian gentleman. When the jury declined to convict, and were discharged, to make room for a more docile one, you refused to renew my bail, and locked me up in Newgate for three days and four nights, so that I might have a full opportunity to prepare my second defence. I spent the whole of that interval, except four hours, in a prison cell, deprived of exercise, fresh air, access to my friends, or communication with my co-defendants. I was, of course, duly thankful for such kindness; but I half regretted that you did not lock up my prosecutors also, and give them a share of my valuable privileges.

Your interpretation of the law displayed the variety of your genius. You explained the law of Blasphemy in one way on Thursday, March 1st, and in quite another way on Monday, March 5th. A generous impulse prevented you from citing cases, or quoting any other book than one which I introduced to your notice. You opened Sir James Stephen's “Digest of the Criminal Law,” and read from it the chapter on offences against religion. I followed your reading with my own copy, and I noticed that you omitted the whole of one paragraph, without informing the jury of the fact. A carping critic might observe that the omitted paragraph supported my view of the law of Blasphemy, and discountenanced yours. But far be it from me to suggest such a thing; for, being a Christian, you are necessarily a gentleman.

You sentenced me to twelve months' imprisonment like a common thief, on the ground that I had "prostituted to the service of the Devil" the "great ability with which God had endowed" me. Many people have been astonished to hear such words from the lips of an English judge in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Why I cannot conjecture; for if God had not noticed my dereliction, or was in a slothful mood, it was highly judicious on your part to atone for his neglect; and if you like to keep a devil, it is sheer impudence to deny your right to bring him into court.

I have done my twelve months' imprisonment, and am once more a free man. My health is not quite broken down, nor is my mind in the least degree impaired. But while I am thankful for this, I regret that I have not sufficiently profited by the fresh Evidences of Christianity which you manufactured for my especial behoof. Although I have lived for a whole year in a felon's cell, in daily contact with thieves, sharpers, forgers, ravishers, burglars, and other noble products of Christian civilisation; although I have read the Bible through three times, gone to chapel every other day, and dutifully listened to fifty-two sermons; although I have reflected daily on your own splendid example of piety and charity; I am still unconverted and impenitent. And, what is even worse, I am instigated by the Devil to persevere in my sin.

This week's *Freethinker*, as you will notice, is just as "blasphemous" as the number you tried me for publishing, and I have recommenced the woodcuts which excited your especial indignation. Such is my obstinacy! Such is my appreciation of the Gospel of Holloway Gaol! I can only throw myself on your indulgence, and hope you will not relax your noble efforts to convert infidels to the true faith. And in order that you may not lose an opportunity of exercising your generous qualities, I leave this number of the *Freethinker* at your house with my card. If I should hear from you again, I trust you will be more successful in your attempts to overcome my obduracy; for I am anxious to embrace the truth, despite the promptings of my infernal monitor; and I would fain enjoy the glorious prospect of spending eternity with such loving Christians as yourself. Be not negligent of my salvation; turn an eye of compassion on me; and if you cannot imprison me, pray for me.—Yours with all due respect and inexpressible gratitude,
G. W. FOOTE.

JUSTICE STEPHEN ON BLASPHEMY.*

THE fact that one of the ablest occupiers of the judicial bench uses the pages of the *Fortnightly Review* to advocate the complete repeal of the blasphemy laws, under which our friends were so barbarously sentenced by a grand inquisitor, born out of due time, is a significant proof that their sufferings have not been in vain.

The course taken by Sir James Fitz-James Stephen in criticising not only the law itself, but the celebrated summing up of his chief, Lord Coleridge, is not the less laudable because unusual. That charge, distinguished as it was for its judiciousness and humanity, was, as we have before remarked, an entirely new statement of the law, which, from the fact of its being laid down by a humane and enlightened judge, may tend to perpetuate a bad law by diverting public attention from its radical defects. Like the theologians who find all the latest scientific truths in Genesis, Lord Coleridge would fain read his own enlightened interpretation of the law into the decisions of earlier judges. By carefully selecting the cases of Taylor, Woolston and Waddington, the Lord Chief Justice was enabled in some measure to make it appear that his predecessors had only punished infidels for exceeding "the decencies of controversy," and not for simply impugning the Christian faith.

An examination of these cases by Justice Stephen shows that the judges were far indeed from laying it down with Lord Coleridge that the fundamentals of religion might be attacked, if attacked decently and with honest motive. So far from this being true, Lord Raymond in Woolston's case would not suffer it to be debated whether writing against Christianity in general was a temporal offence. The view laid down in Blackstone, that "all affronts to Christianity,

or endeavors to deprecate its efficacy, are highly deserving of human punishment," which Justice Stephen declares to be still correct in law, has been the one which prevailed with the judges in these cases, as in those of Williams, Eaton, Houston, Carlile and his shopmen, Taylor, Hethrington, Southwell, Holyoake and Paterson. In the case of Hethrington, prosecuted (1841) for selling Haslam's "Letters to the Clergy," the Attorney-General stated that the Government did not wish to prosecute the free discussion of religion, but only ridicule. Nevertheless, Lord Denman laid it down that if the publication "tended to question or cast disgrace upon the Old Testament it was a libel." In the later cases of Southwell, Holyoake and Paterson (1842-3), as in this, no hint was given that the fundamentals of Christianity might be attacked if attacked respectfully. At the same time an appearance of aggravation has always been given to blasphemy cases by selecting for indictment the "warmest" portions of an argumentative discourse. Since these cases the infidelity which was then confined to a few Socialists has permeated the upper circles of society and found expression in such aristocrats as the Duke of Somerset, the Marquis of Queensberry and Viscount Amberley. Modern science has discredited the Bible; Darwinism has effected a revolution in thought; and the historic method has discredited the old faiths by showing their genesis in the crude animism of savagery. Hence the change of front.

The truth is, that in all the old blasphemy trials, although taking place under the common law, from the difficulty of proving the indicted parties to have been educated in the Christian faith, the judges were guided by what Lord Coleridge well called; the "ferocious" unrepealed statute of William III., in which the simple denial of Christianity is declared punishable at law.

The statute says nothing whatever as to the manner of denial, nor does it say anything as to honesty or any mitigating circumstances, such as it has been sought to import into the law since it has been felt to be not in accordance with the spirit of the age.

As long ago as 1857, Lord, then Mr. Coleridge, said, when counsel for the prosecution of Thomas Pooley, "it was not for holding or maintaining any opinion, if it was maintained decently and with due consideration for the feelings of other people, and due respect towards the laws and religion of the land, that a prosecution like this would be justified, or could be sustained." His father, Sir John Coleridge, the presiding judge, in sentencing poor Pooley to twenty-one months' imprisonment for chalking some stupid words on a clergyman's gate, gave this his guarded sanction by saying "it had very properly been stated that by the laws of this country decent discussions upon the different doctrines of religion were not forbidden. At the same time, the law required that the discussion should be decent, reasonable, and serious."

This doctrine that blasphemy is not a question of matter, but of manner, is, on the face of it, an attempt to escape from the historic fact insisted upon by Mr. Foote and supported by Justice Stephen, that the law is a remnant of ecclesiasticism based on the principle of persecution. According to this theory, the scepticism which is skilled in verbalism is safe; that which speaks to the point is punishable. The deity may be denied, but it must be done with due decorum. God's revelation must be assailed gracefully. Jahveh may be called the offspring of barbarous minds, but his character must not be crudely likened to that of a Bengal tiger. Blasphemy, in short, is simply bad rhetoric. It is like saying you must not call a man a thief, but you may say he appropriated a purse with intent to retain it.

The one complaint which Lord Coleridge had to make against Mr. Foote's "striking and able defence" was that he spoke with something like contempt of the late Mr. Starkie. In this he is fully followed by Justice Stephen, who stigmatises Starkie's exposition of the law of blasphemous libel as "flabby verbiage," and whose doctrine he declares is "as indistinct and disingenuous as his style is obscure and his language embarrassed."

As a result of Justice Stephen's examination of the authorities, it follows, in his own words, that "a large part of the most serious and important literature of the day is illegal—that, for instance, every bookseller who sells, everyone who lends to his friend, a copy of Comte's "Positive Philosophy," or of Renan's "Vie de Jésus," commits a crime punishable with fine and imprisonment. It may be said that so revolting a consequence cannot be true; but unfortunately this is not the case." In all this Mr. Foote's

* "Blasphemy and Blasphemous Libel," by Mr. Justice Stephen—*Fortnightly Review*, pp. 289-318; 1884.

contention is fully borne out. Justice Stephen adds: "No one can dislike the law, as I believe it to be, more profoundly than I do; no one can be more firmly convinced of its utter unfitness for these times—if, indeed, it was ever fit for any times. But because I so thoroughly dislike it, I prefer stating it in its natural deformity, to explaining it away in such a manner as to prolong its existence and give it an air of plausibility and humanity."

To the pretence that the object of the law is to protect religious sentiment from insult, Justice Stephen aptly asks what religious sentiment is to be protected. If all creeds are equal before the law, the Protestant must not speak of winking virgins. To affirm a mother of god is blasphemy to the Theist; to deny one is blasphemy to the Catholic. No one must call Mahomet an impostor. Such a burst of denunciation as Wesley's appeal to all the devils in hell against the Calvinists would subject him to fine and imprisonment. The same fate would await those who ventured to laugh at Comte's parody of Popery. If any modern missionary should address the worshippers of Doorga as Elijah did the prophets of Baal, the law would be violated. In short, any vigorous attack on the weak side of religion would be criminal, and consequently any improvement impossible.

The following extract puts the matter so well that we transcribe it for our readers' benefit:—

"There is one reflexion which seems to me to prove with conclusive force that the law upon this subject can be explained and justified only on what I regard as its true principle—the principle of persecution. It is that if the law were really impartial, and punished blasphemy only because it offends the feelings of believers, it ought also to punish such preaching as offends the feelings of unbelievers. All the more earnest and enthusiastic forms of religion are extremely offensive to those who do not believe them. Why should not people who are not Christians be protected against the rough, coarse, ignorant ferocity with which they are often told that they and theirs are on the way to hell-fire for ever and ever? Such a doctrine, though necessary to be known if true, is, if false, revolting and mischievous to the last degree. If the law in no degree recognised these doctrines as true, if it were as neutral as the Indian Penal Code is between Hindoos and Mahometans, it would have to apply to the Salvation Army the same rule as it applies to the *Freethinker* and its contributors. It would say: 'Keep your temper. Do not publicly use language which gives great pain to those who do not believe it to be true, which excites their nerves, disturbs the peace of their families, and often sends, not peace on earth, but a sword, and makes men of two minds in a house. Publish your opinions by all means, but do it decently.' Notoriously the law does not hold this language. It is equally notorious that no Act of Parliament passed in order to do so could be executed."

While the law remains as it is our duty is clear, to defy it. We mean to publish our thoughts, whatever be the consequences. Holding Christianity to be not only a superstition, but a pernicious one, we shall assail it with whatever weapons we find serviceable. The law has made individuals suffer, but the fact that it has not stopped the *Freethinker* or its policy is a sufficient proof it is as stupid as it is barbarous.

It is noticeable that throughout Mr. Justice Stephen's elaborate argument he makes no mention of the support given to his reading of the law by the judge who sentenced our friends. The fact is, of course, the display of that judicial luminary's legal competence at the trial was sufficiently appreciated by his speedy removal to another sphere, where, as Mr. Foote has observed, the lives and liberties of the people are no longer at his disposal.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

Two of a trade seldom agree, and you scarcely ever find a gentleman moved by the holy ghost who will allow that other "inspired" gentlemen are other than maniacs or impostors. There is little Churchill, for instance, who has for three years been standing up for god against Bradlaugh, and professing to speak in the name of the lord against all Atheists and "rich." While he was addressing the House a few days ago, a brother in Christ began spouting in the Speaker's Gallery, and was forcibly ejected, although he swore that he was "inspired by the almighty." Poor fellow! Pretenders get all the honors, and the real article is kicked out of doors.

ONE day last week a fox was chased by the hounds right into a church. He made straight for the pulpit, and felt quite at home there until they drove him out. A fox in a

pulpit! The newspapers thought it an odd occurrence, yet it happens every Sunday in the year.

IRREVERENT Talmage will have it that Jesus was either god or an impostor when he said, "I and my father are one." How about when he said, "My father is greater than I?"

IRREVERENT Talmage speaks of the miracles of feeding five thousand and turning water into wine for guests well drunk as "alimentary achievements," and the walking on water and big draught of fishes as "marine achievements." It would have been quite as correct to style them "tales for the marines."

In opposition to Agnosticism. Joe Cook has fashioned a new word, Melognosticism, meaning, we can know a little. Joseph certainly makes the most of the very little he knows, and his arguments are rather rotten than mellow.

OUR charming contemporary, the *Christian Chronicle*, calls Agnosticism "foolish, absurd and mischievous." It will be clever indeed if it points out anything more foolish and absurd than the belief in a god born in Palestine, or more mischievous than the doctrine that sinners are saved by the blood of an innocent person.

"How is it," asked Kinglake, author of "Eothen," of one of his servants, when travelling in the East, "that you who are a Christian persist in lying to me and robbing me on every occasion, while my Mohammedan servants neither steal nor tell me falsehoods?" "It is, probably," promptly replied the man, "because their religion does not permit them those advantages." "Christ has paid for all," is the motto of the Christian sinner. This evangelical doctrine is to the full as pernicious as ever was the Romish sale of indulgences. Indeed, it offers indulgences to all with only the foolish proviso of a profession of belief.

THOSE who read the Christian journals will be in no danger of thinking George Eliot's remarks in her essays on Young and Cumming over strong. In the first number of the *Presbyterian* just issued, its editor, the Rev. Kennedy Moore, asks, What is the value of human affection if there be no hereafter? and shows his ignorance by declaring that, "The blood which flowed in such sickening streams from the guillotine in France, under the Reign of Terror, formed a significant warning concerning the tender mercies of an Atheistic faith." Robespierre, Carrier, Collot d'Herbois, and Fouquier Tinville were all good Theists.

THE Church Association evidently does not like the snubbing given it by the Bishop of London in the matter of the clergyman who took the place of Machonochie. At a meeting of the Association, held in Willis's Rooms last week, a resolution was passed that "the meeting views with alarm the fact that Bishops of the Church of England tolerate practices discarded at the Reformation." If the Church would only discard all its ritualists who oppose the doctrines of the reformation, and its rationalists who have got beyond them, it would remain the church of a very meagre minority indeed.

THE Buffalo Liberal and Scientific League issue a challenge to the clergy, offering \$50 in cash and \$10 per year on subscription for five years if they will read in full the references given below, not omitting any word, and explain the meaning of the same to their congregations on any Sunday morning. The League will not accept as an excuse that these passages were written in an age of barbarism or ignorance—if they were, the League holds that it is a disgrace to the Christian world and advancing civilisation to still incorporate such verses in a creed which is presented as a guide to a land where all is purity. While not denying what is true and beautiful in the Bible, call is made upon the Christian world in the name of decency and civilisation to offer a Bible that they dare read before any company. The references are: Gen. xix., Deut. xxiii., 1, 2; 12, 13. Deut. xxv., 11, 12. Judges xix., 34-36. Gen. xxx., 15, 16. Gen. xxxi., 35. Gen. xxxv., 22. Gen. xxxviii., 9, 16. Leviticus xv., 24, 33. Lev. xx., 18. Lev. xviii., 1-24. Numbers xxxi., 18. Deut. xxii., 13-17. 24, 25. 2 Samuel xi., 4; xiii., 2, 8, 11, 12, 14; xvi., 22. 2 Kings ix., 8; xviii., 27. Psalms xxxvi., 3-11. Solomon's Song v., 6; vii., 23; viii., 8. Ezekiel iv., 12, 15; xvi., 33-34; xxi., 14; xxiii., 2, 3, 8, 11, 17, 20, 29, 30, 43, 44. 1 Corinthians vii., 8, 9.

THERE is something intensely amusing in G. J. Holyoake's address to the electors of Leicester. He wishes to be returned in order that the Government may re-introduce and carry the Affirmation Bill; and then poor Mr. Bradlaugh and other Atheists will have a chance of taking their seats in the House of Commons, instead of cooling their heels in Palace Yard. Of course the Government will re-introduce the Bill at once, and the Tories will cease to oppose it when Mr. Holyoake presents his august person at St. Stephen's. We really hope Mr. Holyoake will be returned for Leicester, after all; for we

would certainly, like every member who declines to take the oath, help to settle this vexed question, although he may not succeed in proving to the Freethought party or the public at large his own view of the relative merits of himself and Mr. Bradlaugh.

At a forenoon service of the Glasgow Park Church, which is the leading one of the Church of Scotland in Glasgow, the pastor, the Rev. Donald Macleod, editor of *Good Words*, alluded to the victory achieved by the British troops in the Soudan on Friday and Saturday, and before dismissing the congregation he asked them to sing the National Anthem. Both choir and congregation joined in the hymn. This is very unusual in a Presbyterian church.

WHAT snobs as well as ruffians these clergymen are. It is bad enough that a professor of religion of the Prince of Peace should, in a church of Christ, congratulate his audience, and, we presume, his lord and master, on the butchery of Arabs by English murderers. But the badness becomes even more disgusting when we find the "miserable sinner" calling on his victims to sing the National Anthem. The Rev. Donald Macleod is often with her Majesty, however, in Scotland, and evil communications corrupt good manners. As the Queen had sent a telegram to the generals, the person felt in duty bound to give out "God save the Queen" in his church.

THE papers laugh at the Mahdi. After the defeat of Hicks, he went down into a hole four yards deep, dug in the ground, and remaining there in communion with Allah for half an hour. Why do not they jeer at the Archbishop of Canterbury for going up into a box now and again and praying to God for a blessing on the British arms, or sneer at Jesus, who went out into the wilderness, not for 30 minutes, but for 40 days and nights.

GEORGE CHEEK, parish clerk of Dunmow, Essex, having taken to preach for the Salvation Army, received such a plentiful influx of the spirit that he had to be taken to the lunatic asylum. Spiritual excitement, other than that produced by whisky, is a potent cause in furnishing inmates for these institutions.

"WANTED—Real Holy Ghost Soldiers." This is the language of a Salvation handbill. Tyler, Newdegate, North, and all the holy crew, why don't you wake up? Blasphemy, flat blasphemy, all over the London streets. If this sort of thing is not stopped, the lord will be down again, travelling the earth in the brimstone and earthquake line.

ONE of the best known of Publican Booth's underlings, "Major" Blandy, Superintendent of the Eastern Division of the Salvation Army, who formerly conducted the services at headquarters, has been fined at Mistle for assaulting a man by striking him on the head with a cornet. The magistrates failed to appreciate this application of gospel harmony.

THE Rev. Canon Moore, of Spalding, declares that Jahveh has always punished idolatrous nations, and is now punishing England for idolising Mr. Gladstone. This pious Tory, some time ago, as a magistrate, heavily punished a little girl for stealing a flower from a front garden.

THE Rev. G. L. Campbell, minister of Argyle Free Gaelic Church, Glasgow, has been let off with a fine of two guineas, or 21 days' imprisonment, for "flagrant misconduct." The case was heard with closed doors.

IN the case of the Rev. W. Thomas, Baptist minister, Capeoch, Aberdare, charged with indecently assaulting a girl of thirteen, the girl swore that after committing the offence the defendant made her kiss that pure volume, the Bible, not to tell her mother, father, or his wife, or anybody, saying that if she did she would "go down to hell fire."

BY "The Ghost of Religion," Mr. Harrison's paper in the *Nineteenth Century*, is not meant Positivism, as one might rashly surmise, but what is left of religion by Mr. Herbert Spencer after the application of the "ghost theory" to its origin. Mr. Harrison styles Spencer's retention of the word "Religion" for the awe of what lies beyond, "a logician's artifice to escape from an awkward dilemma," and he asks, "Would it be blasphemy to speak disrespectfully of the Unknowable?"

It is to be regretted that the contributor of the volume "George Sand" to the "Eminent Women" series should not have avoided ambiguity when discussing that eminent woman's relation to Christianity. We learn that "certainly the supposition of the antagonistic spirit of her writings to Christianity and marriage vanishes in proportion to the reader's acquaintance with her works," but it would appear that by "autagonism" is meant, not simple scepticism, but "aggressiveness" and "flippancy." We are also told that "her own faith was eminently Christian in character,"

though apparently "unable to accept for herself the doctrine of revelation as commonly interpreted."

DR. STANTON, a believer in Faith Healing, contends that the curative influence of the atonement is to be felt upon the bodies as well as upon the souls of men. Poor Jesus bore not only the sins of all the world, but all their physical disorders as well, and whosoever will believe this saving truth will have no need of either doctors or hospitals. This theory may not have scriptural authority, but it is not one whit more absurd than the orthodox doctrine of vicarious sacrifice.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.—The following is a list of interdicted jokes for the current week:—That the governor of Holloway Gaol felt much better directly he set his Foote out of prison one day last week.—That the person so released complained bitterly of the effects of the North wind.—That Foote, instead of confining himself to a certain number of inches, would for the future go as far as he legally could.—That the imprisonment of Foote was worse than that of Bunyan.—That Foote, not caring the least what may become of his sole, would bring down his heel heavily on certain persons.—That all future prosecutors who designed to punish him in the shape of fines would receive from Foote more kicks than halfpence.—That the result would show the utter Foote-tility of such prosecutions.—(By order) Ed. *Funny Folks*.

A MOST extraordinary illustration of British freedom has just been brought to our notice. A Freethinker was staying at an hotel in Bury, and hearing some of the company in the coffee room charge Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant with the most disgusting immorality, he interposed, and remarked that their teachings were as pure as Jesus Christ's. Whereupon a bigoted Christian struck him full in the face with a sugar basin, half blinding him with the sugar, and severely cutting his nose and forehead with the glass. The injured man brought an action for damages, and the defendant paid forty shillings into court as ample compensation for an injury to one who dared to "defend Bradlaugh." The magistrate, who is also an M.P., took the same view; and added that people were in error who thought they could conduct controversy as they liked. Defending Mr. Bradlaugh's character is thus construed as a provocation to a breach of the peace; yet we are told that England is a free country, and Mr. Gladstone is at any time ready to talk for three hours on that glorious truth.

SOLOMON TOUCHED UP.

(Being Proverbs which the men of Judah forgot to copy out.)

My son, put not thy trust in missionaries, neither take thou heed of white-chokers. They pretend to pilot the way to other worlds, yet know not the nature of the one they inhabit.

Give not of thy substance unto the churches, neither give of thy time to the psalm-smiters; behold their way is vanity.

They disregard humanity to praise a god who heedeth them not; they crown the dead and despise the living.

A preacher is known by his noise, but a wise man holdeth his peace.

Beware, oh, my daughter, of the bible-banger; take heed lest he read thee the Canticles, and peradventure beguile thee of thy purity. His book-fetish is impure, and its perusal is not fitting for thy modesty.

The fear of the lord is the beginning of insanity, and the church is the half-way house to the lunatic asylum. A wise man knoweth not the name of fear.

Rejoice, oh man, in thy reason, and heed not the terrors of the hell-mongers.

Think not that thou canst dispense with work by much supplication. There is no profit in prayer, and sore knees only cometh of long kneeling.

He that waiteth for providence is on the road to the poor-house.

There is no arrogance like that of the priest and no venom like clerical venom. Beware of these vipers, for where they cannot answer they will seek to imprison; where they cannot prosecute they will annoy with petty persecution.

Lift up thy voice against the bigots, and their day will soon be over.

LUCIANUS.

THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF JESUS.—We are expected to believe it as it occurs in a collection of writings becoming authoritative 360 years after the reported event. It matters not that there are two accounts of this birth, inconsistent with one another and with other scriptures, and both unsupported by any known or traceable witnesses, and that the facts are in subversion of the laws of nature and all human experience. The fiat of the Church, given after this long interval, is to warrant their acceptance.—*Judge Strange*, "What is Christianity," p. 49; 1880.

AN earnest Christian, with the Adam and Eve story strong in his mind, insisted upon singing the familiar line, "Crown him lord of all"—Crown him lord of fall.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

Our next number will contain a full Report of the Banquet to Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp at the Hall of Science, and a Letter from Mr. Foote to Sir William Harcourt.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 16th, St. James's Hall, Manchester. Morning at 11, "My Three Trials for Blasphemy"; afternoon at 3, "Prison Thoughts on the Bible"; evening at 6.30, "Twelve Months in a Christian Gaol." Mr. W. J. Ramsey will take the chair.

March 23, Plymouth. April 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 24, Hall of Science. May 4 and 11, Hall of Science; 18, Claremont Hall. —As Mr. Foote is overwhelmed with applications for lectures, and finds the greatest difficulty in arranging his tours so as to economise his time and visit as many places as possible, it is practically useless for any more Societies to write until the fresh dates are settled and published.

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.

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.

DR. EDWARD AVELING'S ENGAGEMENTS.—March 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.

RECEIVED.—W. Leckey, Veritas, M: Drenon, C. Deane, St. O., C. B.

ATHEIST BLACKSMITH and his brother have ordered six copies each of the *Freethinker* now the Bible Sketches are resumed. We have received two letters complaining of our resuming the sketches, and scores approving it.

J. H. WHITHAM.—Letters like yours fill us with encouragement. While people who should have known better were counselling discretion instead of courage, it was the plucky conduct of men like yourself that sustained the great principle of Freethought and saved our cause from disgrace.

T. ROBERTS.—Will you kindly write again when you see your town in Mr. Foote's list of engagements?

M. HUMBOLDT.—Back numbers of *Progress* can be obtained at 28 Stonecutter Street.

W. CROPPER.—Mr. Foote will write. We are very pleased to hear that there will be a "strong muster of Rochdale friends to give Mr. Foote and Mr. Ramsey a hearty Lancashire greeting" at Manchester.

J. CAMPBELL.—Thanks for the suggestion. We have taken the necessary precautions.

J. CARTER.—We have handed your order to Mr. Ramsey. Pray send all orders for literature to him direct. Much inconvenience is caused by sending them to Mr. Foote.

E. B. B.—Of course we remember you. We never forget our friends or our enemies either. Thanks for the paper and your good wishes. Be sure you come and shake hands with us on the 23rd, if you do travel so far to join in our "west-country welcome."

W. DAVIES.—Spurgeon's nonsense is not worth troubling about just now. What is the use of replying to a reckless man who says that Freethinkers are not outspoken, but timid and mean, when three of them have just done two years' imprisonment for blasphemy in Holloway Gaol? *Progress* will contain biographies and portraits again, as you hope.

MR. RAMSEY would be obliged if any friend could supply him with the following numbers of this paper: Vol. I., No. 14 to end of volume. Vol. II., Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 30 and 39. Please state price.

J. DONNELLY.—We do not know the work you speak of.

R. CALKINS.—An account of Eaton's trial for publishing Paine's "Age of Reason" is given in the introduction to "Shelley on Blasphemy," price one penny.

H. DUNKLEY.—The parties referred to are not worth noticing.

G. IMESON.—Your suggestion will receive attention.

K.—The opinions of the Rev. H. H. Moore on the evolution theory are as worthless as his ignorance of the subject is gross.

J. GENLITTE (COWES) informs us that the statement as to a girl having been seduced by the absconding minister, the Rev. J. Middleton, is incorrect. We regret having been misled by another correspondent.

ANXIOUS (STRATFORD).—You are right. It is the children we have to look to for the future of Freethought. Parents are very judicious who allow them to go to the Sunday-school on the plea that it keeps them out of the streets. The pernicious dogmas learned in these hotbeds of superstition make them the prey of the clericals all their lives. Parents would do better to teach them at home or establish secular schools and Sunday science classes.

C. BELL.—Babylon was conquered B.C. 537. The Book of Daniel says that it was under Belshazzar the king, but Assyrian inscriptions make it certain that Belshazzar never reigned, and that his name appears in the Bible because the Jews confounded him with his father, Nebunaid. Josephus says it was a little while after the handwriting on the wall. Daniel (v., 30) makes it the same night. The Book of Daniel was written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, more than 200 years after the time of its supposed author.

C. RUSSELL.—The "Bible Romances" will be completed directly Mr. Foote is strong enough to begin his pamphlet work. Your friend's statement about our prosecuted Christmas number is a sheer invention. There was no such illustration in it, nor any illustration that the most perverse ingenuity could twist into a semblance of it. If it were not for the cost, we would reprint the Christmas number, and dissipate all these absurd misrepresentations.

H. SMITH.—Received. We hope the Bishop relished the *Freethinker* you sent him.

F. C. NORTHAPE.—Mr. Foote's absence from town prevented your letter being answered in time.

NAVY.—What is the use of solemnly asking us to truthfully answer such questions as whether Mrs. Besant or Mr. Bradlaugh has ever been beaten in argument, or if a Mr. Wainwright has been hustled by infidels? We are neither infallible nor omniscient.

W. J. L. A.—Your remarks are taken in good part. We shall endeavor to improve our illustrations.

F. S. FRENCH.—Thanks for your services and good wishes.

C. DAVIES.—Colonel Ingersoll commanded the 11th Illinois Cavalry during the American war. He has passed his fiftieth birthday.

CORRESPONDENTS favoring us with newspapers will increase the service by marking the parts they wish us to see.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Bradford Observer—Glasgow Weekly Herald—Thinker—Sun—Essex Observer—Christian Socialist—Newcastle Examiner—Word—Eastern Weekly Press—Truth—North British Mail—Truthseeker.

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 large hall of the Cromwell Club, Plaistow, was crowded by an enthusiastic audience on Monday evening. Mr. Foote's appearance on the platform was the signal for loud and prolonged cheers. At the conclusion of his address, which lasted an hour and a half, a unanimous vote of thanks was accorded to him for the "ability and courage with which he had defended the right of free speech." The resolution was seconded by a gentleman whom Mr. Moody has been representing as a convert to Christianity. He has been an Atheist for years and is an Atheist still. Altogether the proceedings were of the most gratifying character, and there can be no doubt as to the verdict of the Freethought party in that district on the *Freethinker* and its prosecution. The audience cheered repeatedly when Mr. Foote announced his intention of publishing again the very things for which he was sent to gaol.

THE chair on Monday night was taken by Mr. Millar, formerly of Peterborough, the gentleman who was nearly prosecuted there for selling the *Freethinker*. Mr. Millar is a good type of the intelligent and earnest young men who are now found in our ranks, and promise well for the future of our cause.

WHILE all the other newsagents in Plaistow refused to sell this paper after its prosecution, Mr. F. Jones, 2 Southern Road, continued to supply it, as he still does, at his own address and at the Cromwell Club. Our readers in that district should remember this. Mr. Jones will be happy also to supply *Progress* to his customers.

THE *Rochdale Observer* gives a long report of a tea-party in that town to celebrate Mr. Foote's release. Mr. Geo. Priestley presided, and there was a numerous assembly. Speeches were delivered by the Chairman, Councillor Slater (of Bury), Councillor Cheetham, and the Rev. Thomas Carter, Unitarian minister. The last expressed a hope "that Mr. Foote would not be embittered by his imprisonment, and that he would do nothing which would bring the least slight upon the cause of Freethought."

REFERRING to Justice Stephen's article on the blasphemy laws, the *Weekly Dispatch* draws attention to Lord Coleridge's evident dislike of them, and says: "No more powerful argument for the abolition of the antiquated and tyrannical law regarding blasphemy could possibly be adduced than the fact that the conscience of the supreme administrator of the law will not allow him to tolerate this peculiar relic of it." As to the bigots themselves, the *Dispatch* adds that if they were consistent "they would call on the administrators of the law to levy fines enough to pay the National Debt, and to crowd all

our prisons till they were more densely packed than the Black Hole of Calcutta or the hold of an Egyptian slave-ship."

THERE is likely to be a demonstration in London very soon against the blasphemy laws. It will probably take place in St. James's Hall.

MILTON HALL is so besieged on Sunday nights that the police have complained. That's the style. We hope they will complain in the same way of every secular hall in the kingdom. Henceforth the doors of the Milton Hall will be opened an hour before the lecture. A few more densely-packed meetings like that which greeted Mr. Foote last Sunday night will necessitate an enlargement of the premises.

DR. AVELING will lecture at Milton Hall on Sunday, March 16. Subject (morning)—"Gradations between Monkeys, Apes, and Man;" evening, "The Creed of an Atheist."

THE Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Branch of the N. S. S. has had to remove to a more commodious meeting-place. Its new quarters are at Marlborough House—not the Prince of Wales' establishment, but one in Spa Road—where all Freethinkers in the district are earnestly invited to attend. Mr. Hughes, the secretary, 275 Lynton Road, Bermondsey, will be happy to forward programmes of the lectures or other information.

THE *Sunday Free Lance* is the name of a new Freethought paper just started in Leavenworth, Kansas. About fifty papers published in the United States are avowedly Freethought or of no religion.

Not only has the *Freethinker* and other English and American Freethought literature a very extensive sale in India, but many of our pamphlets and tracts are translated into the various dialects. Kidernath Basu, who has translated many of them into Bengali, says that Freethought works "are in the hands of almost every educated man throughout the country, and there is not a place in all India where Christianity and its black-coated defenders are not ridiculed by the people."

MISSIONARY societies and religious journals often talk of the conversion of India, but it is well known to all visitors to that great country that Christianity has no effect on the educated classes there. It is only the savage hill tribes and devil worshippers who get converted to the belief in redemption through blood.

PROF. ALEX. BAIN has in the press a volume of essays partly original and partly reprinted from reviews. Among the former is a paper on the ethics of clerical subscription, or more properly on clerical perjury.

AN interesting article on "The Theistic Church" was contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 8, by the Rev. Chas. Voysey. A sentence which may lead to misapprehension is that "It is a special feature of Theism to hold no man, however distinguished or good, and no book, however venerable or valuable in the light of an authority, or in the position of a unique supremacy." This is the position of all Freethinkers, theistic or otherwise.

ON Sunday, March 16, the Socialist clubs of London will have a demonstration in remembrance of the "18th of March." At 1.30 they will set out from Cleveland Street, Tottenham Court Road, and march to Highgate Cemetery. There, at the grave of Karl Marx, speeches in German, French and English will be made by Vollmar (member of the German Reichstag), Lavache and others.

A VERY attractive programme of music is put forward by Mr. George Sanford for his Sunday evening concerts which have been started at Neumeyer Hall, Hart Street, Bloomsbury.

MR. J. S. BLANCHARD sends us a list of lectures on social and secular topics, which he is ready to deliver. The list can be obtained from him at 1 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square.

It is said that Colonel Ingersoll intends nominating Mr. John M. Harlan for the Republican presidency. Harlan is both a general and judge of the Supreme Court of the United States.

THE FALL.—There never has been a "fall of man" from which he could be saved by the suffering and death of god or man upon the cross; and the preaching of such a mode of salvation constitutes a miserable mockery. It is an utterly misleading aside from the real work of the world that remains to be done; and the money spent in sustaining the great delusion at home and propagating it abroad, might suffice for the extinction of poverty if preventively applied.—*Gerald Massey*, "Natural Genesis," vol. ii., p. 160; 1883.

SECULAR SERMON.—No. 1.

PHARAOH'S LESSON TO GOD AND MAN.

"And Pharaoh said, Who is the lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the lord, neither will I let Israel go."—EXODUS v., 2.

THE Egyptian king who uttered these brave words, so full of the fire of Freethought, is a much maligned man. He has come down, with a character charged with unpopularity, to posterity which has been prejudiced against him by his priestly enemies, who hold him up to our execration as the cruel tyrant and heartless oppressor of an inoffensive people. The voice of profane history, however, keeps an impartial silence regarding his misdeeds, and only from sacred history, written by his foreign foes, the fawning flatterers of a foreign god, do we receive the sad tidings of the wickedness of this ungodly man. But even from such tainted source stream a number of facts that arouse grave suspicions of the fictitious character of Pharaoh's sin and Israel's sufferings. For if the king was so base a tyrant as he is represented, he would doubtless have slain murderer Moses and priestly Aaron for daring to beard him on his regal throne. If the Jews were so badly treated, where did they obtain, and how did they retain, the flocks and herds in great multitude of which they were possessed? Were these "borrowed" from the Egyptians, like the jewels with which they levanted? Or how comes it that a race of slaves were privileged to live as neighbors of well-to-do Egyptians, who could trust their despised bondsmen with the loan of their gold and silver? If Egypt was to the Jews a house of bondage, whence came their desire, when free, to return to the flesh-pots of Egypt? And, finally, is it credible that a nation of 600,000 warriors would have tamely submitted to the yoke of tyranny without striking a blow for liberty, and shrink like cowards beneath the whip of the taskmaster? The oppression of so numerous a people, admittedly so wealthy and so well-treated, is an improbable story. It is evidently a pious concoction contrived by priests of a rival nation for the promotion of the glory of their tribal Jahveh and the disparagement of the gods, people and king of Egypt.

King Pharaoh was evidently a Freethinker. He lacked the soul-saving virtue of faith. Jahveh failed to inspire either awe or respect in the fearless soul of the monarch. The commands of god were only treated with the contempt of disobedience. He rightly refused to obey the imperious mandates of a god of whom he knew nothing, save that his existence was merely vouched for by the word of a seditious magician and foreign priest. The lesson which Pharaoh thus taught to Jahveh was a valuable one, both for god to receive and for man to impart—viz., that, instead of intermeddling in human concerns, god were better employed in looking after his private affairs, and conducting his not over-flourishing business in the heavenly regions.

Pharaoh deserves our hearty thanks for the salutary check he thus offered to the interference of Jahveh in those things which concern not god but man. Would that all kings and rulers had similarly resisted the interested aggressions of god and priest! Had a gallant stand been generally taken in vindication of the rights of man, whole oceans of human blood and tears would not have been shed by the pious means of brutal bigotry. What misery had humanity thereby been spared! But more important even than the lesson which the king administered to Jahveh, is the lesson which his example teaches us. That lesson, briefly, is that it is man's duty to resist the commands of god by the weapons of disobedience and defiance. Disobedience, because god has no claim on man's submission. Defiance, because the divine encroachments only merit human resistance.

A brief examination of the language of our text will, it is hoped, serve to bring the useful lesson taught by the god-defying king into clearer light, and help the diffusion of its wholesome influence into the faith-hardened hearts of the bond-slaves of Jahveh.

(1) "Who is the Lord?"—An important question, verily. "There be gods many and lords many." They are as the sands on the seashore in multitude. Their name is Legion. Jahveh himself, in his youthful days, admitted the melancholy fact, and was, moreover, frightfully jealous of all and singular his godly rivals. So long, however, as he was fortunate enough to secure from the piety of his chosen people the monopoly of sacrifice and worship, he was well

content. But as he advanced to the wisdom and mental stature of riper years he became imbued with the spirit of Free-thought, and developed a sort of dogmatic Atheism, under the educating influence of which he altogether denied the existence of any god but himself. His own reality, however, still remained as questionable as that of any other deity. He always managed perversely and obstinately to enwrap himself in the multiplied folds of an impenetrable mystery, keeping himself quite in the dark, far, far away from the carnal inspection of mankind. "No man hath seen god at any time," though Moses, we are told, once lost a splendid opportunity. Alas! Moses's loss was humanity's too.

The partiality of gods for priests is similar to that which angels have for asses. Only by the purblind eye of faith can the rank and file of the army of belief come face to face with god. The popular faith in the unseen god is a pious delusion arising from the intoxication produced by imbibing the hell-fire water of credulity and superstition, evil spirits which are brewed and distilled by priestcraft for the inebriation and stupefaction of mankind. Thus faith, and the fear and love of god, though nominally devoted towards that unknown object, are in reality directed to, as fully as they are exploited by, the priests. These holy men, indeed, are the "oracles of god"; for their trade and occupation consist in "working the oracle." WILLIAM HEAFORD.

(To be concluded)

THE HACKNEY CLUB TESTIMONIAL.

WEDNESDAY, March 5, was a big night at the Borough of Hackney Workmen's Club. With a membership of over 1,600, this club is one of the most influential of the Radical institutions of the metropolis, and its well-organised political council forms a centre of political information for the Haggerstone district. The sturdy working men of the club, looking upon the prosecution of the *Freethinker* as an attack on the rights of the free press, on the very night of Judge North's iniquitous sentences, moved a vote of condolence with the prisoners and censure of the jury, and this they followed up by meeting and passing resolutions condemning the blasphemy laws and demanding the release of those imprisoned under them. A sum having been collected to make Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp a small present, separate from that of the National Secular Society, these gentlemen were invited to the large hall of the club, which, together with the entrances, was crowded with working men and their wives. Upon the entrance of Mr. Foote and his fellow-sufferers, they were greeted with loud and long-continued applause. Upon the platform were delegates from seven East-end clubs.

Mr. PIKE, chairman of the Political Council, presided, and in a brief speech said they had met to show their sympathy and respect with men who had suffered for them and for humanity at large. To allow those in authority to in any way gag the freedom of the press was a desertion of the principles of liberty, and they should not rest until they had wiped out these base laws. He was pleased to see Mr. Foote looking so well, and knew this occasion would give him further energy in fighting the cause of the people.

Mr. THOS. HUGHES then moved a resolution expressing sympathy with Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp for their sufferings during their unjust imprisonment for upholding the rights of free speech. Mr. Hughes ascribed these sufferings to the action of that corrupt body, the City Fathers.

Mr. PAPE, of the Commonwealth Club, Bethnal Green, in seconding the resolution, reminded the audience of the Sunday Trading Law and acts which would subject them to fines for not attending church if the bigots could only have their way.

Mr. G. S. VAN DER HOUT, a foreigner, of the Tower Hamlets Radical Club, supported the resolution in a vigorous speech. He characterised the sentences as legal murder, for the twelve months cut out of Mr. Foote's busy life could never be returned. The bigots of to-day are in spirit the same as those of the past, and the workmen's clubs must stifle them. He was glad to see Mr. Foote look "far remarkable better" since Monday.

The resolution being put to the meeting was carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN then presented Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp each with separate testimonials and purses. Mr. Foote's testimonial, which was neatly illumined and framed, read as follows:—

"The Political Council of the Borough of Hackney Workmen's Club present this Testimonial to George William Foote as a token of admiration of the courage displayed by him in the advocacy of free speech, and in sympathy with the sufferings endured during twelve months imprisonment for the

same under barbarous laws unfitted for the spirit of a free people.

Signed on behalf of the Council { ALFRED PIKE, Chairman.
CHAS. KNIGHT, Secretary.

The two other testimonials were similarly worded.

Mr. FOOTE was greeted with much applause and spoke for upwards of half an hour upon the character of the prosecutors and the nature of his imprisonment. He said this testimonial would stimulate him to further endeavors in the cause of religious, social and political freedom, and progress.

Mr. RAMSEY, who was equally applauded, spoke of his long connexion with the borough and the pride he took in being a member of the club. He hoped to have an opportunity of exposing publicly the jobbery of the city prosecutors.

Mr. KEMP also briefly expressed his pride and pleasure in the testimonial.

A vote of thanks to the delegates of other clubs, proposed by Mr. Hughes, was responded to by Mr. Davis, of the Tower Hamlets Club, who assured the meeting that the other Radical clubs were at one on this question of the blasphemy laws, and he looked forward to their taking united, political action.

MY CONVERSION.

HOLY father, must I say,
Far from thee I'm forced to stray,
For thy ways are, I must say,
Not very straight.

To thee I've cried when suffering pain;
No answer then did I obtain;
And now I find I've nought to gain
While following thee.

I overlooked thy holy cause,
And tried to cover all its "flaws,"
And thought it was all right because
Thou hadst ordained.

In Jesus Christ I once believed,
And thought myself from sin relieved;
But now that theory I've perceived
To be a sham.

The fear of hell once troubled me,
And from that place I wished to flee;
And on the land of rest to be
With holy saints.

When sceptics then did me attack,
To them I always turned my back,
Because I evidence did lack
To prove thy cause.

Those childish notions now are past,
And with Freethought my lot is cast;
And by its side I will stick fast
E'en to the last.

C. S.

PROFANE JOKES.

"Now, my children," said a Sabbath-school teacher to his class, "let us see if we can name the precious stones mentioned in the Bible. Thomas, what one do you remember?" "Brimstone, sir."

A PIOUS Wesleyan who kept a coal-store, said one morning to his son Jack: "Is it frosty this morning?" "Yes, father—a heavy frost." "Is the canal frozen?" "Yes, father." "Then raise the coals twopence a hundred, and god help the poor."

"MOTHER," said a little girl, "is Tom a good cat?" "Yes," said the mother. "Then he'll go to heaven, won't he?" "I suppose so; but if you're not a better girl you'll never go there." "Oh," said the little girl, "I'll hold on to Tom's tail."

It is stated as a fact that a minister baptising some negroes in the Missouri, allowed a bulky negress to slip through his arms into deep water, where she was drowned. He turned round and exclaimed with perfect *sang froid*, "There's one gone to glory; fetch another."

THE Christians are changing front again. They were wont to teach that the path for the converted one was a narrow way. Now they want to show that it is a Hollow-way.

PIGEON pie he loved not wisely but too well. With a fairly-earned indigestion and a face as long as an old time sermon, he was plodding wearily on when a man, whose frontispiece rivalled our Gourmand's in the matter of elongation, stepped in front of him and thrusting out a tract headed "Christ in the heart," inquired if his "dear brother" had found lodgment in that organ for Jesus. Said the dyspeptic one: "No, friend, no; I have not Christ in the heart, but I have the holy ghost in the stomach."

A FRENCHMAN and an ardent Irishman were chopping wood by the side of a stream. A tree falling into the water, took the Frenchman along with it. Not being able to swim he commenced to cry out, "O, mon dieu!" (O my god). The Irishman not "parlant français," shouted, "Never mind Monju, grab hold of the branches."

A FINE stone church was lately built in Missouri, upon the facade of which a stonecutter was ordered to cut the following: "My house shall be called the house of prayer." He was referred for accuracy to the verse of scripture in which these words were written; but unfortunately, to the scandal of society, he transcribed the whole verse: "My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves."

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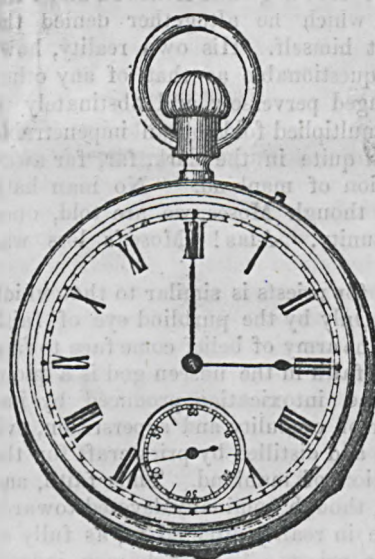
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