

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. LXIII.



FIRM AS A ROCK.

"*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church*" (Matthew xvi., 18). "*Then began he to curse and swear saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew*" (chap. xxvi., 74).

LETTER TO LORD COLERIDGE.

MY LORD.—Nearly a year has elapsed since my affairs occupied your time and attention in the Court of Queen's Bench, where you have the great honour to preside as the Lord Chief Justice of England. Yet I do not suppose you have forgotten me, for mine was an unusual case, which excited much public interest, and occasioned your famous summing up of the law of Blasphemous Libel. And assuredly I have not forgotten you. I stood in a responsible and perilous position. For the third time in three months I had to defend my own liberty and the honour of a cause which I hold dearer than life. My heart was full of bitter scorn for the beagles of corruption and tyranny that had hunted me into a felon's cell, from which I was brought to appear before your Lordship. Judge North and his compliant jury made me doubt the honour and dignity of the Bench. I was prepared for the worst, and indifferent to my fate. My only desire was to plead for the cause I love in a superior court, to gain the moral victory of a bold defence before the highest administrator of the law, to speak in accents that should rouse the sluggish temper of the outside world, and compel attention if not respect. How were my feelings modified by your Lordship's lofty bearing. I found myself in the presence of a judge who was a gentleman. You treated me with impartiality, and a generous consideration for my misfortunes. No one could doubt your sincerity when, in the midst of a legal illustration which might be construed as a reflection on my character, you suddenly checked yourself and said, "I mean no offence to Mr. Foote. I should be unworthy of my position if I

insulted anyone in his." You were scrupulously, almost painfully, careful to say nothing that could assist the prosecution or wound my susceptibilities. You appeared to tremble lest your own convictions should prejudice you, and the jury through you, against me and my fellow prisoner. You listened with the deepest attention to my long address to the jury. You discussed all my arguments that you considered essential in your summing up; and you strengthened some of them, while deprecating others, with a logical force and beauty of expression, which were at once my admiration and my despair. You paid me such handsome compliments on my defence in the most trying circumstances as dispelled at once the orthodox theory that I was a mere vulgar criminal. In brief, my lord, you displayed such a lofty spirit of justice, such a tenderness of humanity, and such a dignity of bearing, that you commanded my admiration, my reverence, and my love; and if the jury had convicted me, and your lordship had felt obliged by the "unpleasant law" to inflict upon me some measure of punishment, I could still have kissed the hand that dealt the blow.

I know how repulsive flattery must be to a nature like yours, but your lordship will pardon one who is no sycophant, who seeks neither to avert your frown nor to gain your favor, who has no sinister object in view, but simply speaks from the fulness of a grateful heart. And you will pardon me if I say that my sentiments are shared by thousands, who hate your creed but respect your character. They watched you throughout my trial with the keenest interest, and they rejoiced when they saw in you those noble human qualities which transcend all dogmas and creeds, and dwarf all differences of opinion into absolute insignificance. Were all Christians like your lordship (I cannot help smiling grimly at the absurd supposition), the policy of the *Freethinker* would be more than a mistake; it would be impossible. But your lordship belongs to the small minority of Nature's gentlemen, who scarcely leaven the great mass of bigotry, hypocrisy, and cruelty. The Tylers, the Norths, the Harcourts, and the pious Aldermen, swamp you with their numbers. We admire you, but we must fight them. When we meet you we lower our swords and salute to the saddle-bow; when we meet them, we drive in our spurs, clench our teeth, and ride straight at them with swords of the temper and sharpness of hate.

Would, my lord, that your humane summing up of the Blasphemy Law left Freethinkers in a position of such comparative safety as you contemplated; but I fear your view of the law is likely to be more dangerous than the old one. You make the blasphemy to consist in the manner, not the matter; and it may hereafter be easy for an unscrupulous judge (my lord, there are such) to persuade a bigoted jury that, by helping to send a Freethinker to gaol, they are not indulging the spirit of persecution, but protecting "the feelings" of the community from outrage; in other words, that they may enjoy the luxury of persecution without incurring the odium. I agree with Mr. Justice Stephen, that, as the Blasphemy Law is only a survival of the Heresy Laws, and is founded on the hateful spirit of persecution, it is far better to let it stand in its "naked deformity" than to give it a new lease of life by hiding its barbarity. You have yourself however, described it as "an unpleasant law for a judge to administer;" your summing-up has occasioned a general suspicion that the Blasphemy Law is doomed; and I have no doubt that when Mr. Justice Stephen's draft-bill for its total abolition is before Parliament, your voice will be heard on the side of justice, freedom and humanity.

Farewell, my lord. I may never see or hear you again, but you will live in my memory among the few precious recollections of a stormy past.—Yours, with sincere admiration, gratitude, and respect,
G. W. FOOTE.

NEW TESTAMENT CORRUPTIONS.

THE question of the integrity of the supposed word of God is sufficiently important for me to supplement the instances given of corruption and interpolation (*Freethinker*, p. 58) with some ancient testimony, which will exhibit in a striking light the manner in which the early Christians dealt with their divine documents.

In the first place, it is very curious that the Church which has kept more than one copy of the pocket-handkerchief with which St. Veronica didn't wipe her savior's nose, has not had the face to pretend a possession of the original manuscripts of the gospels. Not only so, but we are absolutely without any evidence of anyone who did see them; so that it is quite open for any believer to assert that the handwriting of the Holy Ghost is something altogether too divine for mortal eyesight. The earliest manuscripts, as already stated, date but back to the fourth century, and are copies of copies, differing from each other in many important respects. Readers of my little book on the "Frauds and Follies of the Early Fathers" will be able to judge what means we have for believing in the integrity of the books passing through these worthies' hands. The only alleged allusion by any of the Fathers to the original autographs of the New Testament occurs in a bombastic passage in Tertullian (on Prescription against Heretics, chap. 36), who says: "Run over the apostolic churches in which the very thrones [*cathedræ*] of the apostles are still pre-eminent in their places, in which their authentic writings are read" ("Anti-Nicene Christian Library," p. 43. The translators say the sense of unmutated copies, as opposed to the garbled ones of the heretics, is probably correct). Dr. Scrivener observes on this passage ("Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament," p. 504; 1883): "The autographs were no more in those cities than the chairs were, but it suited the purpose of the moment to suppose they were extant." That these precious autographs were lost, and that various readings crept in in the earliest ages of the Church, we have evidence from Irenæus, who, in his argument concerning the Anti-Christ (Against Heresies, ch. xxx., p. 135) speaks of the number 666 "being found in all the most approved and ancient copies." He complains of copyists tampering by substituting letters for figures. Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth (A. C. 170-176), speaks of those who adulterated the scriptures of the Lord and corrupted his own writings (Eusebius, "Ecclesiastical History," iv., 23).

It may be noted that the words attributed to Paul in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, ii., 2; iii., 17; imply that his epistle had been falsified, and, setting aside some of those which bear his name in the Canon, spurious epistles were long ascribed to him, such as that to the Laodiceans and a third epistle to the Corinthians.

Clement of Alexandria also complains of those who corrupt the gospels for their own sinister ends (Miscellanies, iv., 6). Tregelles pertinently remarks that Clement, in the very act of censuring others, ventures on liberties no less extravagant himself.

The testimony of the learned Father Origen is yet more explicit. "But now," he says, "great, in truth, has become the diversity in copies, be it from the negligence of certain scribes, or from the evil daring of some who correct what is written, or from those who, in correcting, add or take away what they think fit" ("Commentary on Matthew," tome iii., p. 671; De La Rue).

Throughout the history of the early Church we have disputes between the various sects of Christians, each accusing the others of using forged and interpolated scriptures. Celsus, the early opponent of Christianity, took notice of this, and boldly says the Christians "altered the gospel three or four different times, as if they were drunk, and, when pressed by their adversaries, recurred to that reading which best suited their purposes." This latter practice of primitive Christians has not been lost on their devoted followers.

Dr. Scrivener ("Plain Introduction," p. 3) says: "The more numerous and venerable the documents within our reach, the more extensive is the view we obtain of the variations (or various readings, as they are called) that prevail in manuscripts. If the number of these variations was rightly computed at thirty thousand in Mill's time, a century and a half ago, they must at present amount to at

least fourfold that quantity." A pretty good number, this, of corruptions of the infallible word of God.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE LAWN-SLEEVES IN THE LORDS.

I DON'T suppose bishops swear (aloud) except when they are reading the Athanasian creed. But if they ever do, how they must have fallen foul (in language) of providence last week! For that bungler actually arranged, with a perfectly devilish ingenuity, for the debate on the Opening of Museums on Sunday and Mr. Willis' motion against the bishops as members of the Upper House to come on the same day. So that while ten clerical vagabonds were voting against a measure of the most ordinary justice, by a narrow majority (narrow in two senses) of eleven only was the excellent proposition of the member for Colchester rejected. Add to the ten the Lord Chancellor and Lord Shaftesbury as each equal to half a cleric, on the same basis of calculation as a tailor is equal to one-ninth of a man, and the majority in the Commons equals in number the flock of religious scarecrows that voted with men more reputable than themselves in the Lords.

What a mockery is the whole business, or rather the whole job of the discussion in the Lords! "The opinion of this House" on a question affecting the working classes! "Visiting the national collections," from which the nation is shut out. A claim for the like opportunities "to those enjoyed by the working classes" of other towns than this philanthropy-ridden London! Morally, "this House" has no voice in the matter, and the opportunities to the laborers ought to be equal, nay superior to those enjoyed by the idling classes of the community. The amateur bishop and professional patroniser of his betters, known as the Earl of Shaftesbury, prattles on the use of the week evenings by the poor. Let us see the cruel Earl toiling for twelve, fourteen, sixteen hours a day at the East-end of London, and then walking, say to the British Museum for an evening's recreation. The Earl of Shaftesbury makes us almost forget the good done by Lord Ashley for the factory workers.

Enough—too much—of this amateur cleric. Let us see what his grace the Archbishop of Canterbury has to say. What is needed is to improve the homes of the people. Truly. At present, thanks to the benign guardianship of the Archbishop and such as he, the children of these homes are in a condition so terrible that in truth the "homes" may be said to be imp-roved. What effort has he made to brighten the children's lives? He has closed the gardens of Lambeth Palace against the little ones. He reads his Master's words "with a difference." "I suffer if the little ones come unto me." Surely, if on the one rest-day the sore eyes of the toilers can be gladdened with beauty the homes will better. The light from the statues of old Greece, and the colors of painters, and the wealth and beauty of Nature in her myriad forms will shine out from the faces that have caught a glimpse of them, into the poor home and into the daily life. But this priest, whose life is one long luxury, would have the rest-day an idle day. It is the true dog-in-the-manger policy of the dog in the pulpit. The people will not—never will—come to the churches. Then, as far as the bishops are concerned, they shall not go to the museums. The public-houses are open. Ha, ha! While these fill, what matter all else? The people will not think whence comes the money for the priestly palaces and the princely incomes. *Every farthing of it all is from the labor of the working classes.*

The Bishop of Oxford complacently remarks that there is a feeling as to Sunday in England not existing in any continental country; and, blind leader of the blind that he is, fails to see the condemnation he thus utters of his island home. He wishes to keep that feeling. Naturally, or rather professionally. His caste have wished to keep the feeling in favor of every old and rotten abuse in our political and social life. Let them keep it, by all means. But let them not try to force their debased and demoralising feelings on honest and free men.

Of course Mr. Broadhurst and his gross misrepresentation of the working classes were dragged in. If he has any feeling other than that which the Bishop of Oxford wants to keep, this quondam working man must feel some compunction. Judas, betraying Christ for thirty pieces of silver, hanged himself. Mr. Broadhurst—how apt, how necessary is the "Mr."—has betrayed the modern Christ, the laboring men and women and children. I neither know nor care how many pieces of silver or of gold Mr. Broadhurst gained by this. I

only know that he has gained the contempt of the working class, and a shame in his own heart so acute that even he must feel it.

EDWARD B. AVELING.—

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

I do not owe my scepticism to any one thing alone, but to many; and amongst the foremost must be reckoned my careful and earnest study of the Bible. It is my long-standing conviction that the more the Bible is read the less it will be believed. As I regard faith in the Bible as one of the most debasing and mischievous of human sentiments, I pen the following gossiping fragments for the express purpose of leading the reader to infidelity—that is, to a state of mind wherein superstition is impossible and nothing is believed without sound reason. The present papers are not a treatise, but a running comment upon texts of the New Testament, not intended to exhaust any subject, but merely to set the reader thinking for himself.

MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew i., 1).—Jesus Christ is not strictly a proper name; the full form is Jesus the Christ—that is, Jesus the anointed or oiled. The New Testament says nothing about any oiling being undergone, except that performed by Mary; he never was *officially* oiled, as kings and priests were in Bible times; and therefore had no more right to the epithet *oiled* than any man has who uses pomatum.

Son of David!—This genealogy and the one in Luke gives the pedigree of Joseph, not Mary. Joseph was not the father of Jesus, and therefore no attempt is made to trace the descent of Jesus from David. Besides, the two pedigrees hopelessly disagree. Matthew gives just forty names between Abraham and Joseph inclusive, and distinctly says each man “begat” the one that follows. Luke gives Joseph fourteen ancestors more than Matthew for the same period—viz., from Abraham. He also says that Joseph’s father was Heli, his grandfather Matthat; Matthew reports that Jacob was his father and Matthan his grandfather. This confusion has never been cleared up and never can. Jesus is of unknown descent—a foundling, perhaps. And thus the divine scheme of salvation begins in darkness.

The story of the birth of Jesus may be read in the text; it is unfit for the commentary.

An angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream (i., 20).—That is an item of divine revelation! The same report in a modern newspaper would be laughed at. The sequel shows that Joseph’s suspicions of his wife were set at rest by a dream! Jealous husbands cannot be so pacified to-day.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins (i., 21).—Here is a savior born in sin to save other people from sins! However, the promise, unfortunately, has never been fulfilled. Greater sinners than the people of Jesus never lived.

CHAPTER II.—*There came wise men (Magi) from the east to Jerusalem* (v., 1). What a story! Who were these magi? Persian fire-worshippers were called by that name. Did they visit Jerusalem and speak to Herod, and Josephus not mention it? They were guided by a star—to the wrong place. Divine guides always lead astray. The star conducted them to Jerusalem, where Jesus was not born; they had to get other guides to reach Bethlehem.

And whom did they seek? A new heir to Israel’s throne. But Jesus was not that heir; he never was prince or king, fortunately. So it was the wrong baby they found after all! As soon as they had performed their devotions to the wrong baby, a dream warned them to avoid Herod, and another dream sent Joseph and Mary with the child into Egypt; but neither dream nor vision warned the parents of those children whom Herod afterwards slaughtered! Of course, the massacre never took place. Herod was tyrant enough, no doubt; but he was not a fool. The gospel writer knew that prejudice would believe anything against the king. The other gospels do not mention it.

Out of Egypt have I called my son (ii., 15). This is the second perversion of Old Testament texts by Matthew already. There is no such prophecy as he quoted! He simply twists the words of Hosea xi., 1, to his own purpose. The text in the prophet, as must be plain to everyone, refers to the visit of that great hero, the Duke of Connaught, to Egypt, and his return unscathed from the battles he never was in.

It is the business of a commentator either to find good sense in the text or impart a little to it. I have just done my duty to one such text.

JOSEPH SYMES.

(To be continued.)

REVIEW.

The City: an Inquiry into its Doings and History. By WILLIAM GILBERT. London: Daldy, Isbister and Co. Can be had at 28 Stonecutter Street.

The Government Municipal Reform Bill should draw attention to the merits of this book. Such a record of mismanagement, avarice, fraud, gluttony and general corruption as may be gathered from this exposure of the pious worthies who instituted the successful prosecution of the *Freethinker*, cannot, we venture to affirm, be found in the history of any other city in the world. The author gives at length the history of the City parochial and medical charities and endowed schools, and shows how these have been misused. “A History of the Livery Companies and their Misapplied Funds” affords sufficient grounds for every one of these nests of corruption being made the subject for Parliamentary inquiry. The Corporation is shown to spend annually £80,000 in salaries to its officials, or £18,000 more than received by all the members of her Majesty’s Government. The white-chokers are also shown to have pickings. With a population of less than one-third of the parish of St. Pancras, the City has no fewer than 129 livings, many ranging from £500 to £1,500 a-year, besides the cathedral staff of St. Pauls, with its dean and canons taking over £5,666; and numerous chaplains to City guilds, lectureships and other clerical appointments. On the other hand the poor and the artificers, for whose benefit the guilds were designed, have been systematically driven from the City, while the charities and funds so lavishly bestowed or bequeathed for their use in bygone time are now lost to them. The book, which was originally published at 7s. 6d., can now be had for one shilling, and we cordially commend it to the attention of all friends of municipal reform.

ACID DROPS.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* has a very ingenious plea for the retention of the bishops in the House of Lords. It says they are lifted up to their high places in order to show conspicuously the evils of an established church. “The voice of the bishops,” says the *P. M. G.*, “is given uniformly by a majority of their order on the side of every thing that is politically bad, and of a great deal that is morally indefensible.” And while they remain where they are they are a frightful warning to mankind of the evils of priesthood.

The *P. M. G.* falls foul of Sir William Harcourt for his defence of the bishops, and says that the “confidence” of Sir William Harcourt can only be compared with the confidence of Sir William Harcourt: there is no other comparison. In other words, Gauler Harcourt has matchless “cheek.”

PARSON PLAYFORD (*Chaplain of Holloway Gaol*).

P rosy as some old dotard run to tongue;
L oud as a braying ass—all mouth and lung;
A musing when he’s solemn, dull when witty—
Y ou hear him preach with laughter or with pity.
F ond of himself, he swears it is the Lord’s word,
O ld Nick has all outside the creed of Playford:
“R ash foots,” he cries, “man’s wisdom is pretence,
D amn every honest friend of common sense.”

A WELCH parson has charged Mr. Bradlaugh with taking a married woman away from her husband. Mr. Bradlaugh describes this statement very properly as “a foul and cruel lie.” These parsons are the people who maintain that Freethinkers should be sent to gaol for “hurting their feelings.” Poor dear unprotected innocents!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE in the police-court for assaulting constables. Oh, William, William!

A CORRESPONDENT, well known as a Freethinker in North London, writes: “My stepson, who is on board the ‘Indus’ at Devonport, went with others and heard Mr. Foote on Sunday last, and it has caused quite a stir on the ships (the ‘Indus’ and ‘Firebrand.’) It bothers the minister very much, so that he calls the sailors ‘god-damn infidels of blue-jackets.’ They want to know when Mr. Foote will be there again, and they will invite the parson and all the sailors in harbor, they were so well pleased with what they heard.”

THIS week we pay 4s. 7d. for tithes, being the share of the Church in the profits of the *Freethinker*.

Mrs. SYKES, a poor widow, nearly 70 years of age, keeping a small sweetstuff and fruit shop at Southend, Essex, is this week summoned by the Sabbatarian bigots for opening her shop on the Lord's Day. The result is not known in time for publication this week, but she will certainly have to close her shop and walk eight miles to Rochford Court and back on the day of hearing. We shall refer to this matter again, and expect that our readers will, if necessary, assist in supporting the old lady against the bigots.

To what depths of degradation must a man have sunk when he impersonates a clergyman. To these depths John Hobart Humphries fell. But it seems hard that he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment for stealing during the impersonation. Surely the offence was in keeping with the character he had assumed.

THE sooner Binns is among the "has beens," the better.

Who would have thought it? According to a little book just published, the world came to an end in 1881. It is appropriately dated A.D. 3, but the A.D. does not refer to J. C., for the new epoch is declared to be that of woman. This curious work is by the authors of "The Perfect Way to the Finding of Christ," one of the writers of which is understood to be Edward Maitland, author of "The Pilgrim and the Shrine." How has the fine gold become dim!

As a set-off to Allan Zachariah Grace, the drunken minister of Wellington, Shropshire, having been suspended by his bishop for eighteen months, the Rev. C. Guest, vicar of Christ Church, Burton-on-Trent, has discharged two curates—the Rev. W. Spriggs-Smith and the Rev. W. B. Dearden—for temperance advocacy.

THE Rev. A. Hannay, D.D., preaching last week before the Salop Association of Congregational Ministers, declared "there was running in England at the present day a strong feeling of hostility towards Christianity, and it was especially so among the reading classes." Just so, gentlemen of the cloth. The reading classes are learning the untrustworthiness of the manufactured evidences of Christianity, the criminality of its history, and the vanity of its pretension that all the best and wisest have been Christians. They find that science has shattered the cosmogony and Fall of Man on which it is built, and, finding this gaol-supported creed of fraud and folly the great impediment to progress, are hostile because they read and think.

THE *Catholic Review* says that "the religious question is the burning question of the time." Yes, dearly beloved, but not quite so burning a question now as when the Holy Inquisition reduced over thirty thousand persons to cinders for heresy, and Christians burned ten times that number in obedience to the Bible command. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus xxii., 18). Thank man, religious questions are somewhat less burning than they used to be. Even the temperature of the fires hereafter have been considerably modified since people have taken the liberty of thinking for themselves on theological topics.

Whether old Nick is dead or no,
Or if his coals are running low,
Whatever the reason, all agree
Hell ain't so hot as it used to be.

PERHAPS it would be too bad to call cremation a burning question. The evidence of Dr. Freire, of Rio Janeiro, however, shows it to be a far more important subject than the other world politics with which the pulpits concern themselves. This physician, in examining the earth where the victims of yellow fever had been interred the year before, found myriads of microbi exactly identical with those found in the vomitings of persons sick with yellow fever. These germs, he found, would reproduce the disease. Even the medical authority of that backward Corporation the City has declared that cremation is the only sanitary method of disposing of the dead. As Gaoler Harcourt, despite the ruling of Justice Stephen that cremation is perfectly legal if carried out so as not to cause a nuisance, declares his intention to put it down, we hope some one will kindly devote his body to the flames in order to test this burning question. Dr. Price is engaged in founding a crematorium.

The parsons have got a misgiving
Cremation won't add to their bread;
Less easily they'll earn their living
When people once more urn their dead.

A NEW sect has just been projected in Illinois called the "Alimentists;" and besides such small matters of ritual as the wearing of dirty shirts, collars, etc., as typifying the detergent properties of Jesus's circulating fluid, they hold peculiar views regarding his forty days' fast. They contend—and support their contention by some strong arguments and a liberal slinging of texts—that man cannot live upon air, not even that procurable in a wilderness. From this they

argue that the human portion of the apthropoid god subsisted by absorbing or incorporating the divine element, whilst "I Am," junior, had to recuperate from the exhaustion, consequent on his tussle with the devil, by gobbling up the rest. When this process of mutual deglutition was ended, all that remained of either god or man was an "emanation of the son, spiritually manifested and to be spiritually discerned." This is all so reasonable, and explains so well the "I in you and you in me" business, that we are tempted to wish that Alimentists had gone a little further, and accounted for the absence of the trinity in these latter days by showing a necessity for the first parson's having devoured the second and third, and capped the destructive process by swallowing himself.

In view of the mixed nature of the people who say they are bound for glory, our irreverent young man wants to know if heaven will not be a rather interesting place of re-sort.

THE LAY OF THE SAVED.

My iniquities once were as black as the night,
And like crimson they also were red;
But now, praise to the lord, like wool they are white,
For Jesus has died in my stead.
I am meek as a lamb and have altered my ways,
For I once, I admit, was a hot'un;
But no merit is mine, every bit of the praise
I ascribe to the Only Begotten.

Now I pray like a good'un, my Bible I read,
And I sing the lord's praises all day;
Like the psalmist I find the lord's words and I feed,
And my banjo and fiddle I play.
Believe, brother, and come unto him, do not doubt,
Trust the promises, think not they're rotten;
Then, so happy, together we'll joyfully shout—
"Hooray for the Only Begotten!"

In his recently-published "Excursions of an Evolutionist," upon the quite too awfully theistic Agnosticism of which we lately commented, Prof. John Fiske has a paper on "The Causes of Persecution." He attributes the birth of this demon of history to the readiness of savage persecutors to undergo the pains they inflict upon others; to the fact, that is, that they almost expect to meet with a violent death. This view may be ingenious, but it requires a qualification when applied to English savages. A moral lesson of our schooldays was that the greatest bullies are usually the greatest cowards; and we have heard the same theory since enforced. It is not probable that Mr. Justice North committed Mr. Foote for twelve months because he himself feels indifferent to detention in gaol, any more than that Bloody Mary, Bishop Bonner and Co. had suspicions of being staked themselves.

TALMAGE, according to the *Presbyterian*, said he once knew a clergyman who used to chew like clockwork all through the service, and that he had spittoons at the font, the communion table, the reading desk, the pulpit, and in the vestry. Well, we know a clergyman in Sydney, who takes a glass of whisky before going to his church, a glass before robing, "four fingers" when donning his surplice, a nip when he's through with the pitch, and then goes home to dinner, which is washed down by a bottle of Foster, and any amount of fiery port. One Sunday, when he got to the vestry, he discovered that some miscreant had "sneaked" his inspiration. He was very dull that day, and his extempore sermon was such a series of inane platitudes, that before he was half through with it the congregation was snoring, with a sound like a circus menagerie shut up in a saw-mill. Now the rev. gentleman always comes armed with a pocket-pistol, and his eloquence is as passionate as ever. Ah, what would his congregation, who swear to a woman that his religious fervor is a gift from the clouds, think if they knew that he purchases it in Pitt-street for 60s. a case!—*Sydney Bulletin*.

MORE blasphemy! The *Cyclist* in its account of the inter-college races at Cambridge, says that "Trinity beat Christ's by a good spurt. After this Jesus beat Corpus Christi very easily, then Trinity beat Corpus Christi. Finally, Trinity beat Jesus easily. Thus Trinity is head, having scored most wins."

A LOCAL preacher in a dissenting chapel at Shirland, near Alfreton, fled precipitately from the pulpit last Sunday upon a butcher rising from the congregation to denounce him for having seduced his wife.

THE Rev. T. A. Ottley, vicar of St. John's, Portland, who some time ago assailed Secularists in the *Southern Times*, has been accused of drunkenness and cruelty to his wife.

A SCOTTISH divine once surprised his congregation by announcing the three heads of his sermon thus: 1st, the Devil going about; 2nd, the Devil a roaring lion; 3rd, seeking who the devil he might devour.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

In our next number will appear a Letter from Mr. Foote to Sir Hardinge Giffard.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 30, Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool. Morning at 11—"How I Fell Among Thieves;" afternoon at 3—"The Blasphemy Laws, as interpreted by Lord Coleridge, Justice Stephen and Justice North;" evening at 7—"Twelve Months in a Christian Gaol."

April 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 24, Hall of Science; 19 and 21, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 20, South Shields. May 4 and 11, Hall of Science; 18, Claremont Hall; 24, Armley; 25, Leeds. June 1, N. S. S. Conference. July 20 and 27, Milton Hall.

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*, 23 Stonecutter Street, London.

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DR. EDWARD AVELING'S ENGAGEMENTS.—March 30, Milton Hall, London. April 6, Manchester; 20, Birmingham; 27, Liverpool. May 4, 11, 14, Milton Hall; 25, Hall of Science. June 8, 15, 22, 29, Milton Hall.

RECEIVED.—A Friend, George Wackerbarth, Lazarus.

C. J. STEINBERG.—The joke has already appeared.

R. BELL.—Read Deut. cxiii, 6-9.

ONE WHO IS ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.—We are pleased to hear from you again. Thanks for your assistance during our incarceration.

ATHEIST.—It will be difficult to procure No. 1 of the *Freethinker*, but if any reader can spare a copy for you we will gladly complete your set.

W. J. MOR.—We are always glad of papers noticing our movement.

C. J. FORMER.—Dr. Aveling had taken the matter in hand before we received your copy. Thanks.

A. MOONEY.—We shall find space for more articles when our paper is enlarged.

F. HAMPTON.—We have no room for reports of any kind, and until we increase our size we certainly cannot insert political resolutions.

D. AIMER.—Mr. Foote would have been pleased to take the chair at Dr. Aveling's lecture for the West Central Branch, but with his present mass of work it is, unfortunately, out of the question.

H. G. SWIFT.—Shall appear. It is gratifying to find our thorough-going policy so generally approved and supported.

W. HINES.—Received with thanks. Letters from earnest Freethinkers like yourself cheer us in our dangerous work.

J. STRANG.—We have no note of the date, but it was about a fortnight before its appearance in our columns.

TRUTH.—We have, unfortunately, no room for reports.

J. ALIAN.—Mr. Foote will be happy to visit York, but it must be on a week-night, as all his Sundays are engaged.

G. PAXTON.—See "Acid Drops." What you say of Varley others say also. The nearest Secular Hall to your address is in Henley Street, York Road, Battersea.

J. NICHOLLS.—We have no room for political letters.

J. TRAVIS.—We read your letter with interest.

C. B.—We are always glad of good suggestions for illustrations.

H. BOLTON.—Brahmanism is more than a thousand years older than Christianity; Buddhism dates from the sixth century before Christ; Mohammedanism arose in the sixth century of the Christian era.

R. HARDING.—For £21; p. 92 read £2.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Lucifer—Shropshire Guardian—Anti Christian—Calcutta—Salisbury Times—Truthseeker—Book Store Monthly—Nottingham Express.

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

PLYMOUTH gave Mr. Foote an enthusiastic reception last Sunday. St. James's Hall is one of the finest in the west of England, and it was filled in the evening by a large audience, in which there was an unusual number of ladies. The Rev. W. Sharman took the chair, and was vociferously applauded when he declared that he was no longer a Liberal; that he would not support a Government which kept Freethinkers in gaol in England and butchered Arabs in Egypt; and that he was thenceforth a Radical and a Republican. The local Liberal paper was too fastidious to report Mr. Foote's lectures; it preferred to report the pious outpourings of Mrs. Booth but its silence is very harmless, and doesn't at all lessen the Freethought audiences.

FREETHOUGHT is spreading wonderfully in South Devonshire; it is even finding its way into obscure villages. The

Freethinker is sold very largely in the district, and the Plymouth Branch of the N. S. S. numbers 170 members.

WE beg to call special attention to the Demonstration against the Blasphemy Laws, to be held in St. James's Hall, London, on May 13th. The Rev. W. Sharman's letter on the subject, which we print in another column, invites us to receive subscriptions from our readers towards the expenses. We have pleasure in beginning the list with a guinea, and we hope the readers of the *Freethinker* will make a prompt and hearty response to the appeal. Subscriptions sent to us will be acknowledged week by week, and forwarded to the Treasurer.

OLIVER CROMWELL's name is often on the lips of Radicals and Republicans, but there is very little known of his character and career. Mr. Foote intends to tell the whole truth about this extraordinary despot in his lectures on "Cromwell and His Times" at the Hall of Science, London, on the Thursday evenings in April. For this purpose he has gone through pretty nearly every piece of accessible literature on the subject, and he will probably surprise many who entertain an unfounded view of Cromwell's relations to English Republicanism.

A *Junior Liberal Review* will appear early in April, under the auspices of the Junior Liberal Association, of which Mr. J. B. Firth, M.P., is president. It promises to address itself especially to young men.

MANY correspondents, since Feb. 25th, have informed us of their conversion through our Trials before Judge North. We have just received a letter from one of these, which is well worth attention. The writer, Mr. G. Paxton, lives at 26 Coulson Street, Chelsea. He tells us to have no scruple in giving his address; for, he says, "as I worked for Christianity before, I would now like to do something, if ever so little, for Freethought." Mr. Paxton wrote to Henry Varley about his doubts. Varley did not like writing a reply, but preferred an interview. At the appointed hour Mr. Paxton called, and Varley was out. Mrs. V. apologised, and said Varley would write again. Of course he never has. Mr. Paxton, as the result of this subterfuge, is more deeply confirmed in his scepticism.

MR. J. ANDERSON, of the Hall of Science Club, 142 Old Street, London, E.C., asks us to announce that there will be a ballad concert (singing) after the lecture (9 p.m.) this evening, Sunday, March 30.

THE flabby goody-goody novel, of which the hero is a curate and the villain a sceptic, has long been an institution among the pious. There is plenty of room and a ready public for good Freethought novels, and we are pleased to notice two Freethought stories sent us from across the herring-pond. Both are by the veteran Freethought writer, Elmina D. Slenker, and are respectively entitled "John's Way" and "Mary Jones; or, The Infidel Teacher."

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Christian* writes from Manchester in reference to the great increase of Secularism among young men there, and deploring the little energy displayed in endeavoring to stem the torrent. He says: "Freethought, like a plague, is gradually working its way into private homes, factories, &c., and, in fact, everywhere."

DR. AVELING will lecture on Sunday, March 30, at the Milton Hall. Subject—(morning, 11.30), "Gradations between Monkeys, Apes and Men." At 7.30, "An evening of readings and music."

ON Wednesday, April 2, at 8.30 p.m., Dr. Aveling will lecture at Grafton Hall for the benefit of the West Central Branch. Subject—"The Pedigree of Man."

MONCURE D. CONWAY, according to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, has come back from his tour round the world more than ever impressed with the necessity of spreading science, enlightenment, and Freethought. He says: "Looking down in all but despair upon this vast rotting jungle of dead religions, watching these gods of worship, which, in any other country but the East, would qualify the worshippers for admission into a lunatic asylum, I felt that I was in the presence of a vast mass of disease which could be healed by nothing around it. The best Hindus with whom I came in contact, men cultivated, profound, clear-seeing, are Freethinkers to a man. They have no hope of anything coming out of the popular religions. We can only trust to the dissolving influence of the scientific spirit which will gradually eat its way through all these creeds, and restore man once more to the possession of that liberty of which he has been robbed by his creeds."

ANOTHER valuable instalment of the papers on the Blasphemy Laws is given in the current number of the *Church Reformer*, Justice Stephen's view that the offence of blasphemy

consists in matter and not in manner, being indorsed. An interesting case is mentioned of a legacy left by Elias de Pas, a Jew, to establish a Yesuba for instructing Jews in their religion, and which was, on the ground that "such bequest was not good in law," handed over by the Court of Chancery to the Foundling Hospital for the support of a preacher and to instruct the children in the Christian religion.

SECULAR SERMON.—No. 1.

PHARAOH'S LESSON TO GOD AND MAN.

(Continued from p. 87).

PHARAOH, like a sensible man, had no relish for Jahveh and his magic-working friends. "No gods need apply," was virtually his answer to Moses. Jahveh, who did apply, needed much stronger recommendations of character and usefulness than his agent presented. The king did not bite the bait, and certainly was not disposed to do any business in the god line with an upstart and impertinent slave. He had no faith in Moses, and quite as much in Jahveh. Had his own question been put to him, "Who is the Lord?" he would probably have replied, "the Lord knows," or "the Lord knows who." Even to-day the voice of reason offers, in disgust, a scarcely less flippant reply to the frivolous fancies of faith.

(2) "*Why should I obey the Lord?*" As Pharaoh did not reverence, neither did he obey, the commands of the Lord. He might justly inquire: "What claim has God on my obedience? When did I, or why should I, become the slave of his will?" His reply is ours to-day: God has no rightful claim to the service of man, who cannot, without doing injustice to humanity, bend his neck to the yoke of deity. Man's affairs are not God's affairs, and God's affairs are not man's. Our duty is, therefore, not to promote the glory of God, but the happiness of mankind. The gods have repaid with scant gratitude the lavish liberality of their pious worshippers. They brought nothing into the world, and have carried almost everything—love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, happiness—out of it. Had not the Pharaohs of Freethought resisted the heavenly tyrants and their earthly representatives, every vestige of virtue and justice had long ago been uprooted by the anti-human aggressions of the gods or their accomplices, the priests. Obedience to God is, therefore, treachery to humanity. Defiance of God is a duty and necessity. To struggling, suffering humanity, slowly climbing the steep ascent of progress, all the service we can pay, all the help we can lend, are due by a right more truly divine than that which any god can demand or deserve.

(3) "*I know not the Lord.*" These words sound the keynote of the Atheistic position. We do not declare there is no God, but that no evidence is forthcoming of his existence. We regard the idea of God as an unverifiable assumption. We are enemies, not of God, but of the Theistic delusion and its anti-secular consequences and tendencies. We are ignorant of God, in the sense that we have diligently searched for proofs of his reality and have failed to discover them. We find Nature silent and Science dumb when interrogated as to the existence of a God. To Job's inquiry, "Can man by searching find out God?" reason gives an emphatic No! What a cruel irony of fate, then, that man should have busied his mind and wasted his energies in the will-o'-the-wisp search—ever pursued and for ever eluded—after God and heaven and salvation, and other trifling theological fictions! What an extravagant endowment of an unknown deity with the spoils of poor humanity! What a lamentable crime to fritter away the treasures of this life by putting them in pawn with the priest in exchange for promissory notes of golden harps and heavenly mansions, realisable in some never-experienced future existence! The very uncertainty of the future ought to be enough to prompt us to make the best use we can of the present life. The doubtfulness of the mere existence—not to speak of the character—of God, and of the nature of his relations, good or evil, with mankind, should, if we were wise, be a high incentive to cultivate with all care and tenderness every flower in the garden of humanity that blossoms and perfumes with possibilities for the present happiness for mankind. How has superstitious man watered with his tears and fertilised with his blood the weed-grown waste of theology! What a plentiful crop of wars and persecutions, of ignorance and folly, of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness has he reaped and garnered! Ye ignorant devotees of an unknown God! ye worship ye know

not what! Down with your altars, dedicated by superstition to a suppositious deity! Surely the known wants of our common humanity have a more sacred right to our attention than the unknown God!

As Freethinkers, we are debtors to the memory of Pharaoh for a valuable lesson and a valiant example. He steadfastly refused to allow the quacks of theology to doctor or indoctrinate the body politic. He despised a dictatorial priest and snubbed a presumptuous God. He declined to carry out a state policy cut and dried and deliberated for him in the celestial cabinet councils of cloud-dwelling Jahveh. For such high courage and lofty independence he has reaped his reward. His reputation has fallen among Jewish thieves, and his good character has been filched away by the priests and Levites. He has been manufactured into a monster, and the story of his crimes has been made edifying by a concocted repentance at the eleventh hour, when his obstinacy gives way, and he yields to the ten plagues what he would not grant to the many importunities of Moses. He afterwards repents of his repentance, and is goaded on by the desire of revenge to his defeat and death. And so, like all Freethinkers, he is brought by the wondrous and mysterious workings of divine providence to a violent or instructive end. This apocryphal catastrophe to an equally apocryphal career is at least interesting as furnishing proof that the mendacious inventiveness of modern vendors of pious legends concerning the death-bed repentances and edifying conversions of Atheists is more ingenious than ingenuous, displaying, as it does, less originality in conception than cunning in contrivance.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

THEOLOGY CAMP.

THEOLOGY CAMP'S afire at our place and we're having glorious times. The holy ghost's been among us, and we're speaking with tongues. We're having meetings, and a regular revival has broke out, and I have been thinking of sending some reports of them to the *Freethinker* as we hain't no religious papers here worth speaking of. Last night we held an Encouragement meeting on the Methodist Love Feast principle, and it went off glorious. At the close there was a "Blood-Washing," and lots of souls got rinsed, only some juveniles went away disappointed because there was to be no fireworks

—The Encouragement Meeting—

Friends were invited to partake of our usual feast. Before the stewards distributed the bread, a stranger struck up "Bringing in the Sheaves," and we sipped to the tune of "Little drops of Water."

—Brother Jinks—

Brother Jinks rose to testify and said he was much refreshed. He had had trials but had come to like 'em. He didn't take folks for rogues as he used to, and he felt better for it.

—"Only a Cullud Hand"—

A strange brother got up and corroborated. He came from the West, and I think I can give you nearly his very words. Says he: "Friends,—I allus thought one man wos as good as another at a hoss trade, but if you ast me now I should jist smile. I thought I had larn'd ter make no difference between a man and his neighbor, but I'm goin' ter begin all over again. Wal, friends, it *do* make one feel as cheap as a busted greenback, arter hevin' laid low for a hull fortnight ter chaw up that sneak-thief in the back yard, jist at the right minnit ter find the wrong man around arter some little racket of his own. Friends this is an experience. I ain't been much used ter sarmons, an' I didn't like ter go right back to the mis-eus without one scalp, especially when she wur so chuck sartin that the varmint wur that very minnit clearin' out the hen-house sure. I felt kinder shamed when I did pounce upon the feller ter find when I had histed him a bit an' shuk a pile of feathers off his carkiss, that after all he wur only an ordinar' old nigger. Why he warn't a bit skeer'd. Sez he: 'Now I wa'n't a gwine ter move dem chickens, chile. I was jist a gwine ter hole a meetin' back hyah all by myself afoah you fotch dat ar shot-gun. Ye kin come right in an' jine me for the collezion, praise de lawd! I ain't a darn ole thief, bress the lam! *Ise only a cullud hand.*'"

—The Singing Sweep—

The strange brother sat down, and a spry little fellow jumped up and said "Hallelujah!" And says he: "Friends, I havn't got no hen-house nor no nothin', for I'm only a poor chimney-sweep; but when I was young I once heard a parson make a joke at a tea-meeting, and it stuck to me. I can't remember the joke, but it stuck to me all the same, and I was another man. I am still in the sweeping business and they call me the singing sweep. Religion made me very happy; and I'll tell you how I used to go about my work. I had my

favorite hymn—you will find it in Wesley's hymn-book—and before I started to sweep a chimney I used to sing the first verse—

“My god the spring of all my joys
The life of my delights;
The glory of my brightest days
The comfort of my nights.

That was in the days of wide chimneys, when sweeping lads were as good as a brush. When I got up the chimney I would sing—

“In darkest shades if thou appear
My dawning is begun;
Thou art my soul's bright morning star
And thou my rising sun.

By this time I had got pretty far up, and presently I started the next verse—

“The opening heavens around me shine
With beams of perfect bliss.
If Jesus shows his mercy mine
And whispers I am his.

And Jesus would whisper, friends. I felt just beside him. I would be pretty near the top now, fairly covered with soot, and as soon as I heard my comrades “be-ep,” I answered with the next verse—

“My soul would leave this heavy clay
At that transporting word:
Run up with joy the shining way
To see and praise my lord.

But friends, this was not all. I had swept the chimney upwards. I had to get down again; but that was easy, for

“Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
I'd break thro' every foe;
The wings of love and arms of faith
Would bear me conqueror through.”

—A Warning to Infidels—

Amid hallelujahs and groans of approbation, a young man got up and said he used to be an awful Atheist and drink and curse and swear like the rest of them, but he gave it all up as soon as he heard that Bradlaugh was a convicted felon, and that Foote, Ramsey and Kemp had been transported for having committed a criminal outrage on a near relative of Judge North. He left them and their teaching and went to the dear savior. He could tell us all about Tom Paine's awful doom, and the horrible deathbeds of dozens of other infidels, but thank god he'd rather be hung and go right to heaven than join the horrible band again.

We are having meetings of this kind very often, and I will be glad to send further reports soon, for I am sure your readers must be anxious to hear how things are going on in Theology Camp. FUST MAN, JUN.

OBITUARY.—Sarah Jane Barnett, the wife of Daniel Barnett died at Congleton on the 19th inst., aged 44 years, and was buried on Sunday afternoon, the 23rd inst., in the beautiful cemetery grounds of Macclesfield. By the request of the deceased a secular address was given at the grave-side by W. L. Sugden, who alluded to her cheerful fidelity to her simple Freethought faith, and its efficacy for her in her life, both in contentment and physical suffering, and at the very gate of death. The address contained appropriate quotations from the Secular Burial Services, Colonel Ingersoll's Orations, and Walt Whitman's and Oscar Wilde's poems.

DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE BLASPHEMY LAWS.

THE Association formed to secure the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws will hold a public meeting in St. James's Hall on Tuesday, May 10th. The chair will be taken by W. A. Hunter, Esq., LL.D., who will be supported by a large number of effective speakers. It is confidently expected that the London friends of civil and religious liberty will do their utmost for the success of the demonstration. As the expenses incurred will be largely in excess of the amount at present in the hands of the treasurer, I beg to request you (Mr. Foote) to have the kindness to consent to receive and to acknowledge in the *Freethinker* any contributions your readers may send in aid of our project.—W. SHARMAN.

MORE BLASPHEMY.

Freddy: Papa, who was Jesus' mother?
Papa: The virgin Mary, my lad.
Freddy: And who was his father?
Papa: Of course god was his father.
Freddy: Was Mary god's wife?
Papa: No; and you musn't ask such naughty questions. It's wicked.

Freddy (after a pause): Who was god's wife?
Papa: He had no wife.
Freddy: Wasn't god married to Mary?
Papa: Decidedly not; and don't you bother me.
Freddy (won't be quieted): Why didn't he marry Mary?
(No reply). Papa, why didn't he marry Mary?
Papa (evasively): Oh, because he didn't wish to.
Freddy: Wasn't it wrong of god not to wish [to marry Mary?
Papa: No, it wasn't.
Freddy: Wasn't it wrong of him not to wish to marry his own wife?
Papa: She was not his wife, I've told you.
Freddy: Was she someone else's wife?
Papa: No, you young scamp?
Freddy: Who was she, then?
Papa: Do let me alone, I can't read my paper!
Freddy: If Mary wasn't god's wife, who was she, papa?
Papa (anxious to turn the subject): Oh, she was a young woman he knew.
Freddy: Was Jesus sorry his father and mother weren't married?
Papa: I cannot say.
Freddy (inexhaustible): What did Mary say to god when he refused to marry her?
Papa: Frederick, you are committing blasphemy; do you know it?
Freddy: What? Because god wouldn't marry poor Mary?
Papa: Yes.
Freddy: Committing blasphemy, because god wouldn't marry Mary? (No reply). Did god know any other young women?
Papa (desirous of explaining): He did not, and you must speak lovingly and respectfully of god.
Freddy: Speak lovingly and respectfully of god, when he wouldn't marry Mary?
Papa: Fred, I shall be angry with you in a minute!
Freddy (after deep thinking): Whose boy am I?
Papa: You are mine, of course.
Freddy: Am I mother's?
Papa: Decidedly you are.
Freddy: Are you mother's husband?
Papa: I shall punish you if you are not quiet.
Freddy (energetically): Is mother your wife? Are you married to mother?
Papa: Be quiet, sir!
Freddy (desperately): Did you refuse to marry mother, like god did Mary?
Papa: Get out of this, you young villain. (Runs Freddy out). This boy is growing too clever. He will have to get a good thrashing.

PROFANE JOKES.

THE reprobate Lord Ross, being on his deathbed, was asked by his chaplain to call on God. He replied: “I will if I go that way, but I don't believe I shall.”

AT a Sunday-school in Yorkshire, upon a question being asked—Do you know any case of cure similar to Christ's miracles of healing? a youngster answered: “Yes, the *Freethinker* lost its Foote for twelve months and had it restored.”

AN old sailor, passing through a graveyard, saw on one of the tombstones. “I still live.” It was too much for Jack, and shifting his quid, he ejaculated, “Well, I've heard say there are cases in which a man may lie; but if I was dead I'd own it.”

STREET-VENDOR OF IMAGES (to drunken sailor): “There! see what you have done. You have broken one of my images.” Drunken Sailor: “Who was it meant to be?” S. V.: “Jesus Christ; but it is useless now; you have broken his arm off.” D. S.: “Well, I can tell you what to do with it—knock his eye out and sell him for Nelson.”

SCENE—A Sunday-school. Young lady catechising the children on the plagues of Egypt. Young lady: And what became of the plague of locusts? A pause; then small boy at bottom suddenly: “Please, miss, I know. John the Baptist ate them!”

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DR. AVELING will LECTURE at GRAFTON HALL, Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square, W.C., on Wednesday Evening, April 2, for the benefit of the West Central Branch of the N. S. S. Subject—“THE PEJorative OF MAN.” Admission—1s., 6d. and 3d. Tickets at the door, or from the Committee, “White Horse,” Castle Street, W. Chair taken at 8.30.

“PROGRESS.”

Edited by G. W. Foote and Edward B. Aveling, D.Sc.

The APRIL NUMBER contains—

A Look Round, by G. W. Foote.
From the South (a Poem), by E. B. A.
Christianity and Buddhism, by J. M. Wheeler.
Two Sonnets, by Laon.
George Elliot's Essays, by Norman Britton.
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CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE REPEAL OF THE BLASPHEMY LAWS.—(1) The Membership of the Association is open to all contributors to its funds. (2) The Management is vested in a General Committee, Treasurer and Secretary. (3) The Executive elected May 17 was desired, in order to avoid the expense of Annual Business Meetings in London, to continue in office until the election of a New Parliament. It is empowered to add to its number. (4) Societies in sympathy with the object of the Association are affiliated with it on application without charge. It is requested that all applications for affiliation may be accompanied by a statement of the number of Members in the Society and the postal address of its Corresponding Secretary.

THE BLASPHEMY LAWS: Should they be Abolished? By W. A. Hunter, LL.D., M.A., Barrister-at-Law. Published for the Association for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws by Rev. W. Sharman (hon. sec.), 20 Headland Park, Plymouth. Price 2d.

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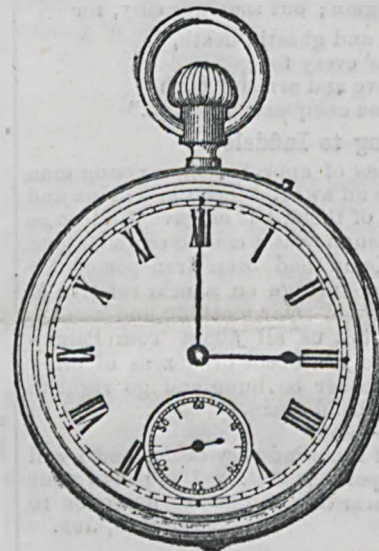
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