

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. LXIV.



SOLOMON'S LOVE SONG.

[REVISED VERSION.]

"It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."—SONG OF SOLOMON v., 2.

LETTER TO LAWYER GIFFARD.

"Woe unto you lawyers."—JESUS CHRIST.

TO SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD.

SIR,—The last time I saw you was on April 26th, 1883, in the Court of Queen's Bench. You were not then in the best of humors, for you had failed in your efforts to induce a special jury to bring me in guilty of blasphemy; and with an impartial judge like Lord Coleridge on the bench, you evidently despaired of ever succeeding, even if you prosecuted me twenty times in succession. Knowing that your client's love of money far exceeded his love of religion, you saw clearly that your well-paid job must come to an end. Certain steps were necessary before you could abandon the prosecution; and as these were rather ignominious, you stole out of sight, and let your poor junior hack Maloney incur all the disgrace. An affidavit had to be presented to the Attorney-General in order to obtain a *nolle prosequi*, and in this document there appeared a flat lie, which Lord Coleridge stamped as such in open Court, to the dire confusion of poor Maloney, who could not have looked worse if the jury had brought him in guilty of blasphemy instead of me. It was in this way that you retired from the contest. Your client had to pay his costs, instead of obtaining them from us, and you suffered a serious loss of reputation. And you could ill afford it, for only a few weeks previous, after years of litigation, Mr. Bradlaugh had given you a terrible beating in the House of Lords. They say you are a great lawyer; perhaps so, but how is it you so seldom win unless you have a friend on the Bench?

You were especially fortunate when you opposed my application for a writ of *certiorari* to remove our second indictment from the Central Criminal Court to the Court of Queen's Bench. Argument on your side was quite unnecessary, and you offered none. You were equally fortunate a few days later at the Old Bailey. Judge North would not delay the trial an hour to give me a proper opportunity for my defence, but he delayed it twenty-four hours for your convenience. And after your brief introductory address to the jury, how knowingly you and he looked at each other when you pleaded other engagements, and asked leave to retire. You left the Court for the rest of the day, but you had the satisfaction of knowing that you had left your brief in very good hands. You prayed to the jury about Jesus Christ. Ah, if he had miraculously appeared in Court, who would have been most embarrassed by his presence? Which of the fat aldermen on the Bench would have hailed him with delight? And how would you and Judge North have looked if your "blessed savior" had cried out with his old fierceness "Woe unto you lawyers"?

Nothing could have exceeded the meanness of the prosecution when your underlings stood silently by while Judge North refused to renew my bail after the jury had disagreed. It is common in such cases for the prosecution to assent; and if you had any sense of honor, you would have reflected on the miserable character of a victory over disabled opponents, and instructed your underlings to support my application. But what can be expected from prosecutors who are capable of every ignominy, from brazen lying to the fraudulent examination of bank-books? Or what from a lawyer who has ever been ready to do the dirty work of the Newdegates, Tylers and City-jobbers; to act as legal scavenger to all the bigots and hypocrites in England?

You brought Messrs. Poland and Lewis to the Old Bailey to assist you in prosecuting three men who knew no more of the law than they had looked up for the occasion. What you dreaded was our appeal to the jury, and you felt obliged to warn them in particular against my "plausible language." You did your wretched worst, like your friend on the Bench, to excite their prejudices. You piously rolled your eyes when you spoke of "our blessed Savior." The expression did not become you. You have a face as cold as a winter sea; it shows no trace of any generous enthusiasm; and when you try to look pious you only look ridiculous.

"Our blessed Savior!" What a roaring farce. There might have been, there actually was, a Jew on the jury. How he must have laughed inwardly at your posturing and grimacing. Speak for yourself, Sir Hardinge. Say "my blessed Savior," and then everybody would see the point of the joke.

I have said you were three against three. One of the officers in Court asked me why there were three of you. I could not conjecture why, except that you had a good job in hand. "No," answered the officer, "that is not it." "What then?" I rejoined. "Oh," said he, "it's one apiece for Father, Son and Holy Ghost." There's blasphemy for you, right under your legal noses. The truth is, that men who work hard for their living see through the pretences of professional Christians like you and your kind. I have been jocularly invited by honest fellows in Holloway Gaol, when they unlocked my cell-door for chapel, to come and have "another dose of glory."

Do you really detest blasphemy any more than they? Let us see. Mr. W. H. Smith was a member of the last Tory Government. Knowing nothing of ships, he was made First Lord of the Admiralty. Being a Tory, he is of course a good Christian. But he sells on every railway bookstall in England a famous piece of blasphemy, which has been declared such by the verdict of an English jury.

I refer to Shelley's "Queen Mab." Mr. Smith sold it when you prosecuted me, and he sells it still. He sold it also when he was First Lord of the Admiralty, and you were Solicitor-General to the same Government. You were legal adviser to a publisher of blasphemy; and if, after another Tory victory, Mr. Smith should re-occupy his old post, you would, I dare say, have no hesitation in playing the same rôle again. What a pretty crew you are! Make hay while the sun shines, Sir Hardinge, and garner your harvest carefully; for the horizon is already clouded, and a storm is gathering that will ruin the fields of privilege and scatter its crops to the winds. The Nazarene's cry of "Woe unto you lawyers" will be drowned in the mighty roar of that tempest, and the wildest scenes of our history will be as mere idylls to its terrible fury.

A word in conclusion. I know that the *Freethinker* is submitted to you every week for your advice as to another prosecution. My answer to this fresh menace is that I despise and defy you. You and your employers gain disgrace as I gain honor every time you attack me; and as no prosecution can now injure this Freethought flag, why should I fear your paltry malice? You would be beneath my notice if you did not put your pious dynamite in my path. And your explosive is such poor stuff, it has so deteriorated since it was manufactured in the good old days of persecution, that you are rather a joke than a terror.—Yours, with all the respect that even you can think you deserve,
G. W. FOOTE.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

(Continued from p. 99.)

VERSES 16-23 relate how Herod slew the innocents, and the subsequent removal of the fugitives to Nazareth. Note—(1) Could not almighty benevolence have contrived to send a savior without causing his birth to occasion the murder of those little ones. This is a wretched beginning, O Jehovah! Maybe it is the first scheme of salvation you ever undertook. (2) The holy family went to Nazareth, a place never mentioned in the Old Testament nor in Josephus, and most likely an invention springing out of the word *Nazarite*. The modern Nazareth very likely owes its name to the New Testament, an invention to meet the wants of pious travellers. (3) Matthew says he went to Nazareth to fulfil a prophecy which foretold he should be called a Nazarene. No such text occurs in the Old Testament. What scripture did Matthew quote? A Nazarene, or Nazarite, could drink no wine or strong drink, or vinegar; eat no fruit of the vine, either moist or dry; he must not shave nor cut his hair, nor come near a corpse, nor go into mourning for his dead relatives (Numbers vi., 1-21). Jesus never was a Nazarite; he never abstained from wine, etc. So Matthew's statement is but a compound blunder.

CHAPTER III.—*In those days came John the Baptist, etc.* (v. 1).—In what days? This has the air of history at first sight; reflexion finds it indefinite and misleading. You would suppose he meant the days referred to in the former chapter. Read on, and you discover your error.

John the baptizer seems to have been a fanatic. Josephus gives an account of him. He made a sensation, and suffered a cruel death for interfering with other people's business. The gospel-writer tries to link Jesus with John's form, makes him a disciple for a brief period, and starts him preaching on John's text.

Then cometh Jesus . . . to be baptized (iii., 13).—The force of this is obscured by the orthodox. Observe what it really implies. John was "baptizing unto repentance"—was calling people to repentance. Jesus, therefore, must be supposed to have heard and obeyed this call. He repented of his sins and received baptism for their remission. No other sense can be gathered from the story. But what can be expected from a savior who performs or submits to such a senseless rite as baptism? Only superstition and error.

And lo the heavens were opened unto him! (v. 16).—That is untrue, Matthew; there are no heavens to open. *And he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him.*—How did he know it was not a pigeon in its true shape, and not the spirit of God in disguise? He could not know the spirit by its shape, for that was the dove's. Such unauthentication goes for nothing except with chil-

dren, young and old. *And lo a voice from heaven, etc.* (v. 17).—The prince of the power of the air, or the Devil, often sports in the heavens, such as these are; and as the Holy Ghost turns himself into a dove, so Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. On this occasion he seems to have let fly in a pigeon, and then roared out, like another Valentine Vox, "This is my beloved son!" etc. Did he mean Jesus or the bird? This story won't do, Matthew, for you cannot tell who it was that spoke from heaven; nor can you be sure whether he called Jesus or the Holy Ghost his beloved son. It is a pity you did not get your gospel passed through the hands of some competent editor before it was published.

CHAPTER IV.—*Then was Jesus led up into the wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil* (v. 1).—I told you that most likely it was the Devil that sent the bird and shouted. Here is the proof. The same spirit leads him into the wilderness to be tempted. This divine Savior was excessively weak, or he would not go. Could he find no better method of saving men than to go out to be the sport and butt of the Devil? Fancy a redeemer of men so full of the most debasing superstition as Jesus! A Savior that cannot release from the thralldom of superstition is too ridiculous to be followed; and no one was ever more deeply sunk in superstition than the gospel Jesus.

He fasted forty days, etc. (v. 2).—How do you vouch for that, Matthew? If he did so, he must have been insane to begin with, or else the fast produced a species of *delirium tremens*. The whole story of the temptation would to-day be treated as a serious case of mania, and the patient placed under medical care and restraint. Had medical skill two thousand years ago been what it is now, Jesus and his paltry revelations would never have been heard of—except as a specimen of what insane musings could produce. Nothing could be more ridiculous than the temptation. If Jesus was all-wise and all-mighty, then the temptation was not real; it could make no impression. If he was what orthodoxy says, he *could not* have sinned, and therefore to submit to the show of temptation was merely a farce. A farce, when played as such, may have a legitimate function—viz., to instruct and amuse; a farce performed as a serious thing is hypocrisy, an imposition; and such was Christ's temptation, if orthodoxy is correct.

JOSEPH SYMES.

(To be continued.)

CAPTAIN NOAH.

"Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."—GENESIS VI., 8.

Now Noah was a mariner upon the briny sea,
He sailed across the flowing main, with his wife and family,
Accompanied by birds and beasts, and insects small and large—
A regular floating wild-beast show, confided to his charge.

You see the folks had wicked been, and the world was very
small,
That pinch and screw as best they might, there wasn't room
for all,
So Jah. (that good Malthusian) to check the population—
Made up his mind to drown the lot in a general inundation.

All but his servant Noah and his family of seven,
Who'd been mindful of their manners in the hope to sail to
heaven.

So Jah. says unto Noah, "Old man, I never know'd,
That this thing would have turned out bad—if I did may I
be blow'd."

"What thing," says Noah. "Why," says Jah., "this making
up of man;
I can't keep him from going wrong, try as hard as e'er I can.
I thought it very easy once to take a little dust
And make a man, but I never thought he'd go it such a bust.

True I was young and didn't know each trick upon the card,
But still I think you will a'low it's very, very hard.
So—I tell you this in confidence—I'll have a jolly spree,
And drown the blooming lot except yourself and family."

So Noah set to work at once, a vessel strong to build,
And ggt a cargo safe inside—when, just as Jah. had willed,
The waters came pouring down, for he opened the casement,
Which safely kept the waters in "above the firmament."

Oh, what a hurrying to and fro. On chimney and on spire,
On mountains high the people climb from water rising higher,
And on their flying footsteps close the cruel waters pressed—
Drowned old and young, and weak and strong, and babes at
mothers' breasts.

Mrs. Noah, safe within the ark, sought calm and sweet repose,
While Noah spoke to those outside, with finger to his nose ;
"Ah, ah! you're left out in the cold, and now may go and
drown,
Don't get wet feet, nor colds on chest." Then shut the wind
down.

Though there were storms outside the ark there wasn't peace
within,
For donkey's bray and jackal's laugh raise up a horrid din ;
The lion, tiger, bear and wolf, leopard and kangaroo,
Kept up a fight the life-long night, as "'tis their nature to."

But everything must have an end, and so had Noah's trip,
And one fine morn he landed dry on Ararat's high tip.
"Hallo," said he, "we're here at last, now turn these cattle
out—
La! ain't it cold. I'm precious glad to get rid of this rout."

Poor Noah, like all mariners, was glad to get to port,
And as his voyage had been long, he fancied "summat short."
Not "fou" with one glass he took two, and so drank more
and more
Till he got drunk, and thus became the model "Jack Ashore."

C. J.

ACID DROPS.

At Exeter there is a wicked young vagabond, one William Denham, a telegraph messenger, who has the audacity to whistle in the streets even when the Rev. John Ingle is passing. He paid for his irreverence by receiving a smart blow on the mouth, causing it to bleed. In view of the immense provocation the magistrates let the clergyman off with a fine of 5s.

THE Christians who cry out that we don't respect their sensitive feelings are not very tender when dealing with other religions. The early Christian fathers alluded to the Pagan gods and goddesses in a style as indelicate as that of Ezekiel. Modern missionaries are not much more considerate of their opponent's feelings. Taking up a book by the Rev. Jas. Gilnour, of the London Mission Society, entitled "Among the Mongols," the first words which strike us are: "The Lama system a curse—Buddhism has no intelligent worship—Buddhist worship is debasing—Buddhism is a usurper," etc. Ink-slinging at a religion, when exerted on behalf of Christianity, is only proper zeal.

OUR excellent contemporary, the *Anti-Christian*, of Calcutta, supplies instances of the way in which missionaries deal with the Hindu religion in their tracts. In one of these kindly Christian documents, entitled "The Test of Religions," not only is the incarnate god Krishna called "a liar, a thief and a debaucher," but it roundly declares that "all the devotees who are followers of Krishna possess his qualities." In another tract on the worship of Siva, the missionaries declare that the Sanyasis (hermits) and other followers of Siva all spend their time in being continually addicted to intoxicating drinks like beasts, more than Siva himself.

MONCURE D. CONWAY writes to the *San Francisco Chronicle*: "The Salvation Army appears to have found a particularly congenial soil in Australia. Howe, the famous bushranger, used to read the scriptures regularly to his robber gang, and swear them in on the prayer-book. One need only refer to the *Australian War Cry* for evidence of the extent to which the army is recruited from the criminal classes."

TALMAGE says it has taken a million years to "evolute" him from an ape. There has been a very slight change for so long a time.

THE New York *Truthseeker* gives the following choice anecdote about the Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier. The other day a forlorn-looking man went to the meter-loving Quaker and said: "Mr. Whittier, I believe I am going to hell. What do you think about it?" "Let me look at thy tongue," said the poet. The man shoved out his tongue, and the poet, after turning it over and regarding it for a few moments, asked, "How long hast thou been impressed with the idea that thou art going to hell?" "Since day before yesterday, when I fell from grace." "How didst thee fall?" "You see, I was building an ash-hopper in the back-yard, mashed the nail off my finger, and swore until the streaks hung from the eaves of the house." "My friend," continued the poet, again taking hold of the fellow's tongue, "thee

cans't go to hell if thee wants to." Whether or not the man has gone, the associated press dispatches fail to say.

APROPOS of our cartoon of March 23, a correspondent sends us the following cutting from the *Sporting Times*:—"Lord M. ——— was brought up in a most innocent manner, under a governess, until he was fourteen years old, when one day in reading he came to the word "concubine," and asked his governess (Miss A. ———) what it meant. She told him that King Solomon had many wise and learned men and women about him, and the latter were his "concubines." A short time after Lady B. ——— called, and, not knowing Miss A. ———, inquired who she was. "Oh," said the boy, "that is Miss A. ———. She's my concubine."

THE statement made by Mr. Trevelyan in the House of Commons ought to bring rejoicing to any Irishman pre-disposed to insanity, and indeed to the public generally. After incarceration in the Cork District Lunatic Asylum and death in that establishment, succeeded by dissection in Queen's College School of Anatomy, what is left of a patient "receives interment in consecrated ground." It is consoling to know that any persons troubled with familiar spirits will thus have the last chance afforded them of going, devils and all, to the celestial regions.

THE *Bullionist* points out that our pious prosecutor, Sir Henry Tyler, was in 1883 "concerned" in the administration of no less than fifteen companies, in which millions of English capital were involved. At present Sir Henry Tyler is concerned only in eight companies; and, curiously enough, the seven enterprises with which he has severed his connexion are not now as flourishing as their shareholders might desire. Like the proverbial rat which deserts the falling house, this omniscient director has forsaken nearly every enterprise which has fallen upon troublous times.

A WRITER in the *Reading Observer*, complaining of the unsightliness of some of the advertisement and notice boards in the locality, becomes amusing, not to say profane. He says: "Occasional humorists are to be found amongst these ministers of the paste-pot. Is it a fortuitous juxtaposition which places a notice of meetings for the evangelisation of the Jews alongside of an announcement that 'bacon is down again'? Conversions among the chosen people are known to be costly, but can Israel resist this pointed appeal? Yet surely it is beyond the limits of a joke when the bill for a Foresters' fête, with its imposing array of comic talent, is placed over an obsolete notice of a discourse on Protestantism in such a way as to leave at the bottom the honored name of the Rev. Rehoboth Trumper, B.A., apparently as an additional attraction to a list which includes the 'Unrivalled Ventriloquist and the Female Acrobat.'"

THE master of the National School, Speldhurst, near Tunbridge Wells, is a believer in the bad old doctrine of Solomon in regard to the use of the rod, and keeps the minds of his scholars from being perverted by the application of the birch when they venture to attend a dissenting place of worship. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

READERS of *Nature* and other scientific journals have had their attention directed to the cause of splendid sunsets and other atmospheric phenomena. The *Christian Herald* thoroughly solves the question by declaring that they are "the great signs from heaven" foretold by Christ to precede his second coming, as shown in Luke xxi., 11." The only objection is, that these great signs ought to have appeared in the lifetime of the apostles. For Jesus to be 1,800 years behind date is a small matter.

THAT wicked infidel paper, the *Christian World*, says: "There is truth in the paradox that thousands of people would reverence the Old Testament less if they read it more. It is precisely because they are in a blessed state of ignorance concerning vast portions of it that it is still surrounded in their minds with the misty halo of uninquisitive admiration which the church and clergy have fostered for long generations." All this is quite as true of the New Testament, which, from the manufactured genealogy and pretended prophecies of Matthew to the crazy Apocalypse of John, has fully as much absurdity, and far less poetry, than the older Jewish writings.

BARON PATET communicates to the *Paris Figaro* an account of the order of Barefooted Nuns in that city which well illustrates what will be undergone in the hope of saving the soul. These poor nuns are almost all under twenty-three, as nearly all die before they have embraced the life for many months. They wear only one woollen robe and a rope girdle. They go barefooted on cold stones and never warm themselves at a fire or eat meat, and they have to spend ten hours of every day upon their knees. The rule of the order is silence, and one nun is said to have lost the power of forming a sen-

tence. These women are specimen products of Christianity when kept from the influence of Secular civilisation.

A NORTH Queensland black fellow saw a monkey for the first time, and was considerably puzzled as to what it was. After scratching his head and deliberating for some time, he came to the following conclusion: "Old man kangaroo marry um Chinagin—then that fellow jump up." A similar theory has just been gravely published by Dr. Hellmuth, Bishop of Huron, who, in his Biblical Thesaurus, adopts the view that apes are men who have degenerated as the result of unnatural marriages. This shining light in anthropology thinks such a reversal of Darwinism falls in with scripture, but does not notice that Dr. Adam Clarke, in his commentary, makes out the *naschish* that tempted Eve to have been a monkey.

THE motion of Mr. Willis, M.P. for Colchester, as to the bishops, has it that "the legislative power of the bishops is fit to be taken away by Bill." This is the only thing fit about it, says our irreverent young man.

THE bishops are reversing the historical speech of the carrier in "David Copperfield." Barkiss is willing, was the message of that worthy to Peggotty. The bishops are saying "Willis is barking."

THE English Church has recently been said to be one in which none governs and none obeys. It is incapable of government and unworthy of obedience.

AN archbishop is said to have remarked of Charles II., that his purity was such that no doubt he had been translated to Abraham's bosom. No doubt, Charles II. and Abraham would have made what the grocers call an excellent "blend."

COLONEL MAKINS contended that the bishops were always in their places when any measure touching the welfare of the people was to be discussed. That's true. Otherwise how could they vote against it?

THE list of toasts at public dinners is very instructive. The royal personages, army, navy, clergy, are standing dishes, four evils, of which two at least are unnecessary.

MORE of God's mercy. A fire at Manchester Hospital for paupers, who were for the most part bed-ridden. Thanks to mercy of God, who laid on the fire, all were got out alive. It will be an interesting study in God's mercy to see how many die of the shock.

THERE is much talk of the laicising of the hospitals in France. Let the following o'er true tale open the eyes of all Freethinkers to the fact that this laicising is in large measure only a farce. Barba died recently in the hospital Lariboisière. He had fought in the Crimea, in the Polish revolt, under Garibaldi, and under the Commune. Of course a hero of this free type was an Atheist. One of the sisters of the hospital as he lies dying comes to him. "Shall I send you a priest?" The offer is declined firmly and gently. The sister insists. "Let me die quietly," pleads the Atheist, nearing his rest. "Then you want to die like a dog," hisses the Megæra in the ears of the dying man. It is impossible to think without anger of this religious fury, half regretful, we doubt not, that the fires of the Inquisition were not at her disposal, tormenting the martyr-hero on his death-bed.

Poor Hottentots can show a better way
Than all the pious Christians of our day.
When missionary Kay spoke with a chief,
The latter asked the cause of unbelief.
The former said, "Undoubtedly the Devil,
He is the source and cause of every evil."
The chief replied, "Convert the Devil first
And then you'll readily convert the rest;
When finally you make the Devil a saint
You free the world from every evil taint."

At a noted church near Lambeth Bridge they order the body and blood of Christ in very large quantities. We noticed a baker with a truck full of loaves, and at the same time a vintner's cart unloading at the church door. There must be a greedy lot of communicants in that parish.

A CORRESPONDENT, who rents a house, is troubled with lodgers (man and wife) who leave their four children squalling at home nearly every evening. It was thought that the parents went out drinking; but what was our correspondent's surprise when, on going one evening to a Salvation meeting in the neighborhood, he saw on the platform the mother of the children holding forth, shouting, "I have four dear little children at home, and I have left God to take care of them while I come here and do his holy work." Our correspondent says Jehovah makes a terribly bad nurse.

THE Rev. F. T. Marsh, of Mansfield, is not satisfied with

Sunday observance. He declares that as it is written, "the evening and the morning were the first day," Sunday ought to begin on Saturday evening. He therefore holds Saturday evening service, but is not sufficiently consistent to make Monday begin on Sunday evening.

THE Song of Solomon has been made the theme for a comedy in verse, by the illustrious Italian poet and deputy, Felice Cavallotti. At Turin, Milan, and Rome, the piece has been performed, and welcomed by enthusiastic audiences. Like our artist, the author does not believe in the mystical meaning which has been attributed to the poem, and sees in it love, such as it is, *au naturel*. The subject of the play is as follows: A future abbé, who had translated the Song of Songs, and who loved the celestial bride, on hearing his cousin, beautiful as a Shulamite, declaim the verses of his translation, becomes inflamed with love for his fair relative. Tearing to pieces the black robe in which he is attired, he asks the hand of his cousin in marriage, and understands then the true sense of the song. The clericals have made a great deal of noise about this profanation, as they call it, but the public, nevertheless, continue to flock to the theatre and to applaud the comedy.

WE shall, perhaps, believe in the philanthropy of the advocates of the Sunday Closing Bill when we observe the same individuals clamour as vociferously for the Sunday opening of museums, free libraries and picture galleries. Meantime, their arguments apply with tenfold force for the closing of public-houses on Saturday, for there is certainly ten times the amount of drunkenness on that day. In point of fact, the Sunday closers are either absolute prohibitionists, ministers who dislike all opposition to their own trade, or superstitious Sabbatarians.

THE blackcoats are the most importunate beggars on the face of the earth. A Lincolnshire correspondent sends us printed and lithographed circulars which he has received from the Rev. J. P. Morgan, soliciting money for what J. P. M. tautologically calls a Parsonage House for the Parish of Llanasa, North Wales. As the begging-letter writer dates from the Vicarage, we presume he wants a house in addition to the parsonage. He states: "We have now to pay for lodgings, which I can ill afford, my income being under £300 a year." How many a hard worker would be glad to pay for lodgings with anything like this sum, which we should imagine greatly exceeds Mr. Morgan's value, judging from the composition of his letter, wherein he further states: "We are overdrawn, and the North and South Wales Bank is now pressing for payment." To overdraw a banking account and send to all and sundry to make up the deficiency is a natural proceeding for those who preach to others "Owe no man anything."

PRINCE LEOPOLD is dead; so is Nicholas Trübner. One did nothing except display a little intelligence, which would have astonished nobody if he had not been a member of the most stupid family that ever held the English throne. The other was an enterprising publisher, who introduced to English readers some of the most eminent thinkers in Europe; opened up to them, through the agency of scholars and translators, much of the ancient wisdom of the East; and disseminated a large variety of liberal literature, which must have beneficially leavened the public mind and assisted the march of progress. The one has half the newspaper to himself for days; the other has here and there an obscure paragraph. Such is the surprising mental condition of the people who sing "Rule Britannia" and "God save the Queen."

"A BENEFICED CLERGYMAN" says, in the Liverpool *Echo*, that with the clergy "it is a matter of expediency." He refers to public worship, but the observation applies all round. When he asks his brethren to "throw off the mask of hypocrisy," we quite agree as to the mask; we only differ as to the throwing-off.

How amusing it is to see Mr. Gladstone and Sir Stafford Northcote deploring "the scandal" of their recent Sunday sitting in the House. The Lord's Day Rest Association squeezes a humble apology from the leaders of our two great political parties. It is a comparatively obscure society of bilious bigots, but it utters the venerable shibboleths of orthodoxy, and the most powerful men in the State sink with shame at its reproach.

THE enemies of education are trembling in their shoes (perhaps "hoofs" would be more appropriate) at the progress the rising generation are making; and are accordingly crying out against "over pressure." The Earl of Whitechokerlea, friend of donkeys, took the chair at the home of insanity in the Strand for the meeting on Wednesday, March 26. The pious peer, who thinks geography too strong for youthful minds and arithmetic quite beyond the years of childhood, insists on the lies of Genesis being taught in school, and on the frequent performance of that marvellous mathematical problem in which the first, second and third persons are the famous factors.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, April 6th, Hall of Science, Old Street, London, E.C. Morning at 11.15—"The New Franchise Bill;" evening at 7—"Three Judges on Blasphemy." Tuesday evening, April 8, Maidstone.

April 10, Hall of Science, London; 16, Camberwell; 17, Hall of Science, London; 19, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 20, South Shields; 21, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 22, Edinburgh; 23, Edinburgh; 24, Hall of Science; 27, Portsmouth. May 4, Hall of Science, London; 11, Hall of Science, London; 13, St. James's Hall—Demonstration against the Blasphemy Laws; 18, Claremont Hall, London; 24, Armley; 25, Leeds; 26, Bradford. June 1, Plymouth Conference. July 20, Milton Hall, London; 27, Milton Hall, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

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

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. 7d.

DR. EDWARD AVELING'S ENGAGEMENTS.—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.—A Stern Young Freethinker, J. S. D. Evans, M. Heine-mann, C. B.

JOHN NEWCOMB.—Your curate is right as regards the actual words "All evil cometh from God" not being found in the Bible, but the sentiment is clearly implied in Isaiah xlv. 7—"I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil." See also Prov. xvi. 4; Amos iii. 6; Ezekiel xx. 25; Jeremiah xi. 11; Job ii. 10, 1 Kings xxii. 23, etc.

J. W. points out that it would be well if some debating Freethinkers would attend at the Midland Railway Arches to counteract the efforts of the Christian Evidence Manufacturing Society.

A. STEWART (Glasgow)—No index to our volumes has yet appeared.

J. SAWYER.—Mr. Wheeler's paper on "Christianity and Buddhism," in the April number of *Progress*, gives all particulars of the connexion of these religions.

J. M. McARTHUR.—Glad to hear from you. Read our literature, and perhaps you will share our opinions.

A FRIEND.—Your well-meant rhymes are scarcely up to our standard.

J. THACKRAY.—The matter has already been noticed.

HINO HYMEDAM.—Your original jokes are good, but we have so many in hand we cannot promise the insertion of more than a selection. Shall be glad to hear from you again.

C. WOOD.—The Jews consider their own nation typified in Isaiah liii.

J. WILSON.—We prefer you to order through a local newsvendor. A service is usually done to the newsagents themselves when they are induced to exhibit the *Freethinker*, for they soon obtain customers.

ALPHA, Liverpool.—You are quite right to act as you do. The support of a widowed mother and young brothers and sisters is a sacred duty, and you must not imperil their livelihood by your own rashness. A Christian might throw the responsibility on providence, but a Freethinker must bear it himself. Be sure, however, that you do all you safely can to promote that Freethought which we may all serve in our various ways.

W. MORGAN.—Write to Mr. Hearnden, 18 Gabriel's Hill, Maidstone.

H. DAVIS.—A little patience.

ATHEIST.—B. B. Wykes, Southend Cottage, Mountsorel, Loughborough, will send No. 1 of the *Freethinker* if you can arrange terms.

N. W., Plymouth.—Received with thanks—£2.

D. DAVIES.—Many thanks. We have executed your order.

DR. T. R. ALLINSON will be glad to lecture gratis on Sunday evenings for Secular Societies in London, or on week-nights for a fee.—His lectures are of course scientific. Address—34 Claremont Square, N.

J. L. SHEPHERD.—Mr. Foote did not receive your letter.

C. HUGHES.—Yes, the biographical sketches will be resumed in *Progress*. We are pleased to learn that the magazine has so many friends, and we hope their number will increase. It is a necessary adjunct to the *Freethinker*. Some of the old *Secularist* articles you refer to will perhaps be reprinted before long.

LOU HILL.—No doubt the book will turn up all right when Mr. Foote has time for a search. We do not intend to raise the price of the *Freethinker*. We intend simply to increase its size to twelve pages when we can make all the necessary arrangements. It will take some time, but it will be done eventually.

J. WINCHESTER.—The "Vinegar Bible" is so called from the parable of the vineyard being printed parable of the vinegar. The "Bug Bible" is one in which a psalm reads—"Thou shalt not fear the bugs [i.e. terrors] by night." In the "Breeches Bible," Genesis iii. 21, reads—"Unto Adam and his wife the Lord God made breeches and clothed them." We expect the "Treachle Bible" exhibits some similar mistake to the Vinegar,

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Portsmouth Evening News—South Australian Advertiser—Western Morning News—Thinker—Boston Investigator—Southend Observer—Mansfield Times.

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

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.

SPECIAL.

WE have now placed the *Freethinker* beyond all danger. It is no longer at the mercy of printers. We have had our own plant for some time, and we have just completed our arrangements by the purchase of machinery. No prosecution can injure us henceforth, for every part of the production of the *Freethinker*, and its allied publications issued from our office, is done by ourselves. We have been forced into this course, but, being in, we mean to pursue it energetically. We shall be happy to furnish estimates to Secular Societies for any kind of printing, and we have no doubt that we shall be able to give them satisfaction. All orders or applications, addressed to Mr. W. J. Ramsey, Manager of the Progressive Publishing Company, will be promptly attended to.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE Bow Freethinkers have secured Zion Chapel for their services. Next Sunday evening Miss Thornton Smith lectures there upon "Freethought Martyrs."

COLONEL OLCOTT, the American Theosophical Buddhist, is expected to lecture on "Theosophy" in London shortly. Mr. A. P. Sinnett has written an account of the Theosophical Society, which the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Saturday last places among its "Centres of Spiritual Activity." Mr. Sinnett does not mention that Dr. G. Wyld, the president of the society, has retired, alleging that the teachings of "Esoteric Buddhism" are Atheistical.

COULD we suppose the Blehheim whelp capable of blushing, Mr. Bradlaugh's just-issued pamphlet, exposing the treachery and peccation of his ancestor, John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, would surely serve to bring out the flush of shame. But no people are so graceless as hereditary paupers. Mr. Bradlaugh states that when the noble lord who sits for Woodstock insulted the electors of Northampton by railing at them as "the scum and dregs of the nation," he carefully examined the electoral roll of that borough, but failed to discover the name of even one Churchill amongst the voters to justify the epithets.

A SHEET printed by G. Shore, 33 Newington Green Road, N., entitled "The Resurrection Stories Collated," exhibits at a glance the many discrepancies of the four evangelists in their mythical story of the resurrection of Jesus, and is likely to be useful to propagandists.

LIVERPOOL gave Mr. Foote an extremely warm reception last Sunday. There was a very fine audience in the Concert Hall in the evening, and a resolution was unanimously carried, thanking Mr. Foote for his "splendid defence of Freethought," and demanding the abolition of the Blasphemy Laws. One noticeable event of the day was the extraordinary sale of the *Freethinker*.

WHY do not some of the young Freethinkers in Liverpool take their proper share in the Society's work? The Local Branch of the N. S. S. wants a strong infusion of new blood, and some of the "old hands" complain that all the work is thrown on them. Let the young men, ay, and young women too, join heartily in the work without any further delay.

THE Plymouth Conference of the N. S. S. on June 1 promises to be a great success; and the South Devonshire friends mean to organise some pleasant trips for the delegates and visitors when the business is over. "See Naples and die," says the proverb. "See Plymouth Sound and live," say we. There is nothing finer in England, at any rate, and the whole district is a paradise of wood and water. Let us all pray hard for rain, and then it is likely to be fine weather.

BRANCHES of the N. S. S. are requested to send in to the secretary their financial and other annual statements before the last Thursday in April. The neglect of this will occasion great inconvenience.

"OUR CORNER" for April contains a continuation, and, from the absence of the welcome words "to be continued," we fear, a conclusion of Mrs. Besant's interesting Autobiographical Sketches; another paper on Socialism, by Mr.

Bradlaugh, which will show Mr. Hyndman something of what he will have to meet in the St. James's Hall debate; a Review of the Theories and Proposals of Mr. George, from the masterly pen of "D.;" an Essay on Style, by Mr. John Robertson; an Account of Wendell Phillips, by Miss H. Bradlaugh; Mr. Ramsey's conclusion of his Narrative of Prison Life; Illustrated Papers on the Lively Flea, by Mr. J. Horner; on Insects and Flowers, by Dr. Aveling; and, last, but by no means least in our estimation, a short, vivid Story of an elephant adventure in India, by Captain Bingham.

THE Prince of Wales has sent a very sensible letter in reply to a complaint from Southend. Mrs. Sarah Sykes, of that town, an old lady of seventy, was fined 5s. and 10s. costs by the local authorities for selling sweetstuff on a Sunday. Young Mr. Sykes wrote to Albert Edward about the affair, and a prompt answer came through F. Knollys that "His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales regrets that the law to which you refer, and which bears so hardly and vexatiously in many cases, has not been repealed." Mr. W. E. Petherick, Honorary Secretary of the "Sykes Defence Committee," has had Albert Edward's letter printed on a window-bill as a warning to the "Sabbatarian Bigots." Mr. Petherick will be glad to receive any small subscriptions to the fund. His address is 29 Osnaburgh Street, London, N.W.

THE Rev. Stewart D. Headlam gives "A Christian View of the Bradlaugh Case" at Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville, this evening (April 6) at 7 o'clock. We hope there will be a good attendance. Mr. Headlam is one of ten thousand. He is a parson and a Radical, a Christian and a Freethinker, a theologian and a reformer. We don't understand at all how he fits all these things together, but we are quite sure of his moral honesty and courage. On Good Friday the Finsbury Branch of the N. S. S. will hold a concert and ball in the same building.

Apropos of Good Friday, here's a capital joke. Two laborers are enjoying a quiet smoke after dinner not far from Woolwich. One of them calls to a boy standing near, "Hi, boy, how long is't to Good Friday?" The boy, who has profited by the School Board, tells them straight off. After a brief silence the first laborer addresses his mate: "I say, Bill, I wonder why we gets a 'oliday on Good Friday." "Oh, I don't know," replies the other; "'Spose it's one o' them royal beggars got married then."

M. EMILE GRUNET has given eleven or twelve thousand Oriental gods to the city of Paris. We wonder whether any of Jehovah's old friends are amongst them. By and by Jehovah himself, J. C. and the H. G. will probably join the collection and make it pretty nearly complete. The only serious question is, will they agree for twenty-four hours when these three firebrands form part of the show?

BARNUM's opinions on religion, or any other serious subject, may not be worth much, but there is some force in the boss showman's view of the doctrine of "repent and be saved": "A pirate, who has killed in cold blood a hundred men, is caught, repents on the gallows, and says, 'I'm sorry for what I've done, and am going to Jesus.' A certain proportion of those he has killed, say 50 per cent., having been cut off in their sins, without time for repentance, are supposed to be damned. Is it conceivable, as consistent with the justice of God, that the repentant pirate shall look over the battlements of heaven down upon those fifty whom he sent to hell and complacently congratulate his redeemed soul upon his luck in having had time to repent before he was hanged?" The *Pall Mall Gazette* adds that Barnum went on with, "No, no, that won't do for me." No, nor for anyone else, except sky-pilots and their dupes.

MR. BRADLAUGH has requested and obtained access to the House of Commons library, in order to consult some books not obtainable elsewhere. The House, on the motion of Sir Stafford Northcote, granted Mr. Bradlaugh's request without a debate, which is almost a miracle in this loquacious Parliament. One Irish member, however, was irrepressible. Noble Tim Healy, with his accustomed ready inspiration, wanted to know why Mr. Bradlaugh's business should take precedence of other matters, especially Oirish ones. But the Speaker sat on him, and Tim felt the want of another refreshment, careless whether he got it above or below the bar.

WE have received the following subscriptions towards the expenses of the great St. James's Hall demonstration against the Blasphemy Laws on May 13th:—G. W. Foote, £1 1s; R. Turpin, 10s. 2d.; H. H. (Liverpool), 5s. As the expenses of the demonstration will be heavy, we trust that our readers will make a prompt and liberal response to the appeal for funds. All the subscriptions we receive will be acknowledged in the *Freethinker*, and forwarded to the Rev. W. Sharman. We hope to publish a good list next week.

THE PARSONS AND THE SCHOOL BOARD.

THERE are 53 members of the London School Board. Of these 10 are parsons pure and simple (if the adjectives will forgive me), and some half a dozen other members are parsons more or less amateur. Let me at once say among the ten and among the half dozen is more than one member that does really good work. One of the half dozen is Mr. Mark Wilks, who has definitely dropped the title of reverend, and who, as chairman of the School Management Committee, is of all the members of the Board, the one who is most master of educational details.

Nevertheless, it is a sorry sight: one-tenth of a body whose work is the education of the children of London are members of the profession that has done more harm to the cause of education than any other.

Of course, all the world knows that there was a time when the clergy were the only people that knew anything; they, when doling out meagre supplies from their own meagre stores of knowledge, helped in some measure the world at large. But that preliminary help was followed by long years in which the clergy threw every impediment—not forgetting prison cells and fiery death—in the way of the teachers of men. The third stage is that of to-day. Now education is taken under the wing of the clergy, and by so much is still in the valley of the shadow of death, though signs are not wanting that the terrestrial city of true freedom in education is within sight. In a word, the class of men to whom I refer, have first helped, then hindered, and are now patronising education.

Of the clerical members of the London School Board I have no hesitation in saying that the majority—I had almost written all—are more anxious about their creed than about education. I do not doubt that in the majority of cases these gentlemen are desirous that the children should be instructed in reading, writing and arithmetic. But I have scarcely less doubt that the ten reverend members of the Board think the religious instruction of far more moment than the secular. It is, of course, purely a professional question, and we cannot be blind to the fact that these clergymen are fighting for their creed, for the very existence of the body to which they belong. Nor can we forget that this creed and this calling have been ever the deadly opponents of human progress and human happiness. Our ten are clergymen first, educationists second.

As long as this occurs, the Education Act will never be properly carried out. Of course, there are clergy and clergy on the Board. Some of them do good work in connexion with the schools. On the other hand, we have the case of my colleague for the division of Westminster, the Rev. Brymer Belcher, who appears to be returned simply for the purpose of preventing the building of a Board school in the vicinity of his own schools. Even the work done by them in connexion with the schools is a danger. Every school under the Board has a body of local managers. The members of each division are *ex officio* members of these bodies of managers for the individual schools. The clergymen members of the Board, having more time on their hands than their colleagues, who get their living in more useful fashion, are very regular attendants at these managers' meetings, and many of the local managers are of the same black cloth. It will be readily conceived that an immense amount of clerical influence may thus be brought to bear on the conduct of the schools and on the teachers, and that incalculable harm may, in a quiet way, be done to the moral tone of the children and their instructors. In some one or two cases I know that Freethinkers are on these local committees. Probably there are many other cases not known to me, as the selection is usually made, the clerical members excepted, on the ground of position and honorable character. My chief object in writing these lines is to urge upon Freethinkers the advisability—nay, the necessity—of finding out in their own localities who are the local managers of particular Board schools. Whenever opportunity offers we should endeavor to leaven the lump of religious people that constitutes the average committee with an infusion of the new rising belief in Freethought.

The clergy are not, in many cases, free from the cruelty that is, I regret to say, characteristic of the middle class in their relations to the workers. The whole of the debates on free education teem with accusations of improvidence and want of thrift, levelled against the poorer people by the men and—with pain be it written—by one woman of the

class that, by its exploitation of the workers, renders providence impossible. It is a positive pain to hear these bourgeois folk, who "come so smug upon the" Board, reproaching the toilers with their carelessness and want of forethought. In this superior reproving the clergy are the worst offenders.

A special instance of the cruelty that is so remorseless as to be almost savage, was shown the other day, when a visitor under the Board, of ten years' standing, was, on the first accusation—an accusation not fully substantiated—called on to resign, and thus practically to be ruined for life. It was a clergyman (the Rev. Thornhill Webber) who, with a lawyer (Mr. Bousfield), proposed that the unfortunate man should be thus cashiered because there was some evidence, more contradictory than conclusive, that he had taken a glass of ale more than was advisable when on duty. Happily on the Board, I succeeded in getting this inhuman sentence reversed. In the discussion on the motion for mercy, it was pathetically humorous to hear numbers of men, who in the course of their lives had certainly drunk the "extra glass" once or twice, solemnly inveighing against the enormity of the visitor, and clamoring, in more or less School-Boardish language, for his official sacrifice. One or two clergymen helped splendidly in the contest, notably the Rev. William Barker, of Marylebone, who, a wearer of the blue ribbon, none the less pleaded eloquently and effectively for justice.

But the most sadly interesting case of the ten is that of the Rev. Samuel Wainwright. His case is interesting as one of reversion. He travels back to the ages when the clergy threw impediments in the way of education. He proposed of late the appointment of a special committee to consider the nature of the religious instruction in schools. Every lover of freedom will be happy to hear that he failed in his design. To a motion in my name, whose aim is the bettering of the science teaching in our schools, Dr. Wainwright has proposed the previous question—that is, that my motion be not put. His action, though a little more outspoken and, perhaps, less wise than that of most of his co-craftsmen, is in keeping with their general policy. Wiser than their prototypes of Ephesus, these gentlemen no longer cry aloud "Our craft (in a two-fold sense) is in danger." They whisper this to themselves and their fellows, and then manœuvre for their own election on School Boards.

EDWARD B. AVELING.

REVIEWS.

Orthodox Theology. By Col. R. G. INGERSOLL. Tunbridge Wells: The Science Library, H. Seymour, Manager. Price 2d.—Col. Ingersoll's orations are as popular in this country as across the herring pond, and we have only to announce the issue of a new and racy lecture to be sure it will at once command thousands of readers.

The Socialist Revolution of 1888. By an EYE-WITNESS. London: Harrison and Sons. Price 6d.—Unless the object of the writer is to alarm Society at the progress of the Democratic Federation, it is difficult to see any object in this brochure, in which Socialism is supposed to be voted by plebiscite, and Messrs. Hyndman, Joynes, and Helen Taylor placed at the head of affairs; beyond pointing out that the sudden advent of Socialism would be attended with disaster to individuals, and likely to produce a reaction.

The Woes of the Gospel—Mr. H. Spencer and the Damnation of Most Men. A Protest by the Rev. C. E. BEEBY M.A. London: Wyman and Sons, 1884. One Shilling.—Herbert Spencer, in his famous article on religion in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*, having mentioned among beliefs that are destined to die out "the damning of all men who do not avail themselves of an alleged mode of obtaining forgiveness, which most men have never heard of," Mr. Beeby feels called upon to protest that this is only the teaching of Calvinism, which he indignantly repudiates. Mr. Beeby conveniently forgets the articles of the Church of England, which he has sworn to believe, and which declare that "Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his spirit, are not pleasant to God," and that "They are also to be had accursed that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For holy scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved." But Mr. Beeby, like many others of his cloth, elects to believe in opposition to the articles he has sworn to defend, and thereby is to be "had accursed."

PROFANE JOKES.

A CLERGYMAN never gives a sermon on eternal torment unless he is *hellevated*.

A COLPORTEUR entered a manufactory and asked the head man, "May I leave some tracts?" "Certainly," replied the man; "but please to leave them with *the heels towards the door!*"

AN aged Hebrew at the opera, witnessing "Les Huguenots," suddenly burst into a guffaw. "Why do you laugh?" asked his Gentile companion. "Laugh! the beth game I ever thaw. A bloomin' lot o' Protethanth an' Catholict'h a-killin' of each other to music written by a Jew. Ha! ha!"

A LECTURE on "The Ten Commandments" was recently delivered in a western town, and the local paper spoke of it as a novel and brilliantly original code of morals, which will be likely to make a stir in the world when it becomes more widely known.

NICE DISTINCTION.—"I sells peppermints on Sundays," remarked a good old lady, who kept a confectioner's shop, "because they carries 'em to church and eats 'em, and keeps awake to hear the sermon; but if you wants brandy cherries you must come on week days. They're secular commodities."

Two wicked machine-boys observing a blind man reading a Bible, put some peas-pudding on it without the blind man being aware of it. He went on reading: "And Abraham says, what the devil's this." The poor man had put his finger in the peas-pudding.

A SAILOR went to hear Talmage preach one day when the Brooklyn mountebank took for his text "Nothing is impossible with God." After it was over Jack went up to the preacher and looking him squarely in the face, said "I can't believe, Mr. Talmage, that it would be possible for God to make your mouth any wider without setting your ears further back."

At a revival meeting a few nights ago, a German arose to express his opinion, and said: "Der pe's a good many on de road to hale." A deacon, who was hard of hearing and regulated his responses by the inflection of the speaker's voice, exclaimed: "The Lord be praised!"

"THE insidious canker of corroding unbelief, and the diabolical ramifications of materialistic blasphemy which characterise this generation, were never so keenly borne in on my soul, as at present," said Peter the Missionary, as he leaned over the pulpit and saw in the plate three buttons and a farthing.

A CLEVER BOY.—A farmer's wife, in speaking of the smartness, aptness, and intelligence of her son, a lad six years old, to a lady acquaintance, said: "He can read fluently in any part of the Bible, repeat the whole Catechism, and weed onions as well as his father." "Yes, mother," added the young hopeful; "and yesterday I licked Ned Rawson and throwed the cat into the well."

A STREET MUSICIAN enters a bar parlor, when the following occurs:—S. M.: "Can I play you a tune, gentlemen, please?" Gents: "No." S. M.: "Then can I sing you a song?" Gents: "No; we want none of your songs." S. M.: "Well, gentlemen, you know I must do something for a living. Would any of you like to see the Devil?" Gents (several at once, laughing): "Oh, yes; we don't mind just a peep at him." S. M.: "Then go to—(Hades revised edition)." Exeunt rather quickly.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

THE CHRISTIAN HEAVEN AND HELL.—Eternal bliss. What is it? Do the sacred writings afford the slightest indication as to what it consists in? There is absolutely none in the Synoptics; and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, set forth in Luke, foreshadows a familiarity with the sufferings of the damned which, unless the blessed hereafter be transformed into devils, would be destructive of all happiness. "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, . . . and cried, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. . . . But Abraham said, . . . Now he is comforted and thou art tormented" (Luke xv.)—"Christianity and Common Sense," by A Barrister, p. 29, 1833.

THE PRIESTS AND THE BIBLE.—Did we find in any other book pretending to give a system of religion, the falsehoods, falsifications, contradictions and absurdities which are to met with in almost every page of the Old and New Testament, all the priests of the present day, who supposed themselves capable, would triumphantly show their skill in criticism and cry it down as a most glaring imposition. But since the books in question belong to their own trade and profession, they, or at least many of them, seek to stifle every inquiry with them, and abuse those who have the honesty and the courage to do it.—*Thomas Paine*, "The Age of Reason," p. 195, 1881.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.

Thirty Words, 1s. 6d.; Every Succeeding Ten Words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One Inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

THWAITES' LIVER PILLS

Are acknowledged to be the best Family Medicine in the World by the many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after you had read it you might say it was only advertising puff; but I ask One Trial of the LIVER PILLS; if not better than any you have tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. I recommend them for *Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Dizziness, Biliousness, Costiveness, Nervousness, Palpitation of the Heart, Piles, etc.*, all of which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what we call a sluggish Liver. Try some of the LIVER PILLS as soon as you can, as they are pure Herb Pills, and may be used at any time by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking cold. Prepared only by GEORGE THWAITES, 2 Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees. Sold at 1s. 1/4d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post for 15 or 36 Penny Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

A SCHOOLMASTER receives a few BOARDERS. Book-keeping and French (Prendergast's system) are included in daily school work. Shorthand extra. No religious instruction. Comfortable home. Low fees.—Headmaster, 51 Aubert Park, Highbury.

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. Suarman (hon. sec.), 20 Headland Park, Plymouth. Price 2d.

COCOANUT SHELL VASES.—Handsomely painted; brass tripod; screwed; engine turned; polished. 1s. 6d. each; sent post free. Dealers most liberally treated.—W. Hardaker, 89 Fetter Lane, London.

Cheap and Valuable Remainder:

THE CITY.—An Inquiry into the Corporation, its Livery Companies, and the Administration of their charities and Endowments, by William Gilbert, author of "Contrasts," etc. Cloth, crown octavo, 376 pp. A thorough exposure of the jobberies in connexion with the City Guilds and Charities. Published at 7s. 6d., now offered at 1s., by post, 1s. 6d.—28 Stonecutter Street.

OLIVER CROMWELL'S LIFE AND TIMES.—Thursday evenings in April, at the Hall of Science, Old Street, London, E.C., by G. W. FOOTE. Chair taken at 8.30. Prices—1s., 6d. and 3d. Course Tickets—2s., 1s. and 6d.

KILBURN BRANCH of the N. S. S., Goldsmith Place.—A Debate will take place between Mr. Mortimer and Mr. Bowman, on Sunday, April 13th, at 7.30—"Was the Deluge (Genesis) Possible according to the Known Facts of Science?" Admission, 2d. and 4d.

FREETHINKERS, come and join the Members of the Finsbury Branch N. S. S. at Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville, N., in a Merry Evening on Good Friday. Tea, Concert and Ball. Single Ticket, 1s. 9d.; Double, 3s.; Ball only, 1s. Tea at 6; dancing at 8. M.C., Mr. T. Tripp. Tickets to be had at the Hall, or of Mr. Hilditch, 7 Cromer Street, Grays Inn Road, W.C.

TEETH, 2s. 6d. each, on vulcanite; upper or lower set, £1. Best quality, on vulcanite, 4s. a tooth; upper or lower set, £2. No extras. Completed in four hours when required. Best teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18-carat gold, 15s. Painless extraction daily, with gas, 6s.; without, 1s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.—Mr. STANTON, B.D., 128 Strand, London. Hours nine to eight.

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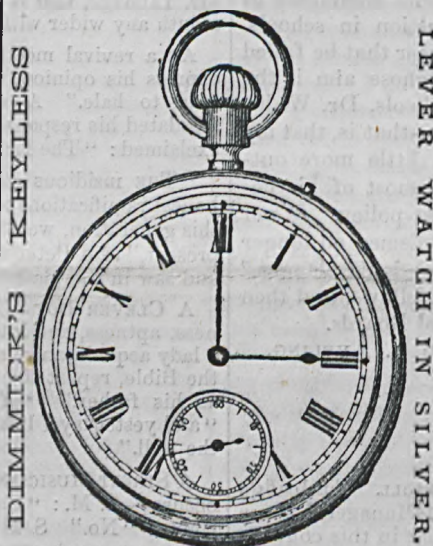
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