

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

"Destruction is our only course. Reformation is a hospital in which the new philosophy exhausts its strength in nursing the old religion."—INGERSOLL.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 70.



SAMUEL SLICING AGAG.

Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord.—1 SAMUEL XV., 33

A NEW MAY MEETING.

THE streets of London have for many days been blackened with sky-pilots. They have come up to town from all parts of the provinces to attend the May Meetings, and they are to be found everywhere; in trains, in 'buses, in restaurants, and (oh shade of pure evangelicalism!) in theatres and music-halls. After eighteen centuries of Christianity the white-chokered gentry meet together to consult on the best means of spreading the gospel which the very first generation of disciples were told to preach to "every creature" in "all the world." God's own religion has failed to convert a fifth part of his own creatures. It has taken him nearly two thousand years to convert less people than Buddha and only a few more than Mohammed; and if we put any faith in the vaticinations of latter-day prophets, the world will become a big bonfire before the numerical strength of Christianity is much increased; for "the end of all things" is nigh, and faster than the missionaries convert the heathen abroad the clergy lose their hold on the people at home.

So much for one kind of May meeting. Now let us look at another. Last Sunday afternoon I met Mr. Ramsey and three other gentlemen at the residence of my poor friend Wheeler. He, however, was no party to the consultation. He laid there on the bed a raving maniac, alternately laughing and crying, and presenting a spectacle that melted us all with pity. We had to convey him to an asylum by main force, after the most painful preliminaries. When we had performed our melancholy and trying task, we drove back to the Hall of Science, where Mr. Ramsey took the

chair, and I lectured on the Prayer Book. My nerves were quite unstrung, and all through the lecture my imagination was haunted by the terrible sight I had just witnessed. But I got through my work as I *must* get through it whatever happens. My dear friend and colleague who is now stricken down again would be the last to desire that I should relax my efforts to "crush the infamous" because of his misfortune; on the contrary, I am sure that he would wish me to be all the more determined and energetic in my assaults on the great enemy of mankind, the sworn foe of liberty and progress. I have left him in good hands, and confident that everything that science and benevolence can do for his recovery will be done, I await his return to my side, not in a spirit of maudlin sentimentality, but, I trust, in the spirit of a soldier of progress, who brushes aside his tears over a fallen comrade, and turns again on the enemy his face full of the fire of battle. Mr. Wheeler is in a private asylum, conducted by an eminent psychologist of humane temper, and his young wife is being properly looked after. Of course the burden on me is in many ways heavy, but I do not think it will break me down. If need be, there are others ready to help. With characteristic generosity, Mrs. Besant has written to know if she can be of any assistance, and she extends her womanly sympathy to my comrade's half-widowed young wife. Dr. Aveling has also offered to relieve me as far as possible of the load of extra work suddenly thrown upon me.

Mr. Wheeler's insanity is entirely owing to the prosecution of this paper and my imprisonment. When I saw him the last time for months in the Old Bailey, after Judge North's atrocious sentence on me, he was huddled up on the floor, in a convulsion of grief; and friends who saw him the same evening say that his mind was clearly unhinged. The bigots had flung their bolts; their stronger victims were only bruised, but the gentler was pierced and overthrown. His insane chattering furnishes the key to his madness. At one minute he talks about Lord Coleridge, and says, "a fine judgment, my lord"; the next, he cries out "There goes old Judge North, off with his wig boys, kick it about." Sometimes he calls out the words "George William Foote," with which Judge North commenced his little sermon to me in the dock. As we were carrying him down the stairs he shouted out "George William Foote, you know the agony and bloody sweat I've had for you," and then "Damn old North." Yes, my dear old comrade, I know it right well, and I am not likely to forget it. I too can curse, not "old North" for I despise him too much, but the damnable creed which gave that paltry creature the power to wreck a life like yours.

When I lectured at Leicester on Monday evening I found scores of friends interested in Mr. Wheeler's case. His ability, which I always knew, is now generally recognised, and people no longer wonder when I say that he is the best-read man I know or ever knew, and as gifted as he is modest and self-sacrificing. And even more than the ringing cheers of that vast meeting in St. James's Hall on Tuesday night, I felt the incentive of those hand-grips at Leicester as I walked back from the platform. "Good speed to you, sir," said one strong man in the prime of life with fine bold features, "you have emancipated me from slavery, I'm a free man now." Another said "I've walked seven miles to hear you," and another "I've walked thirteen." Many told me that the *Freethinker*, which they only heard of after my trial, had converted them to Freethought, and made them active workers in the good cause. All this is very encouraging and very fortifying, and when backed as it is by the cordial written address of the Leicester Branch of the N. S. S., supported by the vote of the whole meeting but two men, I feel strengthened for fresh labors. Mr. Wheeler himself, if he were well enough, would say, "Go on; fight

the good fight and prosper. Never mind me. Fight on—fight on." For he knows as well as I that life is a battle, and Freethought the greatest of all battles.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE CLERGY.

It is a hopeful sign of the times to find the *Andover Review* and the *Christian World* deploring that the ministry is becoming a neglected profession both in the United States and England. Of course it is not meant that there is a deficiency of candidates of a certain class, those namely to whom the emoluments of the churches mean simply heightened social status and an easier means of earning a livelihood than could be procured elsewhere; but it has become increasingly evident that the clerical profession no longer attracts young men of high aims and intellectual attainments. No self-respecting youth at all acquainted with the culture of the age can embark in the black business which demands that he shall, to use the words of Carlyle, "solemnly constitute himself an impostor at the threshold." To do so implies he is either dull or dishonest; either he is unable to perceive how modern science has disproved the creeds he swears to defend, or he is ready to maintain them for the reason assigned in "Hudibras":—

"What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About three hundred pounds a year."

With every wish to be charitable, it is difficult to acquit the mass of the clergy of absolute hypocrisy and perjury. What else is their swearing that they believe they are called to the ministry by the Holy Ghost (unless by the Holy Ghost they mean the trinity of £ s. d.)? What else is their professed belief in articles and creeds they dare not preach? We have in the Church of England the spectacle of men boasting how they evade the reading of the creed of St. Athanasius as ordered by the canons of their church. The same persons will read without compunction the Apostles' or Nicene creed, as if there was anything more monstrous in the *Quicumque vult* than the assertion that Jesus came down from heaven and was born of the Virgin Mary! In all churches we find a dishonest dissembling of the Christian doctrine of hell. Everlasting and eternal no longer mean never-ending; and the lake of fire and brimstone is no longer a place, but a state of alienation from God which, judging by the picture given of him in the Bible, we should say was a very comfortable state indeed. The day defined as evening and morning no longer means twenty-four hours. Language must be tortured to prove that Moses was acquainted with modern science, and that there is no flaw in the revelation from heaven. To manage this requires such desperate principles of accommodating interpretation as no man can resort to without endangering his intellectual integrity.

In truth, many of the clergy are to be sincerely pitied. They have, by fond but foolish parents, been urged to a career in which their manhood is lost, and having had no experience of honest labor find other avenues closed to them. They have to make the best of a bad situation, and some do try to make the best of their office by leaving on one side the dogmas they are pledged to defend, and to earn their salaries by ministering charity and kindly advice to their flocks. Even with these, their professional caste keeps them aloof from outsiders to their creed. They have made up their minds as to the truth of Christianity before having studied the question, and the tendency of their theological studies has of course been to mould the mind in but one direction. They must know that Christianity is but one of many faiths that have occupied the minds of men, yet they are not called upon to study the truths which have given vitality to other religions. They are not like medical men, brought in contact with the facts of nature and of man. When the results of science and rational criticism come before them they come as a shock, and to accept them means to give up their means of livelihood. What are they likely to do but accept the immoral advice of the *Christian World* and "by the exercise of tact lead their congregations to their own conclusions," sandwich in a thin layer of freethought among the fossil sawdust heretofore given out as the bread of life!

Taken as individuals many of the parsons may be good enough husbands, fathers and neighbors, just as a denizen of Holloway Gaol may have many good qualities apart from his priggish profession, but as a class they certainly

give no sufficient return for the vast sums they take from the state. Their whole history testifies that they have ever been the inveterate foes of free and unfettered inquiry. They bolster up the Bible simply because to impugn its authority is to challenge their own. J. M. WHEELER.

[This article was in type before Mr. Wheeler broke down.]

SECULAR SERMON.—No. 3.

LOVE (BY GOD) FOR HATE.

"Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you."—LUKE vi., 27.

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you."—MATT. v., 11.

LOVE, like charity, begins at home. It must be centred in self before it can radiate, far and wide, for the welfare of humanity. Selfishness is not a bad quality when it does not end, as it begins, with "Number One," but takes its supreme joy in diffusing the greatest good to the greatest number. In doing good to others we benefit ourselves; so that enlightened self-love, after generously emptying the heart's richest treasures into the ocean of humanity, is repaid with ample interest for every outlay of good deeds.

Love begets love; friendship kindles friendship; kindness grows in the soil of kindness. We cannot love the man or thing which is hateful; we cannot be real friends to our real foes. It were contrary to human nature and common sense—aye, and to morality—to make the vain attempt. Not all the gods in heaven or parsons in Christendom can twist and turn human affection into so crooked and contracted a channel. Nor can the gods or the parsons themselves put into practice so absurd a doctrine. All the world knows how profound is *their* love for those that hate them; how fond they are of their enemies; how delighted they feel to be reviled and ridiculed! Their self-sacrifice under such trying circumstances, their submission to ill-treatment, are objects of admiring wonder even to the carnal and ungodly, and of edification to all.

The ferocious conduct of God towards his foes affords a sufficient argument to convince any reasonable being of the absurdity of the above-quoted teachings of Christ. To love your enemies, to do good to them which hate you, may sound sublime; but to make the measure of a man's blessedness the "cussedness" of his foes is ridiculous. Yet such, in its logical result, is what Christ teaches. There can be no sane objection to obey the command of Buddha: "Overcome evil with good"; for such a mode of doing good to them which hate you satisfies both the requirements of justice and mercy. But the injunction of Christ, viewed in the light shed upon it by kindred commands (e.g., "Resist not evil," etc.) savors too strongly of the suicidal doctrine of passive or non-resistance to be palatable to the moral taste of reasonable mortals. To love our enemies is simply a wasteful lavishing of affection on unworthy objects, and an act of injustice to our friends. The latter, who alone deserve our love, can expect no more than love; and shall friendship receive no more than the reward of enmity? We may pity the moral perversity of our foes; and, indeed—in order to banish from our hearts the base lust of vindictiveness—we ought to forbear to hate them; but we are no more bound by the laws of morality to love them than we are able or impelled to do so by the instincts or laws of human nature. It is fortunately true that by mingling forbearance with firmness, and resisting without revenging, we may not unseldom bind our foes captives in the sweet bonds of love and friendship. But only a fanatic or a maniac would willingly sacrifice himself, or be sacrificed, on the altar of violence and hate. The suicidal surrender of Christ into the hands of his enemies is a case in point. The hysterical anxiety of the early Christians for the blood-stained crown of martyrdom is another. In both cases that useful phase of selfishness which consists in self-respect and self-preservation was lamentably deficient. Its absence entailed suffering on the martyr, and stained with crime his persecutors. Christ notwithstanding, the martyr who can love his tormenters must be a sentimental madman. The climax of absurdity is reached when to this delusion is added the notion of the blessedness of being reviled and persecuted. This was the absurdity that made death enviable in the eyes of J. C. and other Christian martyrs. No sane man believes in it, or ever did; and even Christ grew sceptical concerning its truth when, in the Garden of Gethsemane, he prayed his Father to let the bitter cup pass from him, and also when, on the cross, he cried, in an agony of despair

and possible disillusion: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Whilst this ascetic notion spurs on the fanatic in the mad pursuit of martyrdom, it encourages the persecutor by the consoling reflexion that the violence in which he delights is accounted the happy means of conferring on his victims a much-to-be-desired state of blessedness.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

(To be concluded.)

ACID DROPS.

WILLIAM BLACKER, a Primitive Methodist of forty years' standing, chapel steward, class leader, superintendent of a Sunday-school and trustee of three chapels, is charged at Huddersfield with assaulting Lily Senior, a little girl of ten. This kind of thing is peculiar to religious men. Piety and lechery often go together, and it is curious that more holy men of God commit rapes and unnatural offences than other members of society. By the time they have read up the worst parts of the Bible, they are ready to imitate Lot's neighbors or the eleventh labor of Hercules.

WHAT beggars these Christians are! Down at Hull the Salvation Mission is getting up a "*Monstre Oriental Bazaar*." (They cannot even write English, you see). The programme advertisement is done in verse, which would win the first prize for the worst attempt at rhyming in any fair and open competition. The concluding lines leave tops and dolls for "the Lord," and ask all and sundry to do something "for Jesus." Christianity ought to be called "The Monster Cadging Company, Unlimited."

THE great unpaid of Southend have had another innings. They have not only fined poor old Sarah Sykes another 5s. with 8s. 6d. costs, but "gone for" Collingwood Wilson, greengrocer, William Palmer, tobacconist, and Ephraim Lawton, all of whom were fined. Mr. Grant, who defended Palmer, pointed out that the tramcars were running, cabs plying, and the Shubbery open, and urged that these prosecutions of poor people were acts of mere persecution. The worthy magistrates thought differently. No doubt it is a crime in their eyes to be poor, even though your industry supports the luxury of the rich. Ephraim Lawton advised the bench to become Jews and learn a little charity.

SCENE — Waterloo Junction Platform. Time — Noon, Saturday, May 10. First fair aristocrat: "And what do you think he asked me up to town for?" Second ditto: "Well?" First ditto: "To attend the May meetings!" (Laughter by both).

THE Old Book tells us that liars shall have their portion in the burning lake, and the Blue Book informs us that the Home Secretary gets his portion at St. Stephens—viz., £5000 per annum.

THE editor of this paper, while admitting the great generosity of the late Professor Holloway of pill and ointment fame, cannot conscientiously affirm the efficacy of the much-advertised nostrums. After undergoing twelve months of Holloway treatment he has now the same complaint in a worse form than ever. He even fears the disease—a contagious one—to be ineradicable and incurable and past all earthly aid, and that ultimately he will die with it. Accordingly he has asked the Christian gentleman (?) who prescribed the dose to pay for him.

THE voice of Newdegate hath not much "timbre" in it, but his estate hath. The voice of the lawlords ringeth in his ears, yea, even as the axe resoundeth in his woods. He goeth up and down and to and fro seeking a cash buyer while the big-brained Bradlaugh exulteth. Peradventure the Book of Esther would prove consolatory to thee, oh pious one. It recordeth how Haman was hung on the gallows he had specially prepared for Mordecai. Verily, the ways of the Lord are strange and past all finding out.

IN AN OFFICE.

SCENE—A number of clerks at work. First clerk—a pious young man—takes out a copy of the *Christian* and reads advertisement:—"Wanted a young man to act as secretary to a religious association. Must be able to address a class of young children; salary, £150 a year." 1st Clerk: "I think I shall go in for that job." 2nd Clerk: "Every parson and scripture reader out of work will be sure to put in for the berth." 1st Clerk: "Ah! but it isn't everybody who takes in the *Christian*." 2nd Clerk: "I know. But the *Christian* takes in everybody else." Both clerks at once proceed to the "next business."

THE vocal example of Mr. Sankey is having its effect. Even so "grave and reverend" a signior as the Rev. Dr. Stoughton begins the annual meeting of the British and

Foreign Bible Society after the Sankey fashion. Thus the erudite *Daily News*: "After singing and prayer by Dr. Stoughton." Anyone who knows the ironbound aspect of the prim doctor and can picture him "on the sing" will have a mirthful five minutes.

EIGHT societies have received each £144 towards the employment of twelve Bible women. It is not recorded whether Jezebel, Judith, either of the daughters of Lot, or any of the concubines of Solomon were among the Bible women employed.

THE Duke of Marlborough, recently deceased, was one of the vice-presidents of the Bible Society. It will be interesting to notice whether, in view of certain recent proceedings in the Divorce Court, the present Duke will be invited to be a vice-president.

WHEN the Bishop of Saskatchewan speaks of the Christianisation of the country as its only salvation from the evils of blank Atheism, it looks very much as if the prelate were swearing. Blank Atheism, indeed!

BLESS these bat-eyed parsons! The only remedy for all the ills that our modern-day flesh is heir to is—the word of God.

"WHAT'S in a name?" A good deal of appropriateness, very often. Cadman, as that of a clergyman, isn't bad. And Gammon, as that of a chairman, at a meeting of the Bible Christian Missionary Society is a good second.

THE Earl of Shaftesbury has gone in for a work of super-erogation. He has gratuitously informed a listening and believing world that "he knows very little of literary men." He might have added "and less of literature."

"COMPARED with fifty years ago the interest in the Bible is intensely deepened at the present day." That's so. The spirit of inquiry is abroad and restless. Men are convicting the old book out of its own mouth. "Thou art tried in the balances and found wanting."

HERE is a kindly phrase as touching the writers and readers of this paper and others of the same kind: "All these fellows who cavilled at the Bible and Christianity were using the powers that God gave them for the destruction of men both temporarily and eternally, and therefore he must only speak of them with contempt and not even with a shadow of respect." This is quite the Justice North vein. Prostitution of our talents to the service of the Devil.

THESE saving clauses of the clergy! The moderate High Churchman will by the proposed prayer-book revision have "liberty to preach his own opinions—within certain limits."

WHAT are "Missionary leaves?" Is there any connexion between them and tea-meetings?

A TESTIMONIAL to Mr. C. H. Spurgeon! Sweet are the uses of advertisement!

THE Archbishop of York believes that science has no right to swallow up God. If, whale-like, science did swallow a Jonah-god, it would soon cast him up again. It has no digestion save for the truth, and it is making humanity disgorge its deity.

OUR wealthy and fashionable people think they can please God by entertaining clerical humbugs, just as the old barons thought they could purchase heaven by building churches. Imagine the sufferings of a refined woman like Lady Ashburton, who has laid upon herself the penance of having Moody and Sankey as her guests.

THE Bishop of Liverpool ought to know something of the slum people, if he ever visits the city whence his diocese takes its name. He does not despair of the dwellers in them if only the Church Pastoral Aid Society can get at them. It is a pretty fancy—anything pastoral in connexion with Liverpool.

THE Liverpool prelate was right on one point. There is not more infidelity among the working classes than among the rich. It is only more outspoken. The rich know that Christianity is doomed, and with it their undeserved wealth and immunity from everything but the privileges of life. They are, in part, like the devils also. They believe not and tremble. But the workers know that delivery from mental bondage is the prelude or the companion of delivery from social slavery.

IT is an unjust world. The empty churches are not the fault of the people but as we are told, that of the pulpit. We believe this to be a gross calumny. We protest on behalf of the pulpit. The fellow who plays the fool in it is the cause

of the bad attendance. Empty himself—as to his head only—he is the cause of emptiness in others—the pews, to wit.

A PUGILISTIC THEOLOGIAN.

If a home or foreign duffer wants to find a fisticuffer
Who will make his sinews suffer, and his backers bring to
book,

He should never treat too lightly any challenge from the
slightly

Reverend person known to theosophic circles as Joe
Cook.

Boston's own John Lawrence Sullivan can't earn his title
fully

As the champion Yankee bully, quite beyond a shade of
doubt,

Till he tries his pugilistic art upon the Calvinistic
Teacher who aspires to be the greatest living knocker out.

He should favor us with starring exhibitions of his sparring,
And should teach the art of marring human features in a
show;

For, if cheek can give assurance of unlimited endurance,
Not a fighting man can stand against the sly Reverend
Joe.

A CORRESPONDENT draws our attention to the fact that the
Rev. G. H. Humphrey who has been convicted of playing the
angel Gabriel to Laura Jones, is the person who held a
written debate with the late M. D. Bennett of the New York
Truthseeker, in which he vehemently inveighed against the
immorality of infidels.

WHITELEY, the great dealer, whose establishment was
recently burnt down, states that he will not allow any
Sunday work in his business except what is necessary to
serve up the fresh milk. But why, as he believes in providence,
doesn't he imitate the Jews who gathered manna
enough on the Saturday to last over Sunday. The manna
kept sweet and pure for them, and the Lord could as easily
keep Whiteley's milk fresh till Monday. But Whiteley knows
that—

“John P. Robinson, he
Says they didn't know everything down in Judee.”

W. R. BRADLAUGH advertises his autobiography, “a story
of thrilling interest.” We believe the greatest accident that
ever happened to him was being born.

MR. RUSSELL LOWELL, the American minister here, has been
saying a good word for Calvin. He told the Browning Society
that “Calvin has created Commonwealths.” Well, he half
created the commonwealth of Geneva, and while he lived
everybody who dared to differ from him was hunted out of
the place, thrown into prison, or treated like poor Servetzs.
Liberal monarchies are a great deal better than Calvinistic
commonwealths.

PROFESSOR MAX MULLER says that Buddhism and charity
are synonymous terms. Now, as Buddhism was founded
centuries before Christ, we should like to know how the
Christians can go on claiming their “gospel of love” as
something original, unique and divine; and especially we
should like to know how they account for the fact that while
Christianity has shed rivers of blood, Buddhism in twenty-
four centuries has never persecuted man, woman or child.

LORD SHAFTESBURY quotes Macaulay's statement in the
House of Lords that “he who speaks or writes a syllable
against Christianity is guilty of high treason against the
civilisation of mankind.” Lord Macaulay thought himself
infallible, but nobody now shares his opinion. If his cock-
sure dictum be true, half the leading writers of the world are
guilty of high treason against humanity. Macaulay is more
likely to be wrong than they are; and on the whole we fancy
the reverse of his dictum would be about the exact truth on
the subject.

WHENEVER General Gordon is in doubt about any of his
plans, he turns to the Bible, and if that doesn't help him,
they say he tosses a penny. No doubt one way is as good as
the other.

TALMAGE's latest description of heaven is “perpetual life in
the sunshine.” That would have been a cheerful prospect
when we were in Holloway Gaol, but after a few days'
experience of hot weather outside, we would rather cry off.
If we get to heaven at all, which is very doubtful, we shall
ask for an awning and a glass of iced claret.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury claims for Churchmen the
right to teach the whole doctrine of the Church and to
explain it to the full. Some one says the last word is mis-
spelt.

MORE crowner's quests. Mr. Langham wants to know on

what grounds Stephen William Kitchener, porter at Dover
Buildings (Sir Sidney Waterlow's Dwellings Company),
objected to oath-taking. The coroner seemed quite hurt at
Kitchener's presuming to have a conscientious objection.
Mr. Langham doubtless envied the man the possession of
such a luxury.

MORE disjunctives! The Rev. H. W. Webb-Peploe moves
at a meeting of the London Anti-Vivisection Society, that
“both humanity and religion are opposed to vivisection.”
Clearly humanity and religion are not at one.

THE first Sunday exhibition of paintings in Scotland took
place last week at Galashiels. The pictures were exhibited
in the Corn Exchange, and over 2,000 people came to view
them. Mr. Richard Lees, the Town Clerk, had the cool
courage to ask the clergy to recommend their flocks to turn
in and see the show. The godly are up in arms, and predict
a speedy end of the world.

JEREMY BENTHAM, in the little book on religion which was
written from his notes by George Grote, noticed that one of
the greatest evils of theology was its manufacture of fictitious
crimes and its condoning of real ones. An illustration of
this truth is furnished by the Wahabees, who consider the
use of tobacco as “the unpardonable sin,” but think adultery
and murder very venial offences, which God in his goodness
will readily forgive.

THE Zulus are rising against the missionaries and driving
them out. They object to the whole breed, with the single
exception of Colenso, whom the whole breed objects to. This
is a singular comment on the gush of the recent missionary
meetings in London.

THE Bishop of Lincoln objects to cremation on the ground
that it would weaken the popular belief in the resurrection
of the body. He also objects to the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill
because “it would destroy the sanctity of our English homes.”
If we once “touch the code of the Primitive Church” we are
all lost. True, we had better not touch it, let us leave it
severely alone.

GAOLER HARCOURT is fond of respiting men who murder
their wives. Is the fat gentleman henpecked? A fellow
feeling makes us wondrous kind.

AT the church of San Maggiore, in Naples, lately a priest
tried to give his congregation a lively idea of hell. In the
middle of his sermon the lights were put out, and striking
on the desk with an iron chain, he exclaimed “We are falling
into hell! Woe to us!” Women fainted, children screamed,
and there was a rush to the doors, which were found to be
carefully closed. The police had to appear on the scene and
restore order. No one was killed, but many were bruised
and had their clothes torn. In England, if a man cries out
“fire!” and causes a panic, we punish him; but it appears
that in Naples, at least, if he puts “hell” in front of it he
gets off scot free.

THE *Poll Mall Gazette* says “it is a sign of grace that the
bishops should begin to do as the newspapers have bidden
them, and should for once have given a solid vote on the right
side of a question.” For once! That very phrase condemns
the right reverend fathers in God. After all only seven of
them voted for the Bill to put down pigeon shooting; all the
rest had something better to do than to take care of the
feelings of “animals.”

THE Bishop of Liverpool “only pities poor Mr. Bradlaugh.”
Mr. Bradlaugh does not even pity the poor Bishop of Liver-
pool.

MOODY “likes the widow's mite.” Of course he does, but
we guess he likes her five-pound-note a good deal better.

JOSH BILLINGS, an American humorist, whose wit lies chiefly
in funny spelling, has the cheek to say that “no Atheist, with
all his boasted bravery, has ever yet dared to advertise his
unbelief on his tume stun,” or sent for “a brother infidel to
to cum and see him die.” Mr. Forder, the energetic Secre-
tary of the National Secular Society, could furnish Josh
Billings with a long monthly list of such Atheists.

DURING the riots in 1780 many persons, in order to save their
houses, wrote on their doors, “No Popery.” Grimaldi the clown,
to avoid all mistakes, wrote on his, “No religion.”

IN a certain Sunday-school the lesson was that describing the
passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. The super-
intendent, began asking questions relating to it, and, among
others, propounded the following—“What happened to the
Egyptians when they attempted to follow the Israelites into the
Red Sea?” There was a short pause, when a little fellow of
five or six summers triumphantly exclaimed, “They stuck in the
mud!”

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, May 18th, Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville, at 7.30, "The Bible in Prison."

Tuesday, the 20th, Newington Hall, York Street, Walworth Road, S., at 8.30, "Prison Thoughts on the Bible."

May 24, Brighouse; 25, Leeds; 26, Bradford; 27, Bradford; 28, Huddersfield. June 1, Plymouth, N. S. S. Conference; 8, Claremont Hall, London; 21, Sutton in Ashfield; 22, Nottingham. July 6, Claremont Hall, London; 13, Claremont Hall; 20, Milton Hall, London; 27, Milton Hall; 29, Manchester. August 3, Hall of Science, London; 10, Hall of Science, London; 17, Claremont Hall, London; 24, Milton Hall, London; 31, Milton Hall, London. Sept. 7, Hall of Science, London; 14, Hall of Science, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

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

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, directly from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

DR. EDWARD AVELING'S ENGAGEMENTS.—May 18, Milton Hall; 25, Hall of Science. June 8, 15, 22, 29, Milton Hall.

W. E. HARDINGHAM.—Thanks.

J. S.—We thank you. Newspaper cuttings are always very welcome. Our readers cannot assist us better than by sending us interesting scraps from the local press.

C. W. ROWE.—We have been pleased by a perusal of your interesting letter. As you say, it is simply absurd to allege that young men become "infidels" in order to lead vicious lives. But, you know, the bigots must say something, and they were never very particular.

H. WOODWARD.—We really cannot say, but we never heard before that Jesus Christ was a "dignitary" of the Church. The "highest dignitary" of the Church of England is Queen Victoria, and next to her the Archbishop of Canterbury.

H. W. BARNES.—Your letter arrived on Monday morning, when all the bills were distributed.

SHERWOOD.—We dealt with the matter last week. Thanks, however.

S. MUIR.—Your letter arrived too late for treatment last week, and the subject is perhaps a little out of date for this. Tuesday morning is the latest date for such announcements.

R. B. G. MONTGOMERY desires us to say that he will be glad to hear from Freethinkers in his district who would like to join him in an effort to establish a local Branch of the N. S. S. Address, 4 East Street, Little Thorbeck, Grays, Essex.

A. FREETHINKER.—The apocryphal books of the Christian Church are as ancient as the canonical books in some instances, and they were all at one time regarded as Scripture. Nothing was too infantine and puerile for the early Christian mind.

G. N. HILL, of Boston, Massachusetts, congratulates us on our "release from the clutches of the superstition-bedevilled Christians," and sends us a Freethought Calendar in which the present era is dated from the martyrdom of Giordano Bruno in 1600. Ten papers in America have already adopted this new chronology.

J. SNOW.—We have put your stamps to the credit of the Blasphemy Fund.

J. W. GRANTHAW.—We can hardly appeal at present when so many objects are pressing for help. Wait a week or two. The Christian Evidence people you refer to are beneath our notice.

A. W. HALL.—Playing cricket on Sunday is perfectly legal. The law only prohibits work. We agree with you as to the need and value of "backbone."

H. M.—Thanks for subscription and jokes.

NEW BEGINNER.—Mr. Bradlaugh's case in the Court of Queen's Bench will probably come on in a few days. Don't give up your living for the pious advisers until the Lord sends you a cheque to go on with. Get the "Financial Reform Almanack" and Mr. Bradlaugh's "Perpetual Pensions."

A. ANDERSON.—Thanks for all your good wishes.

W. E. PETHERICK.—We admire the stand you and your committee are making against the bigots and hypocrites of Southend, and we shall always be glad to give you any support we can.

F. J. BOORMAN.—The Jews were as distinctive eighteen centuries ago as now, as you will see by reading Juvenal's Satires. The type is Semitic and very ancient.

A. H.—The illustration is a good one and may be of use.

E. A. V.—What we would substitute for the Christian Bible is the bible of Humanity, the best that has been thought and said on the deepest subjects in all ages and languages. Education does not tend to increase crime. Your friend forgets the enormous growth of population in great cities. To be logical he should try to banish all knowledge from the world; then everybody would be ignorant and good.

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 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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE annual Conference of the National Secular Society will be held on Sunday, June 1st, at Plymouth, in the St. James's Hall, which is one of the handsomest and most commodious halls in the West of England. As the weather promises to be very fine, a large gathering of delegates is expected. We hope every Branch will try to send a delegate of its own. There is much work to be done, and our annual Conferences are growing more and more influential and important.

PLYMOUTH, as we have before said, is the centre of some of the loveliest scenery in the world; and as the Plymouth Branch has arranged for some good pleasure trips to places of historical interest and natural loveliness, the delegates, after they have finished their work, will be able to take a little wholesome recreation together. And perhaps a few hours of pleasant social intercourse will brace them up for another year's work almost as well as the Conference itself.

We have received the following further subscriptions towards the expenses of the Demonstration against the Blasphemy Laws, held in St. James's Hall on Tuesday:—M. Harling, 6d.; T. B., 2s.; No Name, 5s.; J. W. Fortescue, 2s.; A. Falck, 6d.; G. Carter, 6d.; F. Goulding, 6d.; G. McDonald, 6d.; A. Anderson, 2s. 6d.; J. Snow, 1s.; H. M., 2s. 6d.; J. Scarrot, 2s. 6d.; H. Blissley, 2s.; H. Kidd, 1s. 6d. M. E., 2s.; W. Brown, 1s.; Mr. Cox, 1s. As the expenses of the Demonstration are not entirely met, we shall keep the Fund open till next week.

It is proposed to form a society in the Edmonton and Tottenham district for securing a free platform, and a preliminary meeting will be held on Sunday, May 18th, at seven p.m., at St. George's Hall, New Road, Edmonton. Support is earnestly invited.

THE *Southampton Times*, which has a reputation for fairness, devotes a column of small type to the report of Mr. Foote's recent lecture in the Philharmonic Hall on the Blasphemy Laws.

THE *Irish Citizen* devotes a column and a half of its immensely valuable space to a denunciation of the *Freethinker*. It advises clergymen to lend our paper to all Christians who are wavering in their faith. We sincerely hope they will do so. It will be a splendid advertisement for us, and people who take the *Freethinker* once take it again.

ONE sentence of the *I. O.* is worthy of special attention. It says of this journal: "Its war is upon 'Priestcraft,' so that by leaving the Christian without a God the occupation of the priest may be gone. But the Church is aware of this, we believe." Just so, and that accounts for our prosecution and imprisonment. "No bishop, no king!" said James the First. "No God, no priest," says the *Irish Citizen*, with no less truth. It is entirely a question of loaves and fishes after all.

AN adjourned meeting of the Sunday Cricket Club will be held at the Hall of Science on Thursday, May 15th, at 8.30, when all those intending to join are requested to attend.

LAST Sunday afternoon a poor little boy fell into the canal near the Edgware Road. The bystanders had not sufficient presence of mind or pluck to render him any real assistance and he was fast sinking, when a member of the Paddington Branch of the N. S. S. came on the spot. Without divesting himself of any of his clothes, he leapt over the iron rails, jumped into the water, and fished the poor lad out. Comically enough the first ejaculation of the youngster was "Where's my hat?"

THE editor of the *Anti-Christian* (Calcutta) has obtained permission to translate Mr. Foote's "Bible Romances" into Hindustanee. Mr. Foote is engaged in completing the second series of these highly successful pamphlets on the old book, and the remaining six numbers will be published shortly.

A CORRESPONDENT in the Old Kent Road writes: "Late Saturday night I pasted the last three weeks' Comic Bible Sketches upon a hoarding close by. Throughout the whole of Sunday there was a small gathering of about a dozen people round. Hundreds were amused, some few goody-goodys, with Bibles in their hand, tried to pick them away with their fingers. However, they lasted up to 8 o'clock, when a much offended gentleman labored with pocket-knife, and obliterated every trace of the pictures. If some of your readers would try the experiment, they would be repaid by knowing that thousands stop and look who have never seen the paper, and perhaps would not take it in their hands."

MRS. ANNIE BESANT will give a benefit lecture on "The Myth of the Resurrection" at the Hackney Branch of the N. S. S., Rutland Hall, Rutland Road, Lauriston Road,

Broadway, South Hackney, on Thursday evening, May 29th, at 8.30. Admission, 3d.

MR. A. B. MOSS has just published an interesting and useful pamphlet on "The Brain and the Soul." It is a compendious statement of the materialist position, and written with clearness and force.

A READER of the *Freethinker* in St. Louis, out in the great Republic across the Atlantic, writes to say that Mr. Foote's words to Judge North, "Thank you, my lord; it is worthy of your creed," were just the right thing; and adds that our Government is "carrying the lighted torch of injustice very near to the magazines of revolution."

MORE good news from unwilling witnesses! The Bishop of Saskatchewan bemoans the fact that "natural science was taken as the basis of their creed by many in India, and if early steps were not taken to counteract this condition of things we should have a trained population of sceptics in India."

DR. MONROE has issued a long but admirable prayer to the Creator and Preserver of God, who is man. Man is besought to be kindly to all living creatures, merciful to those more sinned against than sinning, gentle to little children, truthful, workful, to invest nothing in heaven, but to tax the churches. Here is the last supplication: "O Man, in conclusion, we beseech thee to do some good charitable act every day. O, try to make thy life of to-day an improvement on thy life of yesterday. O, we pray thee to set a resolution to drop one fault or infirmity every day of thy life till thou has left them all off and become as perfect as a creature of thy make up and surroundings can be."

ON Sunday next at Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town Road, at 7.30 p.m., there will be an evening of readings and music. The readings will be by Dr. Edward Aveling; the music, vocal and instrumental, by Miss Alice Kean, Miss Sophie and Miss Minnie Summer, Herr Trousselle and Maestro Hermann Koenig.

MIRACLES.

"And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief."—(Mark vi., 5, 6).

ALL religions profess to be founded upon some revelation made by a god or gods to man. All are equally destitute of natural evidence, and therefore resort to occurrences contrary to our usual experience of the operations of nature and alleged to be produced by supernatural power, as the only proofs they are capable of giving of a divine origin.

Why so? If an infinitely good god wished to make known to his creatures some truth on which their eternal welfare depended, he could place that truth within the reach of all by giving such evidence of it as would be satisfactory to their reason. It is absurd to suppose that instead of adopting this course he would astonish a few of the most ignorant of mankind by wonders which could only become known to the rest of the world on doubtful authority. The Christian believes, not because Jesus did marvellous things, but because he has read in a book, or has been told by someone who heard it from somebody else, that he did so.

If however an all-wise God chose to work miracles in evidence of his revelation, he would certainly perform them among those who are ignorant or incredulous concerning it. But the deity of the Christians limits his operations to those who already believe, and therefore have no need of them. The text of Scripture with which I have introduced this subject explains this. Jesus was unable to do mighty works in his own country, because those who knew him well had no faith in him. They said, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" (verse 3). Yet in the previous verse we are told "Many hearing him were astonished, saying, from whence hath this man these things, and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands." Those who were astonished at the mighty works he could not do might have been altogether converted by a little exercise of the omnipotence he did not possess. Not to be outdone in the art of wondering, Jesus, whose omniscience should have foreseen their want of faith, "marvelled because of their unbelief." He might rather have marvelled if they had believed in a conjuror who failed in all his most important tricks.

If miracles are proofs of Christianity, they are required at least as much here and now as in Palestine eighteen

centuries back. By furnishing some thousands of our out-cast poor with a good substantial meal on five loaves and two small fishes, or by healing through the laying on of hands a few hundred sick who lie in misery in our hospitals or uncared for in their own destitute homes, Christians might hope to stay the tide of infidelity which now causes them so much fear. Or I might suggest raising a few deceased theologians from their tombs, or perhaps most acceptable of all to some of our pious opponents, the invisible hand which is said to have prevented Mary of Egypt from entering a church whilst unrepentant of her former life, might turn back Mr. Bradlaugh from the door of the House of Commons. That would at once be a triumph over Atheism, and save the employment of extra police. Some of the Irish members might obtain the assistance of the lady of Knock for this purpose, but unfortunately for them, she, like her son, can only perform mighty works among those who believe.

In this we perceive the weakness of miraculous evidence. It is proof only to those who believe without proof. The particular miracles of each religious body are rejected with scorn by all the rest. If faith is to be founded upon miracles, "mighty works" must be wrought upon and among unbelievers. If, on the other hand, believing without evidence is essential to true faith, a real undoubted miracle would render all who witnessed it for ever incapable of that saving virtue. If Jesus spoke the truth in saying to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed" (John xx., 29). Why did he try to take away this blessing from those who had it? And why do some of his followers now write and lecture in defence of Christian evidences? Certainly they may have some grounds to hope that no one will be deprived of a blessing through seeing the force of their arguments.

Some people imagine that omnipotence can accomplish all things with equal ease, but our text plainly shows this to be an erroneous idea. There is a considerable difference between great and small miracles. In his own country Jesus "could do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them." No raising the dead, no giving sight to the blind or hearing to the deaf, no making the lame to walk. Those who were really dead, blind, deaf, or lame, were too well known in that locality. But he succeeded in some little miracles. He healed some "sick folk," but only "a few." Sickness may be feigned or imaginary, or the recovery may be delusive; yet it was only this very humble class of miracles that Jesus could work in a place where he was known to be the son of Mary, and where therefore the greater evidence was required to prove him the son of God.

Credulity, the child of ignorance, retires as knowledge advances. The age of miracles has not passed, because they are no longer required to convince unbelievers, for unbelievers are more numerous and harder to convince than they ever were. It has passed because the faith, which must exist in the witness to a miracle, is nowhere to be found. Every miracle that was ever heard of has been recorded by believers, and on the evidence of believers only. The apparitions of La Salette and Knock were so far more credible than those of the Bible, that they happened nearer our own country and in our own time. Yet instead of satisfying the Protestant of the truth of Catholicism, he makes them an argument against a Church which requires to be propped up by the tales of ignorant or cunning peasants. And in like manner, I say that every miracle in Scripture, instead of proving the truth of its revelation, proves only that the author of the story was a deluder, or himself deluded.

E. J. BOWTELL.

THE GREAT BLASPHEMY DEMONSTRATION.

ON Tuesday evening St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, was crowded with an enthusiastic multitude, which met for the purpose of protesting against the iniquitous Blasphemy Laws and demanding their entire repeal. Dr. W. A. Hunter, barrister-at-law, occupied the chair.

The Rev. W. SHARMAN read letters of sympathy from Mr. Caine, M.P., Mr. Driver, M.P., Joseph Cowen, M.P., and Mr. Burt, M.P.; from the son of the Lord Chief Justice; a goodly number of clergymen, and from the Hon. Auberon Herbert. Mrs. Besant was present, but unable to address the audience as she was suffering from a severe cold.

The CHAIRMAN, who explained the Blasphemy Laws, said that the bigots had been entirely powerless to touch Mr. Bradlaugh with them; they had only been able to strike Mr. Foote and his

co-prisoners. Mr. Bradlaugh proved to be too hard a bitter for them. The bigots tried to fix upon him the publication of another man—a publication with which he had nothing whatever to do. Lord Coleridge described these laws as “ferocious.” Justice Stephen described them as naked persecution. Where eminent judges differed it would be presumptuous on his part to express an opinion. We have met to-night to help an association to obtain the removal of these laws, and I am glad that we have expressions of sympathy with our cause from many clergymen. Under the Indian Criminal Code men could not be imprisoned for blasphemy. England should not lag behind India in this matter. England should be trusted with a similar measure of religious liberty. To remove that stigma is the object of our association. (Loud cheers.)

Canon SHUTTLEWORTH, who was called upon to move the first resolution, said: I feel a curious mixture of pride and shame in addressing this vast audience. Of pride because I am a clergyman, of shame because men have been imprisoned under these laws in the name of religion. A clergyman could scarcely do anything else but protest against laws of this kind—laws which are only a protection for the feelings of religious people. And I object to men being tried for one thing and sent to prison for another. Not for blasphemy, but for outraging people's feelings. Under these laws a man is put in prison not for what he says, but for the way in which he says it. I willingly move the following resolution:—“That in the opinion of this meeting the laws relating to Blasphemy are contrary to the spirit of the age, and endanger the liberty of honest thinkers of many forms of belief.” If Mr. Foote had attacked Mahomedanism he would not have been sent to prison for that. Such unequal laws are dangerous to the religion of which I am a minister. (Loud applause.)

The Rev. E. M. GELDART said: The first part of the resolution I have been asked to second says “that they are opposed to the spirit of the age.” What is the spirit of the age to which they are opposed? I take it that it is the spirit of free inquiry. What is the good of having a Christian Evidence Society if free inquiry is not permitted? That Society uses argument against the Freethinker. Whether it is successful or not I will not say. (Laughter.) To shut a man up by argument is one thing, to shut him up by imprisonment is another. No man who could do the first would ever do the latter. The bigots retain these Blasphemy Laws as a sort of rod in pickle. Under these laws you must observe the decencies of conversation. What are they? Must we take the standard of the *Rock* or the *War Cry* as a guide? The latter calls you “children of the Devil” and says that you are “going to hell.” If you retaliate you are in danger of these laws. Unprotected men are singled out as scapegoats. Those who have respectable surroundings are allowed to go scot free. Laws like these should be swept away from the code of our country. (Cheers.)

CHAIRMAN: I now call upon Mr. Foote to support the resolution.

Mr. FOOTE, who was received with tremendous applause, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman,—After the remarkably able and eloquent address which we have just listened to I feel it almost unnecessary work on my part to address you at all. But there is one point of view from which no one (except my friends on the left) can speak with more authority than myself. I regarded these laws from the inside of the gaol, whilst others regard them only from the outside. For twelve months I had to study the sentence of the judge who sent me to gaol. And while the preceding speaker only felt the whole force of it, I *knew* the whole force of it. It is not true in any sense of the word that I was sent to gaol for outraging people's feelings. Judge North—(hissee)—I do not know that he has not done more for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws than anyone else—Judge North frankly told me that I had prostituted my talents to the service of the Devil; that if his God didn't see me he did; and that if he would not punish me he would. Just the same language was used in bygone times when they sentenced men to be burnt. It is utterly absurd to send men to gaol for such a crime. Why not administer the law impartially all round? Why not protect the Conservatives from the ridicule of their opponents and *vice versa*? We never hear of prosecutions against publishers of expensive books, but only against publishers of cheap papers. Lord Coleridge admitted that he could see no difference between the quotations which I read from Mill, Swinburne and others and those for which we were prosecuted. That prosecution was, I believe, only started to strike down with a religious dagger a man whose political enemies had otherwise failed to injure him. We are quite as honest as our prosecutors. No Freethought advocate need fear comparison with their prosecutors, or with the Corporation of the City of London. We make more sacrifices for our principles than do our prosecutors. We preach Freethought to the people at the people's price; we stand on the indefeasible right of every man to think and speak with absolute freedom. We will never rest satisfied with less than that. The question of taste is beside the point. The question is whether I have the right to publish what I think. I affirm that I have. And I would rather go to gaol again than abandon that right. What I am pleading for is Freethought for all, not this or that special opinion, but that grand principle of Freethought which is neither so low as a cottage nor so lofty as a pyramid, but is like the soaring azure dome of heaven which overarches all with equal ease. (Loud and continued applause.)

Mr. CONWAY supported the resolution in an amusing speech, relating his experiences of religion in Ceylon and Madras. The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Dr. HARDWICKE, in moving the second resolution, which was as follows:—“That the Bill drafted by Mr. Justice Stephen offers the best remedy for the evil denounced in the first resolution.”—said: I thought it my duty to come here to-night although it will occasion me 320 miles of travelling. I feel it is only by being earnest that these Blasphemy Laws can be repealed; I cannot conceive of a Freethinker being anything but honest in his opinions. (Cheers.) Just consider for one moment the risk he runs of Holloway Gaol and social ostracism here and eternal damnation hereafter.

Dr. AVELING, whose rising was the signal for an outburst of applause, in support of the resolution said: Mr. Chairman and Friends,—We come here to-night to protest against these iniquitous laws. We represent the feelings of many thousands on this question—not in this country alone, but throughout the world. But there is an enormous mass of indifference on this matter. The people want to be moved on this question. I only see three reporters present. The papers seem to give prominence to insignificant things. I heartily support this resolution. We want to see it made criminal to prosecute for blasphemy. Not one member of Parliament will have the courage to introduce the Bill drawn up by Mr. Justice Stephen. Men on this platform will, when the opportunity comes, enter that House, which we hope they soon will—especially our learned Chairman, who will not be afraid to introduce that Bill. There must be on the back of that Bill many names. We want the people to endorse that Bill against the Blasphemy Laws. (Cheers.)

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

The Rev. STEWART D. HEADLAM then moved the third resolution, which was as follows:—“That this meeting commends the National Association for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws to the support of all friends of civil and religious liberty.”

Mr. BRADLAUGH, who on rising to second the resolution was received with great applause, said: Friends,—On the other side of the ocean men have been sent to prison under exactly the same laws as those which our friends have suffered from lately. No hall can we take, no land can we lease, no legacy can we leave under these laws. No man and no woman is safe under these laws, or even allowed the custody of their own children. My brave colleague, who bids me to speak for her to-night, was deprived under these laws of the custody of her child. The bigots only strike at us with these laws because they think we are weak. It is quite true as Mr. Chairman said, that the laws have not dealt with me in the measure they have dealt with some. During my thirty years of struggling I have felt them very often though. I commend to you the society for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. It is because I have hope, I have trust, I have belief, it will do something to break down the odium of those laws, something to destroy them. During my whole life, when there was no sort of prosecution feared, in season and out of season, I have never ceased trying to get these laws swept away. They will not go unless you work hard for their repeal. Others will go to goal unless you do work. That is why we fight them, some in pulpit and some on platform. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously. A vote of thanks to the chairman terminated the meeting, which was enthusiastic throughout.

PROFANE JOKES.

WHO was hung for not wearing a wig?—Absalom.

WHEN may a Devonshire farmer's wife be said to “possess an evil spirit”?—When she has an apple liea' in cyder (an Apollyon i' side her).

WHY was Baalam like a life guardsman?—Because he went about with his queer ass (cuir-ass).

WHAT is the difference between Charles Keen and Jonah?—One was brought up at Eton, the other was eaten and brought up?

THE straight tip. For the next Derby race back “Foote” to run and win.

IF an honest man is worth his weight in gold what is a dishonest one worth? Any details as to the value of the real and personal estate of Sir Henry Tyler will not be accepted as a satisfactory answer, though to many it may appear conclusive.

PUBLIC rumor hatch it that Judge North is suffering from a severe attack of “Foote and mouth disease.” But public rumors, like Home Secretary's, are—well, wanderers from the truth.

A STORY is told of a lady who left her church and went to the Salvation Army. Her minister was perplexed at her desertion, and called upon her for an explanation. No; she got no new gain in doctrine or in practice from her new religious surroundings. She had no spiritual consolations she had not previously enjoyed. How then was she the happier by the change? The old lady burst into an ecstasy of happy recollection exclaimed, “O, sir, the big drum is such a comfort to me!”

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