

# THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

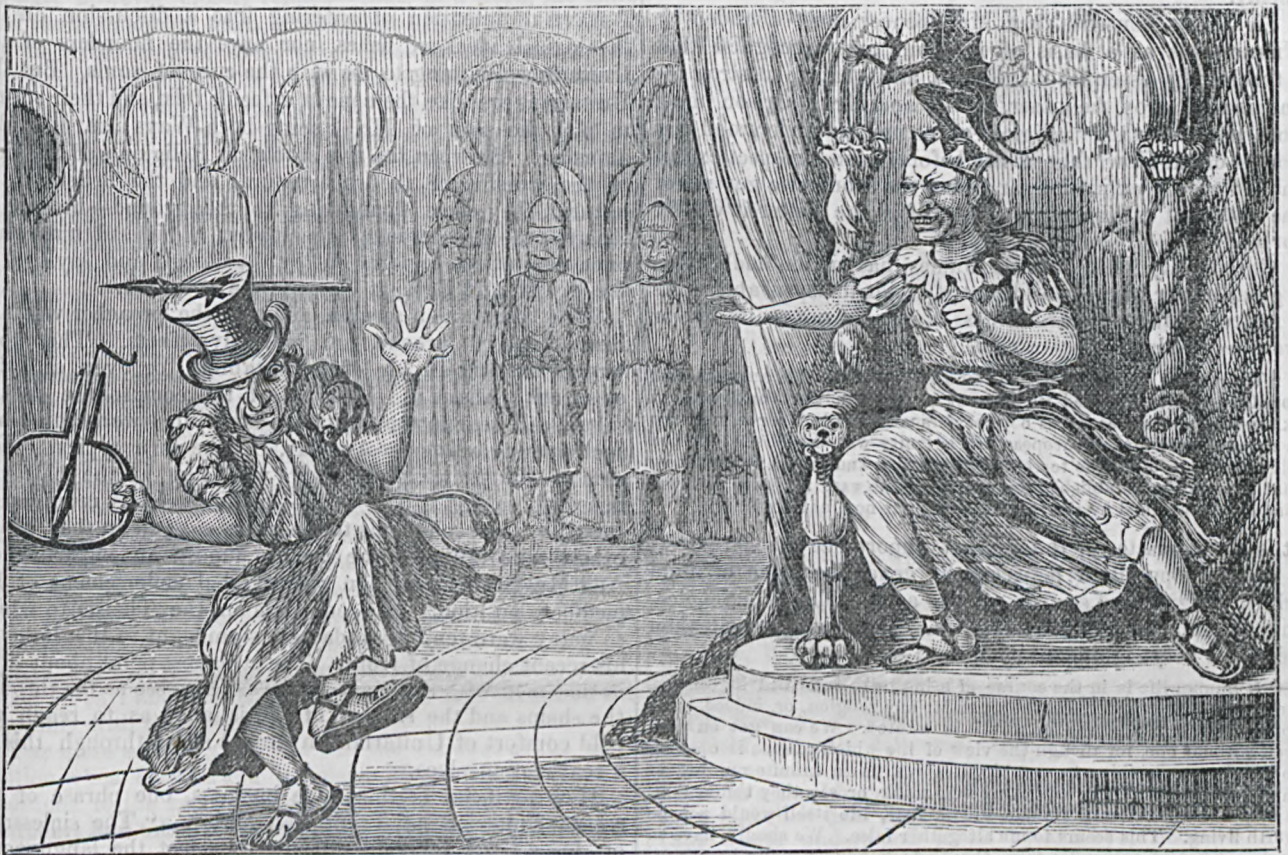
Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH. — No. 74.



SAUL HARPOONING DAVID.

*“And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp and played with his hand (1 Sam. xvi., 23). And there was a javelin in Saul’s hand. And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it” (1 Sam. xviii., 10-11.)*

## JUDGE STEPHEN ON RELIGION.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER is great on the Unknowable, one of those words you begin with a capital letter for the sake of dignity, just as, to use Huxley’s simile, we stick a bearskin hat on a grenadier to make him look more formidable. He also calls it Infinite Eternal Energy and other fine names, all beginning with capital letters. Some people think that all he means at bottom is that man is very little and the universe is very big; but Mr. Spencer repudiates this as a trifling conception of his great idea, and he has taken the trouble to develop it in sonorous sentences full of long words in that fashionable organ of all sorts of opinions, the *Nineteenth Century*. Hard upon his heels came Mr. Frederic Harrison, the eloquent and cock-sure Positivist, who laughs at Mr. Spencer’s fancy of “making a religion out of the Unknowable,” and says we may as well try “to make it out of the Equator.” Mr. Harrison stands up for religion, but all the articles that have passed under that name have been mere counterfeits, and he wishes us to accept the real thing, which is Humanity. Last of all comes Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, with an article on “The Unknowable and the Unknown,” who treats the religions of both these eminent writers with considerable contempt, and urges that the Unknowable, with a capital U, and Humanity, with a capital H, resemble each other like pot and kettle, one being about as fit for a God as the other. Sir James Stephen’s style is just adapted for this kind of work. He is an admirable dialectician, though not a rhetorician; he has a keen eye for his opponents’

mistakes; and he is always sun-clear as to his own position. Above all, he refuses to take a metaphor for a fact, and he insists on finding the precise weight of meaning in every key-word of the discussion.

This great judge, who is, perhaps, the best jurist on the English bench, and will probably succeed Lord Coleridge as Chief Justice, long ago expressed his hostility to the Blasphemy Laws, and he has lately drafted a Bill for their entire abolition. No judge would do that who was not something of a sceptic. That was patent to all; but no doubt few were prepared to find such thorough scepticism as is expressed in this article.

Sir James Stephen declines to worship Mr. Harrison’s “Humanity,” for most of our race are stupid and ignorant, and its “most distinguished specimens have passed their lives in chasing chimeras, and believing and forcing others to believe in fairy tales about them.” That is a sweet morsel for the theologians, and we hope they will enjoy it. At the same time, we think there is more to be said in behalf of Humanity than Sir James imagines, although at present we have no leisure to say it. Mr. Harrison’s language is far-fetched, as is natural to a born declaimer; but his yearning for humanity is something more than “a childless woman’s love for a lapdog.”

Sir James deals more effectively with Mr. Spencer’s “Unknowable.” His theory being “that religion began by dreams which suggested a belief in ghosts,” how can this conception be any truer for being highly developed? His conclusion, says Sir James, is absolutely meaningless. “It is like a gigantic soap-bubble not burst but blown thinner and thinner till it has become absolutely imperceptible.”

And we may add that, however fine and exquisite the bubble, its substance is nothing but soap-suds after all. Sir James adds that Mr. Spencer's intricate game of words reminds him of Isaiah's description of the manufacture of of idols:—

"Effort and force and energy are to Mr. Spencer what the cypress and the oak and the ash were to the artificers described by the prophet. He works his words about this way and that; he accounts with part for ghosts and dreams, and the residue thereof he maketh a god, and saith Aha, I am wise, I have seen the truth."

This is very clever and effective, but it is, to say the least of it, sailing very near the wind. When the contributors to the *Freethinker* write in that style, it is called flat blasphemy.

Sir James contends that Mr. Spencer must abandon his Unknowable as a basis of religion, must recognise that "theology is essential to religion, and that to destroy the one is to destroy the other." He and Mr. Harrison must both perceive that "religion as commonly understood has got its death-blow, that it has before it no prospect except that of speedy extinction, and that the sooner we get rid of the notion of raising some ghost of it, the better it will be for us."

Christianity itself, says Sir James, has undoubtedly been a great power in the world, but it is not indispensable. As a matter of fact, the great mass of men do not really like or want any religion.

"They must be compelled to come in. Neither Mohammedanism nor Christianity attained its present position in the world without exhausting all the resources both of persuasion and of force, military moral and spiritual. European Christianity was established by the joint operation of all the terrors of this world and the next, and now that it has been established for centuries, the vast majority of mankind are reproached by the rest for being but nominal Christians."

It is also a matter of the greatest importance that "there is a distinct opposition between the general temper of mind which religion and science assume and produce." Science, indeed, tends to extinguish religion. And Sir James Stephen adds this very significant comment:—

"If human life is in the course of being fully described by science, I do not see what materials there are for any religion, or, indeed, what would be the use of one, or why it is wanted. We can get on very well without one, for though the view of life which science is opening to us gives us nothing to worship, it gives us an infinite number of things to enjoy. There are many who think, or say they think, that, if the scientific view of human life is true, life itself would not be worth living. This seems to me altogether false. We should have to live on different principles from those which have usually been professed; but I think that for people who took a just view of their own position, and were moderately fortunate, life would still be extremely pleasant. The world seems to me a very good world if it would only last. It is full of pleasant people and curious things, and I think that most men find no great difficulty in turning their minds away from its transient character. Love, friendship, ambition, science, literature, art, politics, commerce, professions, trades, and a thousand other matters will go on equally well, as far as I can see, whether there is or is not a God or a future state, and a man who cannot occupy every waking moment of a long life with some or other of these things must be either very unfortunate in regard of his health or circumstances, or else must be a poor creature."

It is indeed easy to see that Sir James Stephen considers religion as fit only for weaklings. People who cannot or will not make anything of this life sigh for another, and God is necessary to furnish them hereafter with a compensation for what they miss now. As Sir James well says, "the essence of religion is to supply to human life something which is not in it." Clearly, then, the fuller we make our life the less there is for religion to do.

Even morality will not be much affected. It would be "transformed, but by no means destroyed;" for "men can never associate together without honoring and rewarding and protecting in various ways temperance, fortitude, benevolence and justice;" and "love, friendship, good-nature, kindness, carried to the height of sincere and devoted affection, will always be the chief pleasures of life whether Christianity is true or false."

Sir James will not even allow those religious sentimentalists, the Unitarians, their worship of Jesus Christ. He contends that if people once come to regard Jesus Christ simply as a dead man, they will cease to regard his name with awe, gratitude, or any similar feeling. Supernaturalism kept Christianity alive, and when that is withdrawn it will die. Sir James concludes that—

"If the Apostles' Creed is given up, the Sermon on the Mount and the parables will go too; that parodies of them are inexpressibly dreary, that to try to keep them alive by new ceremonies and forms of worship made on purpose is like preparing ingredients and charms which would make Medea's cauldron efficacious. But I also contend on the other hand that, if Christianity does pass away, life will

remain in most particulars and to most people much what it is at present, the chief difference being that the respectable man of the world, the lukewarm, nominal Christian who believed as much of his creed as happened to suit him and led an easy life, will turn out to have been right after all, and enthusiastic believers of all creeds to have been quite wrong."

Such is the gist of this remarkable article by one of the most eminent judges in England. When a man of such position and influence can write in this manner we may be sure that religion is fast declining to its grave. It is the beginning of the end.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### UNITARIAN FLOUNDERS.

I HAVE no intention of entering into a discussion on the theological ideas of fishes, nor have the flounders of the Unitarians anything to do with the cure of souls. But the Unitarians are, like the coney, a feeble folk, and their efforts to play the part of Mr. Facing-both-Ways are painfully amusing. Between the two stools of Religion and Science, of the worship of the supernatural and the belief in the natural, they come floundering to the ground—but not to the ground of a rational conclusion. This sad truth has once again been brought out by the doings and sayings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

That there was a sermon, and that the preacher was the Rev. Stopford Brooke, are indicative facts. The word sermon has still an air of respectability, or even an odor of sanctity, about it. It savors of the compromise that I should call dear to the Unitarian heart, if I were sure that such a thing existed. And Mr. Brooke is a typical specimen of the thought-passengers who stop at the half-way house whose sign is 'The Cross—modified.' His retention of the title Reverend seems to me in his case, as in that of all others who still use the prefix, almost an impertinence. And Mr. Brooke's sermon was a verbal endorsement of his mediocre position. His comments on the Theism to which so many were tending to-day are significant in the light of his recent change of front. The strangest point about it all is that men with sufficient penetration to see as far through the shams and the shames of Christianity as to reach the cold comfort of Unitarianism cannot strive through this to a real resting-place.

How artificial is the whole business, one phrase of the recent Unitarian *né* Trinitarian shows. "The sinlessness of Jesus." It is really difficult to select the language by which such a reckless phrase should be characterised. Of the first thirty years of the life of Jesus we know almost nothing. Of all the trials, temptations, and passion-agonies, "bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire" in that time of struggle we have no record. And yet men of the Unitarian floundering stamp prate glibly of the sinlessness of a life as to one-eleventh only of which they have some few fragmentary statements. I suppose the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke will not understand me, but a statement of this kind seems to me to be simply a falsehood.

As I fear the major part of my comments must be adverse in their nature, let me hasten to place on record an excellent resolution upon which one Dr. Crosskey made an excellent speech. The gist of resolution and of speech alike was that under the Education Act violations of the principle of religious equality were of frequent or even of constant occurrence. Everyone who has had anything to do with Board Schools knows, either with open pain or with a secret delight, that dogmas are taught according to the taste and fancy of the teacher, or of the most active manager, or of the divisional member who takes most interest in the particular school. Dr. Crosskey was within the truth when he said that such doctrines as those of the Atonement, the Trinity, Bible infallibility, are taught more or less directly in our State schools. And if he, the Unitarian, sees cause for complaint, we may fairly ask Unitarians and Trinitarians alike if a gross wrong is not done to every Atheist in the community under the present system?

The uncertainty, the fluctuating mental condition of this body of thinkers, are especially shown in their words and ways in regard to children. This came out painfully in a discussion on "Our Young People: The Church of the Future." To discuss the Church of the future is like discussing the dodo of the twentieth century. The anachronistic nature of the whole debate and of Unitarian thought on the subject will be gathered when I say that the main point urged was the wrong of letting children grow up with minds unfettered by any particular order of religious idea

until they are of an age to judge for themselves. This permission of freedom to the young was condemned on the ground that it was impossible for anyone to grow up to man's estate absolutely free from bias on religion. So that our Unitarian friends would deny their sons and daughters even a relative freedom from religious bias, and would force the definite convictions of maturity on the plastic minds of children.

Nor does the argument hold that the parent "knows best" what to teach the child in these matters, and, therefore, is right in inculcating the use of the parental shibboleth. For the child is the offspring not only of its father and mother, but of society, of the time in which it lives, of the past. And the higher idea is that, if anything "knows best," it is all these, rather than any two human beings, however closely related—that, in a word, the child and the man should learn of all orders of thought and profit by the experience of every age. That is why some of us think that children should be allowed to read the Bible *so long as* it is read on exactly the same footing as other books, and should study the Christian mythology in exactly the same way as they study that of Greece.

Unitarianism is growing too respectable. Confirmation services are actually now held by this body. When any sect of thinkers begins to ape the customs of the sect whence it has evolved, we may know reversion, retrogression are occurring. When the Dissenter, waxing rich, begins to attend the fashionable church, the deacon shakes his head, and the minister murmurs of backsliding. And here are confirmation services in the Unitarian church. There is one hope yet, however. Two of its clergymen, Dr. Longstaff and the Rev. J. Freestone, advocated the teaching of natural science in the Sunday schools. Once let that scheme come into action, and the confirmation services, the prayers, the ambiguous hymns, the belief in the sinlessness of Jesus will all go the way of futilities.

But that good time is, alas! far off, and Unitarianism is yet making friends to itself of the mammon of respectability. The chairman at the recent meeting dwelt with unctious upon the fact that on the first occasion of his entering the chapel that was the scene of the anniversary lucubrations, a duke, an earl and the daughter of a lord had sanctified the assembly with their presence.

Far more serious than this was the conduct of the association when earnest and impulsive Mr. Geldart suggested additions to the report, expressing regret that Sir William Harcourt had taken no notice of the petitions for the release of the blasphemy prisoners and proposed that they recognise the value of Mr. Sharman's work in relation to the repeal of the blasphemy laws. Amongst the eminently proper people present, Mr. Geldart could not find one righteous man to support him. "His suggestions met with no seconder." It is the old story. Safe as they think themselves, these men with their hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt in the shape of confirmation services and the like, are blandly indifferent as to the fate of other thinkers.

EDWARD AVELING.

## ACID DROPS.

At a recent election of bishops in Philadelphia, the ballots became mixed. A large number of delegates had left the hall, but those present insisted on another vote being taken, which was done. How on earth can the Holy Ghost manage to select the right man if such irregularities as these are allowed to occur?

A NATIONAL Convention of Physicians has lately been in session at Washington. The daily proceedings were opened with prayer. This canting formality at last became nauseating to some of the sensible delegates present, and Dr. Von Kline, of Ohio, offered a resolution to the effect that "as many of the members of the association were infidels, freethinkers, and materialists, the custom of opening the session of the annual meeting with prayer was an imposition on many of the members, and that therefore it should be abolished."

This reasonable proposition was not accepted. If physicians were honest believers in Christianity, we could readily understand their adherence to this antiquated custom, but as scarcely any of them really believe in the efficacy of prayer, we agree with the *Radical Review* of Chicago, that their rejection of Dr. Kline's resolution is "anything but honorable and manly," and that it is "a piece of moral obliquity highly

condemnable in so enlightened a body of people as the Medical Association aims to be."

THE sole survivor of the crew of the Norwegian bark *Athena*, reached Quebec on May 25. When the ship went ashore in a dense fog near Wolfe Island, the captain began praying, and invited all on board to join in that highly useful exercise. They continued to "cry unto the Lord," despite the entreaties of the first mate who wanted them to get out the boats and make an effort to save themselves. The result was, they got no help from above, and all were lost except one man who drifted ashore on a plank. Perhaps the Christian Evidence Society will include this in their illustrations of the efficacy of prayer.

THE Mormon membership is now 92,000 with 46,000 children under eight, and fresh converts stream in every year. Christianity made no such progress in so short a time, and if numerical success is a test of truth Mormonism is truer than Christianity.

THE *Christian* calls Mormonism a "monstrous delusion" and an "infamous system." We won't quarrel on this point, but we would observe that when we describe Christianity with the same freedom the people for whom the *Christian* caters give us twelve months in Holloway for "outraging their feelings."

GENTLE Jesus, meek and mild,  
Drove the money-changers wild.  
He scourged them, did this model Lord,  
With a beautiful, heavy, knotted cord.  
He routed them, he drove them forth,  
East, and West, and South, and North.  
He broke their tables and desks and stools,  
And called them rogues and thieves and fools,  
While, with his ever-blesséd feet,  
He kicked their cash about the street.  
Thus gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
Drove the money-changers wild.

DOLPHIE: "Nurse, what did God stand on when he made the world?" Nurse: "I suppose he hung on by an elastic band like Father Christmas on the tree." Dolphie: "Then what did the tree stand on?" Nurse: "Nothing." Dolphie is quiet, but perplexed. The above conversation is a fact. Boy about nine years old.

THE Rev. A. J. Tweedie, vicar of St. John's, Ranmoor, Sheffield, recently delivered himself of a flood of nonsense over the death of his warden, Mr. A. Dearman, who was killed in a shocking carriage accident. The uninjured sky-pilot said their dear brother's removal was "expedient," that they would understand it all by-and-bye, that the Lord knew best and so forth *ad nauseam*. Surely the Lord might have given a little notice before executing the poor gentleman for his family's sake. Perhaps Mr. Tweedie will state what the Lord intends to do for the widow and children.

THE Rev. Stopford Brooke says "there are many here on earth who have reached the state in which they cannot sin." Judging from the highly self-satisfied look which he usually wears, we should say that he includes himself in the "many."

MOODY entered the revival business a poor man. He is now said to be a rich man. He is also a very humble man. His favorite hymn is reported to be "Not more than others I deserve, but God hath given me more." By the way, that is what Spurgeon said when his wife had twins.

DR. PRESSENSÉ claims Würtz as "one of the greatest chemists of the day, and also a firm believer in Christian spiritualism." Perhaps so, but chemistry happens to be a science which does not conflict with theology. How many astronomers, physicists, geologists or biologists are Christians? We doubt if Dr. Pressensé can claim ten per cent. of them on his side.

THE *Christian World* talks of "the mob of Atheistic physicists." What exquisite urbanity! How it becomes a journal which approves sending Freethinkers to gaol for wounding the "susceptibilities" of true believers!

THIRTY-FIVE thousand pounds spent on the west front of Lichfield cathedral, and coroner's inquests held on poor devils dead of starvation. This is the result of eighteen centuries of Christianity. If Jesus had foreseen the fruits of his religion would he ever have thought it worth his while to die on Calvary?

SIR BARTLE FRERE, the "Christian hero" as they like to call him, showed how closely Christianity and Jingoism are allied, and how compatible the "religion of love" is with international filibustering, diplomatic fraud, military violence, and wholesale slaughter of innocent people whose only crime

is that they have what you want and are impudent enough to live on the same planet with you. When asked how he should like to die, this pious Jingo answered that he should prefer being shot; and he had an idea that the noblest position any man could fill was "Minister of War at a time of war." Sir Bartle Frere and the "great Macdermott" had very much in common, only the one sang to the boxes and the other to the gallery.

A LURRY-LOAD of "Sunday-school" children was being driven along Urmston Lane, Stretford (Manchester), on Whit Wednesday, ostensibly to give the children an outing. The lurry was decorated with bunting, and on the front of it was a shield bearing the words—"The Bible is our guide." Singularly enough the lurry driver stopped a Freethinker with this question—"Please, sir, will you tell me the road to Davyhulme?"

THE *Christian Million* has a column headed—"Fools answered according to their folly." By "fools" are meant unbelievers generally. The book which Christians hold to be their supreme guide styles us fools and classes us with murderers and infamous characters (Rev. xxi., 8). But we don't mind it in the least. We can smile at Christian insults if they don't call in the constable.

THE Sabbatarians of Southend, not contented with persecuting small shopkeepers for Sunday trading, are now about to close the pier. The tenants will be served with a six days' notice to quit if they do not close on Sundays. We recommend the prosecution of every coachman, cab-driver, or other persons engaged in conveying the bigots of Southend on the Lord's day. Dish them up in their own sauce. Mr. Petherick, we are glad to see, has already applied for two summonses against a justice of the peace and a solicitor for selling tickets in the Shrubbery. The former sat on the Bench when poor Mrs. Sykes was fined again and again.

THE vicar of Littlehampton says that the clergy are warmly attached to the Conservative cause and to the union of Church and State so long as the State protects them and does not interfere in matters ecclesiastical. He thinks that the State should give the Church unjust privileges and vast sums of public money, and at the same time it should exercise no control whatever over the expenditure or the expenders. There may be a Radical government before long, and we fancy we can hear Mr. Chamberlain say to the vicar of Littlehampton—"Not for Joe."

#### A SNAKE STORY.

ONCE two great serpents fought a battle,  
Hissing their ire in snakish prattle;  
But soon, enraged beyond all reason,  
Each other's tail they fiercely seize on—  
And seek, by suction and by "swallow,"  
To make each other's body follow.  
The living circle, fury-shaken,  
Grows smaller as each gulp is taken,  
For neither can do aught that's kindly:  
So still they swallow—madly, blindly.  
A traveller found these serpents dying.  
He crushed them both where they were lying.  
Thus serpent daughter, serpent mother,  
Fought and stung and choked each other.  
The future traveller, when he searches,  
Will name these serpents Christian churches;  
Who sought each other's death as needed,  
And, happily for earth, succeeded.

MRS. EDITH O'GORMAN AUFFRAY, the "Escaped Nun," has been lecturing on "Life in a Convent," in the Palatine Hall, Lancaster. She says that if a nun happened to fall in love with a priest she was bound to tell him in the confessional and ask his advice about it. She had known six nuns in love with the same priest, and he was the ugliest man she ever saw. The Roman Catholics, enraged at what they describe as "the violence of her language" and the "outrageous calumnies" she heaps upon their religion, assembled in large numbers, but were mostly unable to obtain admission. The comparative few who succeeded in entering the hall caused continual interruptions and frequent uproar. The chairman appealed to the audience for a patient hearing, and was met with the reply, "We don't want her coming here telling a lot of lies," followed by the more emphatic declaration from another meek and long-suffering Christian, "You are nothing but a — liar." These disorderly scenes show only too well how tolerant and charitable these Christian sects are towards each other. The excited crowd kept watch outside, so that the lecturers and her agents should not escape the pious attentions of Christian love. Disappointed of their prey, the crowd wreaked its vengeance on the unoffending cabs, which were much damaged by bricks and other missiles. One of the lamps was smashed by a paving stone, which was afterwards found inside the cab. One of the drivers was struck with a stone, and had rotten eggs thrown at him. It

was not until twelve o'clock that the police by a ruse cleared the mob away from one of the entrances, and so enabled the escaped nun to become an escaped lecturers.

THE magistrates the next day decided not to afford any police assistance, and threatened to bind the lecturers over to keep the peace. That is they practically prohibited any further lectures and submitted to the dictates of a sectarian mob. We consider this decision unjust, for we hold that there should be the fullest liberty of speech, accompanied, of course, by a proper responsibility before the law. We do not say this out of any sympathy for either of the contending parties, for we only prefer Protestantism to Romanism on the same principle that we might prefer measles to small-pox.

If the Protestants are not mere hypocrites in pretending that they maintain the Blasphemy Laws only to protect outraged religious feeling, why do they not so shape these laws that the feelings of Roman Catholics may be legally protected from Protestant insult and calumny?

THE annual vestry meeting of St. Thomas's Church, Liverpool, was very lively. It lasted till after midnight, and everybody complimented everybody in the most Christian manner. The principal orations were in chorus, and consisted of groans, hootings and hisses. The scene resembled an early Church Council. Mr. Gladstone has the gift of the living, and the parishioners are about as well behaved as the big boys in his school at St. Stephen's.

THE *Banner of Israel* is devoted to proving that we are all Jews without knowing it. One of its contributors, who is a recent convert, and has evidently spent much time in studying the polite language of the Old Testament, describes our party as "a rabble of uneducated bigots whose ideas are formed by what they read in the *Freethinker* and such like papers." This gentleman belongs to the "Lost Ten Tribes," and he has certainly lost his manners. Whether he has lost his senses we cannot decide without knowing his original condition.

THIS year's president of the Methodist New Connexion, urges his brethren to "withstand in every righteous way the opening of museums and places of amusement on Sunday." He plainly intimates that this is trade policy on their part, for, without even alluding to the argument that the Sabbath is a day of rest, he describes it as "an institution which was expressly intended to cultivate the fear of the Lord." That's the style Demetrius Crothers. Great is Diana of the Ephesians!

MR. BENTLEY, a missionary in the Congo region, protests against the ratification by our Government of the treaty which they are reported to have made with the Portuguese, whose priests constantly endeavor to persuade the native king to banish the Protestant missionaries, and threaten to send Portuguese soldiers against him if he does not follow their advice. One of these priests recently much disturbed the native mind by declaring that he would poison the king if the latter did not send the Protestant missionaries out of the country. Who will say that Christians do not love each other?

A NEW ENGLAND deacon called upon a brother deacon with whom he was at variance, and with an air of great solemnity said: "Brother Jones, it is a shame that this quarrel of ours should bring scandal upon the church. I have prayed earnestly for guidance in the matter, and I have come to the conclusion that you must give in, for I cannot."

HIGH CHURCH—VERY.—"My husband is vicar of St. Boniface—but I don't attend his church." "Indeed! How is that?" "The fact is, I—I don't approve of married clergymen!"

A PREACHER not far from Boston, found himself at one time in a sad dilemma. He stopped in his sermon and said: "If I speak softly those of you in the rear cannot hear me; if I speak loud I shall certainly wake up those who are close to me."

"Now, brudders an' sistahs, I will now take up a collection fur de preacher," said the colored minister to his congregation a few nights ago. "An' I 'spec'fully' advise you ter not put no buttons in de conterbution hat, as I is goin' roun' myse'f, an' will take a list of de button membahs of dis congregation an' make them the subjec' ob my sermon de naix meetin'. Close that doah, dar."

DR. GRANBERRY and family are Presbyterians. In the family is a baby boy of three years. Mrs. G. had been drilling the boy in the Shorter Catechism, wherein he was informed that God made man, punished him with hell-fire, redeemed him, and so forth, all for his own glory. Young three-year-old, becoming unmanageable in the absence of his father, had been subjected to a mild application of the rod. When the doctor returned, and noticed the boy was in trouble, the following conversation took place. Father: "What is the matter, my son?" Son (weeping): "Mother whipped me." Father: "What for, my boy?" Son (between his sobs): "For her own glory."

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, June 15, Secular Hall, Milkstone Road, Rochdale: at 11, "How I Fell among Thieves;" at 3, "Prison Thoughts on the Bible;" at 6.30, "Twelve Months in a Christian Gaol."

June 21, Sutton in Ashfield; 22, Nottingham; 29, Manchester; July 6, Claremont Hall, London; 13, Claremont Hall, London; 20, Milton Hall, London; 27, Milton Hall, London; 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; 21, Glasgow; 8, Edinburgh. Oct. 5, Liverpool.

## 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.—June 15, Milton Hall; 22, 29, Hall of Science.

W. LEFKEY writes that one of the Christian Evidence Society's lecturers in Regent's Park, last Sunday afternoon, convulsed his own audience by referring to the tails of anthropoid apes, and suggests that as Milton Hall is so near, the C. E. S. lecturers might profitably drop in some evening and take a few lessons in biology from Dr. Aveling.

A. C.—We will remember the suggestion.

E. PACKHAM.—You would probably find that the Christians are not to be taken by a side-wind as you propose. Open and straightforward attack is after all the best method. The purpose you have in view is partly served by the "Freethinker's Text-book."

R. C. GATER states that a large quantity of back numbers of the *Freethinker* were distributed at the outdoor meeting of the South London Branch of the N. S. S., in addition to a good sale of the current number. Freethinkers who have any secular literature for gratuitous distribution might send it to V. Roger, 25 Tracey Street, Kennington Road.

W. D. KEY.—Our space is too limited; besides W. R. Bradlaugh on Science is too great a joke to be treated seriously.

ALBERT SMITH.—Thanks for the jokes and sketches.

AN ATHEIST.—You had better make a selection from the writings of Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Foote and Dr. Aveling.

G. PAYNE.—Such interesting and effective letters in the local press are of excellent service to the cause. It is a sign of the times that editors will insert such communications.

W. C. SAVILLE.—Received with thanks.

F. GODFREY.—We shall be glad of further reports of the Liverpool scandal.

A. HILDITCH writes that Mr. Hunt, of Nottingham, will deliver his first London lecture at Claremont Hall on Sunday evening, the 15th, and hopes he will be well supported.

J. GREIG.—We cannot very well make announcements without full particulars of time, place and subject.

BEN. TURNER.—You must practise a good deal more before your verses are quite up to the mark.

S. MARYON, 2 Henry Street, Penton Street, Pentonville, supplies this paper and other Secular literature.

E. DAWSON.—We cannot give a paragraph every week. Your cricket club is now fairly on its legs, and you must remember that our space is limited.

E. CHAPMAN.—Thanks, but it has already appeared.

C. W. ROWE.—The person you refer to is of course entitled to his own opinion. It is impossible for us to discuss the character of the *Freethinker*. Taste and sentiment are far less important than truth. At any rate we are not so stupid as to edit this paper to please the enemy.

J. CLAYTON.—"Shirking" is an awkward word and nearly landed your letter in the waste-paper basket. We said that your concluding question was meaningless. You asked—Can an inanimate thing move itself? We repeat, this question as it stands is meaningless. Every word in it would have to be rigidly defined before an answer could be given, and even then it would involve a discussion of the ultimate theory of force and matter, which is impossible in this column. If you ask, in the ordinary sense of the words, whether a glass or porcelain vase can move from a table without the operation of some extrinsic cause, we should answer, decidedly not. If the vase shifted the question would arise, What is that extrinsic cause? and as we were not present when this erratic motion occurred, we decline the responsibility of accounting for it.

C. SMITH.—No doubt a few outdoor lectures in Edinburgh during the summer would do a great deal of good. Why not mention the matter to the local branch of the N. S. S.? Mr. Collins' pamphlet can be ordered through our office. You want much more practice in versifying.

A. J. APPLETON.—Thanks. We wish our readers would always look out for newspaper cuttings to send us.

JOCOSERIA.—We had already seen them, but we are obliged all the same.

JOHN BARNES.—Many thanks. We have pleasure and pride in seeing so many working men ardent friends of the *Freethinker*.

ST. O.—We have noticed Sir James Stephen's article.

P. E. J.—It is only rare numbers of the *Freethinker* that are of exceptional value, and unless your lot includes some of those there is scarcely need for your kind offer:

C. A. BERRY.—Mr. Bradlaugh's "Genesis" and the "Freethinker's Text-Book," Part I., with Dr. Aveling's "Student's Darwin," would probably help you.

ARGUS.—Received with thanks.

W. PRICE.—Unfortunately we have not sufficient knowledge of the circumstances to treat the case with proper effect. It looks a very promising subject, however, and we don't wonder at the parson's imitating Judas so far as to carry the bag.

J. FLETCHER.—Thanks for the papers. We have dealt with the subject. Of course we should be happy to see "the saints" in your town, but our time is very much occupied.

T. HARTLEY.—You ask us to explain things we never saw and don't believe. Surely a man's life is too precious to waste on the question of whether this or that happened in a spiritist *séance*. People who go in for that sort of thing have a tile loose or a design on other people's pockets.

W. LENOX.—Thomas Paine did not die a "true Atheist" for he never was one. He died as he lived, with the sentiments expressed in "The Age of Reason." The pious stories about his death are sheer fabrications, fashioned by bigotry out of falsehood. They say the Devil is the father of lies. Well, if he turns out as many in a year as the Christians do in a day, he is a marvellously prolific old gentleman.

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.

## EDITORIAL.

MR. WHEELER'S health is fortunately much improved, and we hope he will soon be able to go to the seaside for a few weeks before resuming his work. He is grateful for the solicitude shown by the Freethought party on his behalf, and hopes to repay their goodness by still better work for the cause when he has recovered his strength.

The July number of *Progress* will begin a new series. The price will be reduced to *threepence*, so as to place the magazine within the reach of a wider circle of readers. There will be no falling-off in the quality of the contents, and no change in the editorial management. A special effort will be made to render the July number exceptionally interesting; it will also be liberally advertised; and we venture to hope that its many friends will try to promote its circulation in any way they find convenient. We never expected to make any profit on *Progress*; we intended it to be a superior organ of advanced ideas; and we shall be satisfied if it serves that purpose without being a pecuniary burden.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

A VERY crowded audience gathered at Claremont Hall last Sunday evening to hear Mr. Foote's new lecture on "Judas Iscariot." As an accident had happened to the gas, the hall was lit up with wax candles, and four of them standing on the table made it look like a High Church altar. We doubt if any of the gospel shops in London are so well patronised in the summer weather as are our Secular halls.

SIR JOHN BENNETT informs us that he has printed a new edition (50,000 copies) of his racy lecture on "The House of Lords." This is a good sign of the times.

*Lucifer*, a plucky little Freethought paper in Valley Falls, Kansas, has a good report of the proceedings at the Hall of Science on the morning of Mr. Foote's release. It gives extracts from the speeches of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, and adds that "the speech of Mr. Foote in response was grandly worthy of the occasion."

MR. F. W. MOORE, of Bloomfield, Iowa, has applied for an injunction against Bible-reading and psalm-singing in the public schools. The judge has given a long statement of the reasons why he refuses to interfere. Mr. Moore is now appealing to a higher court against his decision. We wish him success, but fear that bigotry and prejudice will be too strong for him.

THE Rev. W. Thompson, secretary of the London Mission Society, acknowledges that on his recent missionary tour he has had to listen to a great deal of adverse criticism on mission work. In India and China he was told that heathen servants were always better than those professing to be Christians. He acknowledges that many converts receive just enough Christian teaching to become "utterly conceited and spoiled," and that the number of erstwhile Sunday-school children in prison has shocked him.

THE *Anti-Christian*, a Bengal Freethought monthly, has the following curious fancy:—

“Cruelty, with Hatred and Rancor, one day  
Met Ignorance and Slavery on their way.  
Theft, Infamy and Abuse were passing by;  
Nuisance and Indecency were also nigh.  
Behold, Treachery and priestly Yoke then came.”

These individuals or personifications put their initials together and found that they represented Christianity. “Unfortunately,” says the *Thinker*, another Hindoo Freethought periodical, in its comments on this passage, “there are no more letters in the word to bring out its perfect character.” The Hindoo mind is evidently not very favorably impressed by the religion of their foreign rulers.

THE *Thinker*, in the half of it printed in English (for the remaining pages, printed in one of the Hindoo languages, must remain as curious mysteries to us), denounces the native superstition as strongly as it does the European. It speaks of the “lazy, stupid and ignorant Brahmins, some of them going by the cursed name of priests, the curse of nations,” and notices how readily they “feed upon the coffers of the pagodas, which are nothing but the collections made from the well-earned means of the working classes at large.” “With these,” it continues, “you will see a group of prostitutes—‘God’s maids’—well arrayed and well fed by the pagodas, who attract the attention of ignorant, uneducated youths, and thus entice them to prematurely quit this ‘world of Maya.’” It denounces “the glaring immorality advocated in their boasted ‘God’s place of worship’ by having, and in fact nourishing, a host of these cursed dancing girls,” and it declares that it is now high time that every educated person “should raise a loud cry for the demolition of at least the abominably reckless vices resulting from Hindoo pagodas, though not for the annihilation of the pagodas themselves.”

“In some places the pagodas and the idols therein,” says the *Thinker*, “are peculiarly and wonderfully built to attract the attention of the mob. The cunning Brahmins, by exhibiting these things to the public as the manifestations of their omnipotent God’s wonders, are fully aware of their getting a sumptuous living of which these drones should be ashamed.” Idols are sometimes made, it appears, with open mouths for receiving the offerings of the faithful, and with a sort of lid inside secretly worked by the priest. When he thinks the liberality of the worshipper is exhausted, the Brahmin closes the lid and thus indicates, to the great joy of the devotee, that the idol is perfectly satisfied. Judging from the actions of the priests at home, we imagine that if they had such an idol here they would never allow its mouth to be closed at all.

ACCORDING to a recent sermon of Dr. Kögel, Court Chaplain, there are now in the Evangelical Church 100 cures vacant in Brandenburg alone through default of applicants, while in Posen nearly one-fourth of the whole number are vacant.

A FIRE broke out in a Louisville church the other Sunday. It was with great difficulty that many of the congregation were awakened in time to save their lives. We remember being in a church one hot Sunday in July some years ago, at an English watering place, and such was the eloquence of the sermon, and such the profound attention of the congregation, that if a fire had broken out just then, and spread with anything like decent celerity, the only two people who would have stood a chance of saving themselves were the parson and a wide-awake Freethinker, who had strayed in like a goat among the sheep.

THE famous “Three Trials for Blasphemy” has been reduced to one shilling. This will meet the want of many Freethinkers, who desired to have a copy without being able to afford the higher price. The report is absolutely verbatim, and it contains Lord Coleridge’s grand summing-up, which his lordship has thought fit to publish in a separate form at a shilling.

THE Newport murderer is said to be mad, and his madness appears to be associated with religion. Just after he had shot his wife he was heard to exclaim: “Six sacks gone up to heaven and my soul has gone with them!”

THE Rev. Marcus Rainsford says that “God has given us all he has in his only begotten son.” He particularly wishes to fasten upon our minds the words—“As ye have received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in him” (Col. ii, 6). In a properly-revised version this would probably be given as “walk into him,” a command which we will endeavor to obey.

MATTHEW ARNOLD greatly dislikes the vulgarity which steals into the worship of Christians. He takes a mischievous delight in quoting, in essay after essay, the following verse

of a hymn, which he declares expresses the average piety of Protestant devotees of the middle class:—

“My Jesus to know and feel his blood flow,  
‘Tis life everlasting, ‘tis heaven below.”

The *North American Review* says he is never tired of thrusting it in their faces as a proof that they cannot adore their redeemer without shocking every principle of good taste.

THE *Anti-Christian* of Calcutta reproduces Mr. Foote’s letter to Judge North, to show how Christian goals convert Freethinkers.

A GREAT demonstration against the Blasphemy Laws will take place on Tunbridge Wells Common at 3 p.m. on Sunday, June 15. Delegates will be present from London, Brighton, Hastings, Maidstone, Sydenham, Chatham, Rochester and Strood. Messrs. W. J. Ramsey, George Standing, Robert Forder, H. Seymour, J. Lilley and others will address the meeting. We hope all Freethinkers in the district will make a point of attending, so that the demonstration may be orderly, imposing and effective.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* says that we have “a Home Secretary whose ‘precautions’ in the way of searching luggage make us the laughing-stock of Europe.” True, but how could we be anything else than the laughing-stock of Europe with a Harcourt in the Cabinet?

YOUNG Mr. Justin McCarthy, who aspires to represent Athlone, has been accused of Atheism. Thereupon Mr. Parnell, who is anxious to increase his Parliamentary group with another McCarthy, telegraphs to the election committee that the statement is an “infamous and atrocious falsehood,” and threatens to prosecute the circulators of such a horrid libel. The Protestant leader of the Home Rulers wishes to reassure the “priests and people” of Athlone. This is very significant; and no less significant is Mr. Parnell’s well assumed indignation. Of course he knows that, in the eyes of the bigoted Catholics of Ireland, Atheism is worse than theft, adultery or murder; and infinitely worse than living luxuriously at Westminster on the Land League funds. We are proud to see Atheism denounced by men like Mr. Parnell and his slippery friends.

TOM CANNON, the jockey, has purchased the advowson of Oadby, near Leicester, for £1,500, which is £5 less than he paid for the Black Dog Inn. Tommy C. has now the right to say who shall be parson in that parish. With the pulpit in his hands, he will supply the natives with both kinds of spirit. This is very cheerful news. We rejoice at anything that brings the Church into contempt.

## CHRISTIAN AND MAORI.

TAWHIAO, King of the Maoris, is now in England. A deputation of New Zealand natives is also on its way to our shores. These people come here in a probably vain endeavor to obtain from the Christians at home the justice denied to them by the Christians in New Zealand, who seize their lands by force, or obtain them by cunning treaties and pitiful bribes. Tawhiao remembers the early missionaries. “They used to tell us,” he says, “that we should be burned up unless we believed.” The first man who came to the king’s father, Potatan I, to ask him to sign the Treaty of Waitanga was a missionary who is now the “Venerable” Archdeacon Maunsell. Potatan refused, whereupon, says his son, the missionary turned to a friendly Maori who accompanied him and said, “This ignorant old man! if he had signed I would have given him a blanket.” The name of the “ignorant old man” was subsequently attached to the treaty, but he himself did not sign it.

That the natives have been treated with great injustice is shown by the surprising fact that a Government Commission appointed in 1879 to investigate certain native claims, actually decided in favor of the Maoris, after a most prolonged and exhaustive investigation which cost no less than £3,008. To give effect to this decision would have required the payment of some three million pounds sterling to the aboriginal landowners. As might be expected, the Christian legislature of New Zealand shuffled out of it, and we are told that, to this day, not a shilling has been paid to these benighted heathens in compensation for the lands stolen from them by Christian immigrants with the practical connivance of Christians at home who profess that they dearly wish to teach these natives Christianity in order to make them honest and neighborly. We wonder whether these Christians ever ask themselves if it was honest and neighborly to act towards these Maoris as

they have done, and then crush them into submission by a bitter war waged by the military forces of a great empire like England.

Sir George Grey, the foremost statesman of New Zealand, once publicly declared that "justice had not been done to the natives" by the Minister of Lands. The natives complain that they have been wrongfully dispossessed of the soil, and that the agreements made with them by the various Governments have invariably been broken whenever the Christian Legislature have found them to be too irksome to be kept. Their appeals have been in vain. Christian ears have ever been as deaf to their cries as the ears of God's chosen people were to the shrieks and death-groans of the Canaanites whose land God had commanded them to steal. God, of course, must be on the side of the Christian. Why trouble then about the poor Maori, or Zulu, or Indian, or other modern representative of the Canaanitish nations, when God so evidently and manifestly intends that they shall be dispossessed of their territory in favor of true believers? Many of the natives have spent more money in coming to the Legislature for redress than the land of which they had been robbed was worth. The natives have now decided to appeal from the Colonial Government to the Imperial one. They have raised over £3,000 to defray the cost of these hopeless missions. No one in New Zealand, except the natives, expects the slightest practical result. The whole matter, in fact, is laughed at.

The intelligent native finds that the Christian people who profess such lofty morality are a set of unprincipled land-thieves. He is compelled to regard them as swindlers, who are quite willing to supply him with rum and Bibles, but who will not display towards him the commonplace virtues of honesty, justice and sincerity, which he would prefer to all the high-flown Christian talk in the world. What to him are the vaunted "blessings of colonisation?" What does he care for the sickening praises of Christian love and British honor, which are dinned into his ears as an ample compensation for his stolen lands?

If Christians, both at home and in New Zealand, do not wish to be set down by the future historian as hypocrites who cared nothing, in any practical way, for what little of good teaching may have been associated with their religion, but only for self interest, they must take this matter in hand. The "Infidel" can do little in the matter except stir up the Christian by his reproaches, for he himself, like the Maori, is fighting the Christian for the common rights of humanity stolen from him by self-complacent bigotry. But he will win these rights both for himself and for all men. The day of his power is at hand. Unfortunately by that time the New Zealander will have become extinct under a policy of Christian kindness which in practice is identical with artful robbery and callous indifference to the rights and interests and feelings of others.

W. P. BALL.

### THE LAUGH THAT KILLS.

A LONG face and a grave demeanor are essentially the characteristics of the truly pious. A hearty laugh is the first step to heterodoxy, especially when it arises out of a serious consideration of orthodox theology. Get a good Christian to smile over the "rib story," or to giggle over the wonderful feats of Samson of long hair and jawbone celebrity, and you have put him on the broad road that leads to everlasting truth.

Nothing in my experience I enjoy more than beholding a pious, a very pious Christian, taking his first lesson in Freethought. Balaam's talking donkey is brought on the scene; the prophet is observed administering some vigorous thwacks on the poor beast's rump; and attention is called to the fact that no representative of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is anywhere to be seen; the angel, with outstretched sword, stands there to overawe the poor donkey; and still the prophet urges it on. When at last the ill-used ass opens its mouth to admonish the prophet, take a sly glance at your Christian auditor. You will observe that he has just opened his mouth, too, not to swallow Balaam's moke, but to allow his features to have full play; a smile plays about his lips, which by and bye changes into hearty merriment. And the gospel of Balaam and his wonderful ass has departed from that man's mind for ever.

And yet observe again. How serious this Christian appears when you apply terms of strong reproach to his pet God, Jahveh. With Iago, he seems to be saying—"Touch me not so near." But the sword-thrusts wound. Again apply your ridicule. Bring Jonah quietly on the scene. Introduce him to his berth on board ship; let the sailors chaff him a little in real Hebrew fashion; then rock him quietly off to sleep. Now the billows roar and the thunder rolls, but Jonah snores on. Paint the sailors fuming and sweating with fear, and not even giving utterance to one vigorous and unnecessary adjective, but seriously arguing that somebody aboard is the cause of the storm. Now look at your Christian right in the face: he is getting ready to enjoy the fun. The lots are cast; Jonah is preparing for a dive. Are you ready? the sailors cry, and up comes the whale; and at one gulp the prophet is transported safely into his new quarters.

Now for a quiet prayer! Now for a song of thanksgiving! Now another prayer and another song, until this monotonous proceeding disgusts even the big fish, and the prophet is unceremoniously vomited on to the shore. Ah! now you hear. The laughter is loud and hearty. Poor Jonah! Nobody will ever swallow him again.

Halloa! now who is this that comes with ghostly tread upon the scene? It is Mr. Satan, and he has come to play the Devil with poor Job. He has been wandering up and down and to and fro in the earth, but the Lord has not seen him; but now the Lord has caught a glimpse of him he has given him instructions to do as he pleases with the patriarch.

Those boils! Those comforters! That wife! That Devil! That God! What, the pious Christian laughs at this too? Ah, he is free! It is that laugh that kills: and it will kill, too, all the superstitions that ignorance ever conceived, wickedness formulated, or credulity sustained.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

### PROFANE JOKES.

WHEN two young ladies kiss each other they fulfil a Gospel injunction. They are doing unto each other what they would that men should do unto them.

OBVIOUS! Visitor (at our Sunday-school): "What is the outward and visible form in baptism?" Pupil (tentatively, after a long pause at this poser): "Please, teacher, the baby?"

TRUE MODESTY.—Mr. Spinks: "I had such a beautiful dream last night, Miss Briggs! I thought I was in the Garden of Eden——" Miss Briggs (with simplicity): "And did Eve appear as she is generally represented, Mr. Spinks?" Mr. Spinks: "I—I—I—I didn't look."

IN THE CHOIR.—During the sermon one of the quartette fell asleep. "Now's your chants," said the organist to the soprano. "See if you can tickle the tenor." "You wouldn't dare duet," said the contralto. "You'll wake hymn up," suggested the bass. "I could make a better pun than that, as sure as my name's Psalm!" remarked the boy that pumped the organ; but he said it solo that no one quartette.

"How do you like the new minister, Mary?" "I think he's just too sweet." "Preaches eloquent sermons?" "I don't know; our pew's too far back to hear well, but he called the other evening while pa and ma were away, and said he was going to restore one of the customs of the earlier church." "Did he give you any idea of what it was?" "Oh, yes; he gave it to me several times." "What did he call it?" "The holy kiss."

### REVIEWS.

*Compulsory Vaccination in England.* With incidental references to Foreign States. By WILLIAM TEBB. London: E. W. Allen, 1884.—An assumption of medical infallibility is almost as absurd as the pretensions of the priest. We do not propose entering into the merits of the vaccination question, but would strongly recommend those who think the matter has been disposed of by the utterances of Sir Lyon Playfair and others of his profession, to look into such works as the one under review or the numerous publications of the Anti-Vaccination Society. He will there find plenty of facts and figures warranting another conclusion. Apart from the merits of the medical question, we unhesitatingly give our opinion that the law which punishes with cumulative fines the father who, after having had one child die from vaccination, refuses to have the operation performed on others, is one more instance of the outrages upon personal liberty which show what a farce it is to boast about our land of freedom. When laws come into conflict with the consciences of men, they should be swept away and not consciences forced.

(Continued on next page.)

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REVIEWS—(continued).

*Natural Man and Christianity a Degrading Religion.* By ARTHUR B. MOSS. Progressive Publishing Co.—Two fresh additions to the stock of Mr. Moss's pamphlets. Both are well worth reading, and we prophecy for them an extensive sale.

*The Present Day.* Edited by G. J. HOLYOAKE. June.—Eight pages of matter, largely consisting of reprinted letters from other journals; probably intended for those who still retain an interest in Mr. Holyoake's utterances, and possessing very little attraction for others.

*To-Day.* June. The Modern Press.—This magazine is the organ of the English Socialists, although most of its contributors have foreign names. The price used to be sixpence, but it is now raised to a shilling, as though that were more suitable to the pockets of the working classes. The contents of the present number are not uninteresting. "Stepniak" contributes a powerful article on "Russian Political Prisons;" Paul Lafargue has "A Few Words with Mr. Herbert Spencer," in which he allows himself to write of our greatest living Evolutionist in a rather impertinent style; Edith Simcox signs a nebulous paper on "Controversial Charities;" G. B. Shaw continues his "Unsocial Socialist;" Dr. Edward Aveling has an interesting piece of dramatic criticism; Mrs. Lynn Linton writes on "Palermo;" and Miss Marx furnishes the most readable portion of the contents—a monthly record of the International Popular Movement.

*Art and Socialism.* By WILLIAM MORRIS. Leek Bijou Reprints, VII.—We can heartily recommend Mr. Morris's able and eloquent lecture. It is full of good ideas well expressed. Mr. Morris is perhaps a little too optimistic in his view of nature, and ascribes to "society" some of the evils that are inseparable from life in any form. He does not make sufficient allowance for the sheer "cussedness" there is in the universe, and it is rather a rose-water view of Progress to suppose that all the good things Mr. Morris proposes can be had by decreeing them, for the obstinacy of nature would have to be overcome even if human nature were properly perfected. We scarcely have the heart to ask Mr. Morris to read James Thomson's "Proposals for the Speedy Extinction of Evil and Misery." It might tone down his enthusiasm to a low level and spoil his best qualities. No, we prefer him as he is, and the reader will probably agree with us. The get-up of this publication is admirably artistic, like all the rest of the series.

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