

THE FREETHINKER.

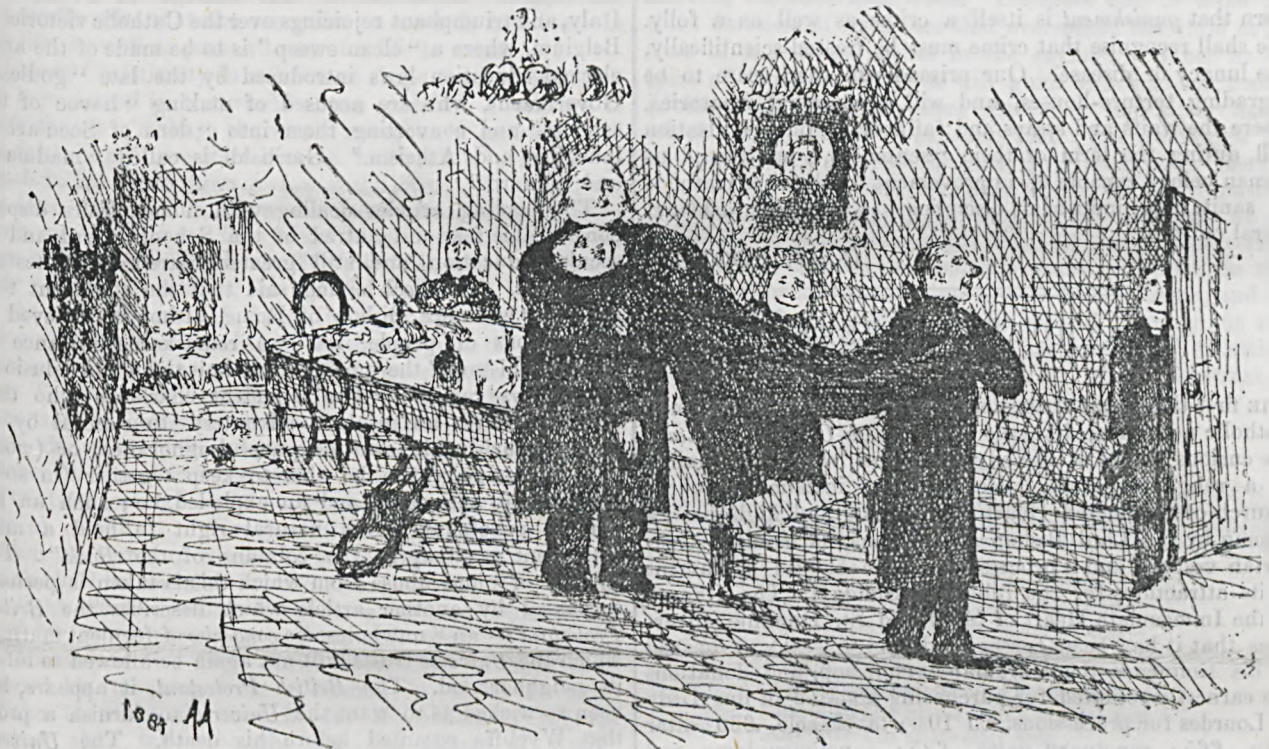
EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



THE ELEVATION OF THE HOST.

CHRISTIANITY AND CRIME.

FREETHINKERS are the most illogical people on the face of the earth. They ought to be frightfully wicked, but they are not. Any Christian can demonstrate that Freethought leads to drunkenness, theft, adultery and murder; and it is perfectly clear that, if we act on our principles, we ought to commit these offences as easily and frequently as we eat and drink or lie down to sleep. But somehow we don't. We are as moral as our neighbors, and sometimes a little more so. We don't fill the gaols or even the workhouses. We don't even commit suicide, although Lord Tennyson has written a poem to remind us of our duty in that respect. We are the most perverse, stiffnecked, "cussed" set in the world; and it is no wonder that the Christians are enraged at our obstinacy. If we had any sense of decorum we should commit a few crimes just to keep their logic in countenance.

When I entered Holloway Goal a clerky official asked what was my religion. "None," I replied. He stared as though I had said I was neither man nor woman. Protestant he knew, and Catholic he knew, but what sort of a creature was this with no religion at all. I had to repeat my statement before he could fully comprehend it. I afterwards found that it was equally strange to the criminals. They could not understand my position; it was a perfect enigma to them. I have heard a couple whispering outside my cell door about the remark on my card, "Religion—none." "What is he," said one, "Catholic or Protestant?" "Why," said the other, "he ain't anything." And then came a dead silence. I could not tell whether they were astonished or frightened, but I was evidently too much for them in some way.

Protestants in Holloway Gaol had white tickets on their doors, and Catholics red. They went to chapel at different times, and on Sundays they often exercised in separate

divisions. No such arrangements were needed for Freethinkers. They did not require a special ticket. They were in fact as rare as black swans. Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Kemp and I were, I believe, the only Freethinkers in the establishment, and probably the only honest men.

Yes, the appalling amount of crime in pious England is not the work of Freethinkers. Many of the inmates of our prisons have had a religious education. Nearly all of them have some smattering of Bible knowledge. While they are serving their terms they attend "divine worship" every other day, and hear a sermon every Sunday. Yet statistics show that most of them return to prison again and again. Preaching has as much effect on them as a shower of water on a duck's back.

Now I do not say that Christianity incites people to crime, but I do say that a religion with such pretensions, such influence, and such a long past, is largely responsible for what it has not abolished. If it cannot deter from crime, of what use is it? for it certainly does not incite men to virtue. Nor is it needed for that purpose. The natural moral feelings of mankind suffice for ordinary people. Religion has scarcely ever aimed at anything but restraining bad propensities. All the ten commandments, for instance, begin with "thou shalt not." If religion, then, cannot even check evil, what use is it? What return does it make for the huge outlay upon it year after year and generation after generation?

The truth is that criminal dispositions are not moved by threats of Hell or fear of the Devil. These terrors may unhinge the delicate mind of a Cowper, but they have no influence on Bill Sykes. The enterprising burglar when he goes "a-burgling" has a very strong respect for the policeman, but if he met the Devil he would probably ask him to stand a drink. And he would wield his jemmy with no less vigor and precision, so long as he was unobserved, if twenty parsons were preaching in neighboring houses or twenty Salvation Armies were howling in the street. The

dexterous pickpocket is so little moved by preaching and praying that he frequently selects God's house as the scene of his operations, and "sneaks" watches and purses while their owners are "seeking the Lord." Hell is a long way off, and Mr. Ikey Moses's receiving house is so near.

When criminals are caught and imprisoned they have the gospel preached unto them, for every gaol has its chaplain to care for their souls as well as a doctor to care for their bodies. But Christianity does them no good. On the contrary, by sanctioning the idea of sin and punishment, it maintains our prison system, which is an organised imbecility, to say nothing of its brutality, and a huge manufactory of crime. Prisoners are not subjected to a wise and elevating discipline; they are simply punished, that is degraded; and they leave the gaol worse than they entered it. Some day, when Christianity has lost its power and prestige, we shall learn that *punishment* is itself a crime as well as a folly. We shall recognise that crime must be treated scientifically, like lunacy or disease. Our prisons will then cease to be degrading torture-houses, and will become reformatories, where the waifs and strays and failures of our civilisation will, during the term of their "sentences," be treated as human beings capable of improvement by the sure methods of sanitation, industrial discipline, and intellectual and moral culture.

G. W. FOOTE.

CATHOLIC PAPERS.

THE first thing that strikes one's eye on taking up a Roman Catholic newspaper like the *Universe* or *Catholic Times* is the curious nature of the advertisements, which are mainly of a religious nature. We find, for instance, that the Church of the Sacred Heart announces grand high mass, a sermon by the Lord Bishop of Emmaus, harmonised Gregorian vespers, and a procession of the blessed sacrament as its attractions for the following Sunday. The Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Dominic advertises that it has been consecrated and solemnly re-opened by his Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop, and donations are earnestly solicited for purchasing a statue of our Lady of Lourdes for processions, £5 10s.; tabernacle, £36; altar rails, £65; sanctuary gates, £25; sanctuary lamp and chain, £17 10s.; and so forth. If you cannot afford cash you are earnestly requested to say at least a *pater* and an *ave*. Various missions of our Lady of Seven Dollars—we beg pardon, the last word though very appropriate we find is printed as "Dolors"—want amounts varying from "what you please" up to £300. "For love of Jesus, Joseph and Mary" you are to send an alms to the school and sanctuary at Batley Carr. For all benefactors there will be a weekly mass, daily memento, children's prayers and fasts, and communions of the consecrated spouses of our Lord. The dear reader is requested to send a donation at once to Corpus Christi Church to save children from the Board School. 30,000 shillings are wanted at once for a new church at Tottenham. The Church of the Immaculate Conception is in sad need of an altar in honor of the bitter thirst of our divine Lord. One institution has a religious lottery with several hundred "valuable prizes," ranging from £50 downwards. Another announces over 400 prizes. The Scapularians want all the sixpences they can get in honor of our Lady of Mount Carmel. Suffering souls in purgatory will be prayed for in the Church of our Lady of the Holy Souls at the marvellously low rate of one shilling each. People who collect money for the above pious purposes are usually promised prayers, sacred pictures, or lottery tickets in return.

Besides the many begging appeals from churches and missions, there are other piteous appeals from priests and private persons for money to clear them from debt or save them from ruin. One priest wants £20, another £50, another £600.

The business advertisements deal with all manner of religious articles. You can have a beautiful oleograph of the sacred heart of Jesus for 5s., or a picture of the entombment of our Lord, by Velasquez, for 4,000 guineas. Busts of the sacred heart of Jesus are only 1s. Wax candles, sincerely recommended by the Cardinal-Archbishop, can be purchased at 2s. 2d. per pound for the finest qualities. The Immaculate Conception, in tinted statuary, is 10s. Rosaries, pocket pyxes, holy oil stocks, crucifixes, scapulars, chasubles, chalice veils, stoles, maniples, burses, "angel colored holy

water fonts," and all the other paraphernalia of Christian piety, can be had at prices varying from 9d. to several pounds.

Some of the news reads almost as curiously as the advertisements. We have a long account of the proceedings of the Oblate Fathers—a comical name, which recalls the "oblate" spheroid of our early geographical lessons and make us wonder whether these Fathers are spheroidal bodies flattened at the polls. We find that a "horrible sacrilege" has been committed at a church at Brooklyn, some scoundrel having forced open the tabernacle with a chisel and abstracted the ciborium, whatever that may be. The thief took about a hundred "consecrated particles"—all of them verily and indeed converted into the body of Christ—and threw them about in handfuls in the streets, to the intense horror and disgust of genuine believers. There are lamentations over the impious "confiscations" and outrages in France and Italy, and triumphant rejoicings over the Catholic victories in Belgium, where a "clean sweep" is to be made of the anti-clerical education laws introduced by the late "godless" Government, who are accused of making "havoc of the schools" and converting them into "dens of Secularism, infidelity and Atheism." Garibaldi is called "madman" and "dotard."

The leading articles dealing with home affairs display considerable fear and hatred of the School Board and of secular education, and still greater hatred of Protestant opponents. The *Rock* having said that the statement that St. Peter was once Bishop of Rome, although believed in by millions of people, was "a remarkable instance of fabulous history," there being "no limit to human delusion," the *Universe* replies: "The impudent charlatan who thus endeavors with an insolent effrontery to conceal by an empty flourish his own disgraceful ignorance, or (worse still) who hopes yet to be able to keep together (in some quarters) an antiquated and an exploded lie; such an incurable miscreant has a natural right to hold a most prominent position in the columns of the *Rock*." The column of pious abuse from which this is taken is perhaps surpassed by another article which describes the *British Protestant* as an "unwholesome congeries of feculent matter," which the *Universe* trusts will not again be allowed to infect its neighborhood. The *British Protestant*, it appears, has been so wicked as to want the *Universe* to furnish a proof that Wycliffe recanted before his death. The *Universe* replies that it has had a large experience of Protestant "brain-picking" and is not to be caught so easily. It challenges the Protestant journal to first prove that Wycliffe did not recant, which must be done by means of other authorities than Potter, Young and Key, whom it despises. The *Universe* then proceeds to describe its opponents as "fire-brands," "unscrupulous fanatics," "profligates," "professors of iniquity," and so forth, who with "wicked fancies" and "mad inventions" mislead their luckless victims, the masses, from the truth which they detest, with an instinct little less than diabolical.

After reading this sample of the controversial courtesies that pass between representative Christians, it is rather amusing to find the *Catholic Times* endorsing the fervent assertion of the *Catholic Standard* that "Christianity is the only power that can resolve the antagonisms of society" and "infuse into the hearts of all that spirit of good-will and mutual respect, consideration and affection, which alone can make the peace of society firm and lasting, and bind together all classes, by the ties of Christian love and duty."

Pretty preaching and ugly practice is what one naturally expects of so insidious and relentless a foe to liberty and progress as the Church of Rome has always shown itself.

W. P. BALL.

HEROD AND THE INNOCENTS.—The alleged slaughter of the innocents at Bethlehem by Herod in order to get rid of Jesus, had it occurred, could not have failed to have found a place in the histories of Herod, and being unmentioned in the accounts of his misdeeds, we may assure ourselves it never happened.—*T. L. Strange*, "What is Christianity?" p. 37; 1880.

PRESENT CHRISTIANITY.—Assuredly if any demonstration be needed of the necessary unsoundness of a system which rests upon history, it is to be found in the present condition of Christianity. Declining to trust its doctrine to Reason, the Church has taken its stand upon historical evidence, only to find this give way under it; and it is now without any basis save that of custom. The time has come when Christians are Christians only because they are accustomed to be Christians. Habit has superseded conviction.—"The Perfect Way; or, the Finding of Christ," p. 31; 1882.

CHRISTIAN SECULARISM.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—(Corinthians xv., 19).

In the days of her power Christianity murdered the intellects of the men and women who had the misfortune to be then in existence. With the capacity for thinking and reasoning their brains were crushed beneath the heavy weight of faith, placed by her blood-stained hands upon their heads. And now that she has to answer for her guilt, and the descendants of those whose minds she slaughtered or whose tongues she gagged pursue her, hurling after her flying form the darts of argument, she makes for fancied cities of refuge. On the terrors of impending annihilation she sees that which has no existence but in her own delirium, and madly cries that she can guide us towards happiness in this life, as well as preach to us of a life to come.

This is Christianity in a different shape to that in which she is presented in the words above quoted. I venture to think that it is a shape she would never have assumed had not faith in a future state become too weak a principle to attach to her more than a few enthusiasts. The business has been, and still is, when she has sufficient influence, to teach men to despise the things of this world and set all their affections on another. The disciples who abandoned their earthly possessions, the hermits who dwelt in deserts, all the real followers of Jesus in every age, might fail to recognise their mother church in the disguise of a secular teacher. If we are to learn Christian doctrine from the New Testament, it is absurd to tell us that that doctrine is capable of bettering man's temporal condition. Every page, almost every line, asserts or reveals the contrary. It teaches us to endure evils, not to remedy them, because the ills of time can admit of no comparison with the fancied joys of eternity. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans viii., 18). "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians iv., 17). Jesus is reported to have commenced his teaching with a sermon in which he said: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself" (Matthew vi., 34). Think of the kingdom of God to-day; perhaps to-morrow the poor-law board will think of you. That is the kind of teaching by which Christianity strives to promote the secular advancement of the human race. After delivering this discourse, the next thing we hear of Jesus is that he cured a leper. The whole country was swarming with lepers, suffering from a loathsome disease which made them outcasts from society, and rendered their lives an intolerable burden. Did this noble secular teacher, this skilled physician, say to the poor man "Go, make known the good work that has been wrought upon you, and bring hither those afflicted like yourself that I may heal them also?" No; he said "See thou tell no man" (viii., 4). Either his power of healing was an imposture, or he had no intention of exercising it with much liberality, for "when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side" (verse 18). Then he tells us that if we follow his example we shall degrade our humanity below the nature of the humblest creatures, for "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head" (verse 20). Yet, "he that saith he abideth with him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked" (1 John ii., 6). And "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter ii., 21).

From this it appears that if Christianity tended to improve man's temporal condition, the nomad of the desert would be in a higher state of advancement than the inhabitant of a civilised city. But the world does not grow better by Christian teaching, but by human intercourse, human affection, human sympathy and human labor. It deteriorates just in proportion as religious fanaticism shuts out his fellow man from each pious heart. Increasing energy, increasing knowledge, increasing kindness of disposition, these are advancement. In ignorant credulity and unfeeling brutality there is retrogression. Yet we read that Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi., 16). Another of his disciples said unto him, Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him,

Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead" (Matthew vii., 21—22).

Theology has always been the greatest impediment to progress. Men have been kept back from improvement just in proportion to the extent of their faith. Let mankind be firmly persuaded that this life is but a passage to another which must be one of endless bliss or endless woe, and their energies are dissipated upon a worthless vision. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Romans ix., 19). The time, the wealth, the strength, the brains of the human race wasted in the pursuit of an ever-changing myth, such are the secular fruits of Christianity. Let those who think it may be adapted to the elevation of our condition here reflect on its work in the past. Let them view the stake, the fire, the pincers, the rack. Let them call to mind the thick darkness of ignorance that overspread the world at the time of a practical belief in the saying: "When he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John xvi., 13). Let them glance at the bitter hatred which fills the hearts of believers still. Let them view the dirt and misery and poverty that thrive most where there is most faith. And then let them reflect on their master's teaching, "No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (Matthew ix., 16—17).

E. J. BOWTELL.

POOR OLD CHURCH!

"You may remember that there was some trouble about the licensing of this piece because there happened to be a bishop in it. I am told that the difficulty has now been satisfactorily arranged. The character remains in the piece, and so does all his dialogue; but he is no longer a dignitary of the Church."—*Reference*, June 15, 1884.

Poor tottering Church! And has it grown
Too frail—too feeble—to withstand
The light touch of the jester's hand—
The little dart by humor thrown?

And is its waning strength so small
That e'en the playwright's playful pen
May joke not at its holy men
Without great danger of its fall?

Ah, there's the secret! Smitten sore
The Church fears most our caustic chaff,
Which makes its sad disciples laugh
Till, laughing, they believe no more.

Believe no more the foolish lies
In which sky-pilots most delight;
For ridicule restores the sight
And strikes the scales from blinded eyes.

Poor, poor old Church! But we shall poke
Our humor at you none the less;
Although you whiningly confess
You are too weak to stand a joke.

F. W. B.

ACID DROPS.

BEECHER says we are to live as God lives. But according to Christian ideas God lives without eating, wears no clothes, pays no taxes, interferes in everybody's business, smites men with death and disease, and causes or permits the grossest injustice and cruelty. Are we to follow suit?

PETER GRANT, a local preacher at Charleston, U.S., was visited by a spirit from the Lord, who told him to discard his wife and take unto himself in her stead one Bella Green, about nineteen years of age. Of course he obeyed. The original wife had faith, and piously submitted to the heavenly will. Subsequently, however, finding herself totally deserted, she became troubled with wicked doubts, and has had her husband arrested. We wonder what the judge will say when this new Peter begins "Thus saith the Lord." Perhaps he'll order that witness to be subpoenaed.

The black gentry have been making a little distraint for tithes at Burscough, near Liverpool, on the farm of a Mr. Williams. A number of laborers, armed with pitchforks, prepared to resist the sanctified robbery. A body of police had to be called in to disarm them. After a considerable amount of fighting, the agents of the Holy Ghost managed to steal enough goods to meet their claim.

We hear that at Price's candle works the boys are fined six-

pence if they are absent from the daily prayers. As the juveniles have to choose between praying and paying, they pray, but many of them would almost as soon pay.

THE *Boston Watchman* says that within the last nine years nearly 800 churches have been burnt in America. The Lord doesn't seem to know his own houses out West. They ought to furnish him with a topographical map.

THE Salvationists have had a big Baptism of Fire meeting at Sheffield. Booth called on the Holy Ghost to "not merely saturate them with water, but make them red-hot with fire." Wouldn't there be a steam-explosion or two if the Holy Ghost mixed fire and water inside his saints in the way suggested? What a scene there would be with the holier members of the army bursting like bomb-shells or boilers. But if the Holy Ghost goes into the red-hot fire business the other party may fairly complain of such an infringement of his prerogative. We might also suggest that the insurance companies should refuse policies on buildings filled with red-hot-'uns.

THE Corporation of the City of London, which prosecuted us with other people's money, is a nice body of moral and religious men. Of course, or why should they prosecute us for insulting J. C. and the twelve apostles, the baker's dozen of the first Salvation Army? Curiously, however, they could give long odds to those gentlemen of Jerusalem, whom J. C. so vigorously denounced, in lying and hypocrisy. They have beaten all previous records in that line of late, and their peculiar opposition to Municipal Reform will remain as the best possible commentary on our imprisonment for the glory of God. As for their bribing, they carry it on wholesale. They are spending thousands of pounds of their reserve fund to prevent the sweeping out of their foul nests of corruption. The Corporation of Jerusalem were far less prodigal. They only voted thirty shillings for an information against Jesus Christ; and however we dislike their policy, we must admire their economy.

"How hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven!" So said Jesus Christ, and he ought to know. Yet the Bishop of Ripon has died worth £25,000. We shudder to think of the amount of fuel that sum will represent for him in hell.

HENRY GILBY was born a few centuries too late, or else in a wrong part of the world. He has been brought before Sir James Ingham, at Bow Street, for begging in the streets. Being of a musical turn of mind, he used to warble "Hark! the Herald Angels sing" and other pious ditties; and when the public threw him coppers he used to flop down on his knees and thank the Lord. He practised this attitude in the dock, but it did not move the hard heart of Sir James, who gave him fourteen days' hard labor. When asked if he had any witness, he replied, "Only God Almighty"; but Sir James evidently thought this witness quite insufficient, so Henry was removed to his cell, where he will have a whole fortnight to hear the herald angels sing.

A ZEALOUS writer in the *Christian World* advises everybody to "don the red guernsey." Yes, but if we all join the Salvation Army, who is to keep us? These warriors of the Lord would be unable to fight the Devil if there were not thousands of fools to save them from fighting starvation.

SHAFTESBURY says Spurgeon is a man after God's own heart. We hope not. The man whom the Bible describes as being after God's own heart was a murderer and an adulterer, besides having many other little failings. If he has any regard for his own character, Spurgeon should bring an action for libel against his lordship.

THE *Christian Herald* has a story of a child that wandered from its father's side while he slept, and fell over a precipice. The father wakes, misses the child, sees its mangled form at the foot of the rocks, and in his remorse accuses himself of being the murderer of his own child. "What a picture of the Church of God!" the *Herald* continues. We suppose the father must be God, who slumbers very soundly for thousands of years, while his children, orthodox and unorthodox alike, fall into abysses of misery, degradation and crime. If the heavenly Father ever awakes his remorse will be terrible. Perhaps out of pity for himself he will continue to sleep on for all eternity; and on the whole we rather hope he will.

DURING the past month the inhabitants of Albano, in Italy, have been greatly edified by a very pious hermit who has been living in a grotto near the town. He wore the dress of the third order of St. Francis, and was always prostrate before a cross or reading a book of prayers. Bread and vegetables formed his diet, and he was so entirely devoted to holy thoughts of a better world that he never would condescend to speak a single word to anyone. But somehow the police became curious. They found that Satan by some artful trick had made his features correspond exactly with those of a pious Veronese banker, who for very good reasons

had absconded. So the poor persecuted servant of God found himself arrested.

THE Rev. John Henry Jenkins absconded from his chapel in 1882, taking with him the children's subscriptions to the London Mission Society. He has just been caught and sentenced to twelve months' hard labor. When discovered he was acting as minister to a Congregational chapel in another part of London. Here he had got up a watch club among his congregation and had stolen several of the watches.

JOSEPH COOK says that all Asia is a ship and Japan is the rudder. The hand of Almighty God is to take hold of the rudder and steer Asia into a religious future. Fancy the size of the hand whose fingers are to clutch the Japanese empire as a rudder! But Joe Cook always dealt in Japan, or at any rate in lacquer.

DR. PENTECOST, a sort of Moody satellite, who has been shining a little in London lately, was asked by a Freethinker, who stayed to ask the question, Whether his creed would damn a man who lived an honest life but could not believe the dogmas of Christianity. The "reverend gentleman" replied "Most certainly." Well, if his creed will damn honest men, honest men will damn his creed.

A FEW days after, the Revival Company (Unlimited—in cheek) sent this "anxious inquirer" a circular, asking whether he was truly converted. In reply, he specially thanked Dr. Pentecost for his successful endeavors to make Freethinkers, and advised him to read Matthew xxiii., 15.

OUR recent notice of Mr. G. J. Holyoake's *Present Day* has roused the indignation of his namesake at Leicester, who edits an equally famous and widely circulated publication called the *Bookstore Monthly*. This gentleman writes an imaginary review of the *Freethinker*, to show what terrific satire he can write if provoked. He forgets that it will be time enough for him to review this paper when a copy is sent him for that purpose. *Present Day* was sent us for review, and we honestly said what we thought of it. It is easier to denounce our criticism than to refute it. W. H. Holyoake might cease playing the part of G. J. Holyoake's little dog. At any rate, he need not let his temper run away with his orthography. His fishy spelling of the word *fishy* almost prompts us to advise the Leicester Secularists to present him with a dictionary as a testimonial, with a special mark at the letter F.

MR. W. H. HOLYOAKE has always been crying down the *Freethinker* at his book-store in Humberston Gate, and he now complains that his sale has diminished. Very likely, for many of his customers buy it elsewhere. The circulation of this paper increases in Leicester as it increases everywhere else.

THOMAS BOYLE, lecturer on temperance and religion, is committed for trial on a charge of criminally assaulting two boys. It was asserted in evidence that he quoted Scripture to the lads as a justification of his villainy. How often have we urged that any enormity can be sanctioned with a Bible text! The "book of books" is one of the most immoral books in the world, and if it were not "God's word" it would be proscribed in every civilised country, or at least kept out of the hands of children except in expurgated editions.

THE Bishop of Truro has been pleading in St. Paul's, London, for "the poor, struggling, lonely fishermen" of his diocese. It sounded beautifully pathetic, and the large congregation of ladies were literally melted, partly in their handkerchiefs and partly in the collection box. But it turns out after all that the Bishop only wants £15,000 for the completion of his cathedral. That's his notion of helping "the poor, struggling, lonely fishermen."

We have received a printed "Form of Prayer" used on June 21, when the colors presented by Lady Brassey to the Bristol Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers were "consecrated" by the chaplain in full canonicals. It is one of the most blasphemous productions we ever saw, and God Almighty must blush for his friends. In addition to the prayer there is a hymn, probably composed by the sky-pilot himself, in which Jesus Christ is told that the Naval Volunteers are "ready for the warfare," and asked to "lead them on victorious over every foe." Fighting is ghastly work at any time and in any circumstances, but it is simply hellish to see a minister of the "gospel of love" consecrating warlike bunting in cold blood, and trying to enlist the lamb of God as an additional butcher.

THE Salvation Army is thinning at Poole notwithstanding the attraction of a simious young captain, who plays a concertina and dances like a Red Indian. A local paper, the *Telegram*, wonders how sober Christians can "support this sad and disgraceful burlesque." But why? Surely the Salvation Army to-day under General Booth is just a counterpart of the first Salvation Army under General Peter.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, July 6, Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville, London, N., at 7.30, on "Sky Pilots."
 Tuesday, July 8, Freethought Institute, York Street, Walworth, at 8.30, on "Judas Iscariot."

July 13, Claremont Hall; 16, Battersea; 20 and 27, Milton Hall, Aug. 3, Hall of Science, London; 10, Hall of Science; 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; 28, Edinburgh. Oct. 5, Liverpool; 19, Manchester.

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.

JOSEPH DAVIS thanks us for our appeal on his behalf, and states that the few pounds he has received, although far from sufficient to cover the costs he was meted in, have enabled him to make an arrangement for paying them, which will prevent the breaking up of his home.

E. DAWSON.—You forgot to enclose the rules.

T. WORLD.—Of course Freethought does not spread rapidly in a bigoted little watering-place, but we must all, as Lincoln said, keep pegging away, and hope for the best.

ROYAL NAVY.—Your letter is very amusing and we have read it with great interest. It is certainly surprising to find so many Freethinkers in the navy. "A Voice from the Ganges," price 1s., would perhaps meet your wants.

R. YOUNG.—Your note was correct, but it was too late for last week, and it is out of date for this.

J. BENT.—You will see the full announcement of Mr. Foote's Glasgow lectures in due course.

T. SKINNER asks us to announce that a special meeting of the West Hartlepool Branch of the N. S. S. will be held at the Citizen Club on July 6, when it is hoped that all Freethinkers in the district will try to attend.—T. Skinner, and all other correspondents, are requested to observe that business orders should be sent to Mr. Ramsey, and all letters respecting the *Freethinker* to Mr. Foote.

W. ATTWOOD.—Is not the Moody story a "cram"?

H. KELLY.—Thanks. Send more.

JUSTINA.—We will look into that converted Jew business.

W. M.—We are pleased to hear that Freethought is making headway in Maidstone, largely through this journal. Thanks.

H. SEYMOUR states that a Mrs. Parks has been discharged, after thirty years' service, from the employ of the Hon. A. J. Beresford Hope, M.P., for reading the *Freethinker* and other Secular literature.

W. WRIGHTON.—There is a good deal about the astronomical theory in the "Devil's Pulpit." Other aspects of the subject are treated now. We have no means of knowing whether Sir James Stephen intends to publish his article in a separate form. Judging from the verse you send us, J. Taylor, Baptist preacher, Sheffield, may be worthy of the attention of the lunacy commissioners, but he certainly is not worthy of ours.

J. MORRIS writes that he takes two copies of *Progress* now the price is reduced. Mr. Andrews, 76 Coleshill Street, Birmingham, and Mr. G. Wilson, 200 Great Francis Street, Vauxhall, Birmingham, sell the *Freethinker* and exhibit its contents sheet.

IGNORAMUS.—The contradiction is only apparent, not real. Paine was essentially right. The Hebrew prophet was not primarily a fortune-teller or an almanac maker. Deuteronomy is not an early but a late piece of Jewish scripture.

DEVIL'S HOOF.—We will see what can be done with it.

C. J. LOCK.—Numerical misprints will sometimes occur. We regret those you point out, but do not see much use in going back on them.

G. GRANT.—Thanks for cuttings and good wishes.

F. J. WALLER.—Received with thanks.

A. A. DAVIS.—We remember the meeting, and are glad to hear from you.

A. A. C.—See paragraph. Newspapers and cuttings never come out of season.

F. HARGREAVES.—There is not matter enough for an article.

PLAGUED HUSBAND.—Scripture readers will prow! about in the husband's absence, and it is hard to catch them. But if you ever succeed remember the advice of Mr. Samuel Weller, junior.

J. W. DAWSON.—Our space is too limited for reports of meetings.

S. MORRIS.—Yes, it is funny to see the pious and dreary Shaftesbury complaining of the spread of democratic opinions when we remember that his "lord and master" was a Communist. When he complains of the spread of "infidelity" he simply means that people don't think Shaftesbury infallible, and that is the principal article of his faith.

SUGAR PLUMS.

DESPITE the unfavorable weather, there were large audiences to greet Mr. Foote at Manchester last Sunday, and a crowded and extremely enthusiastic audience welcomed him at Birmingham on Monday, when Mr. W. W. Collins took

the chair. Next Sunday evening, at Claremont Hall, Mr. Foote will lecture on "Sky Pilots," for the first time in London.

PROFESSOR F. W. NEWMAN will shortly publish an important work on "Christianity in its Cradle," which we shall introduce to our readers directly it is issued.

THE Lambeth Vestry is moving against the black leeches of that parish. Since 1852 the Church burial grounds have been disused, in consequence of their being overcrowded; but the Burial Board has gone on paying clerical fees to the parish clergy all the same. During the four years, 1880-1884, the clergy of St. Mary's Church received £652; St. John's, £132; St. Mark's, £383; St. Matthew's, £226; St. Luke's, £38; and a number of minor churches that never possessed any burial ground received £194. These black leeches would doubtless go on sucking in this style till the end of time. Their day of judgment, however, appears to have come. The voice of economy is their trumpet of doom.

THE *Christian World* says that "there are some hoary falsehoods waiting to be disproved." True, and John's God Almighty with "hair white like wool" is one of them.

AT the annual meeting of the English Church Union one of the speakers said there was a great class consisting of those who were bitterly hostile to religion, and if people wanted to know how fast this hostility was growing they had only to buy any of the Sunday morning papers—*Lloyd's*, *Reynold's*, or the *Weekly Dispatch*—and read the long list of announcements of Secularist lectures to be delivered on the Sunday evening. Yes, that list is significant. It shows that these widely-circulated papers have found out that there is a general interest in Freethought. While the high-priced papers give lists of Christian preachers, the cheap people's papers give lists of Secular lecturers.

WHEN eminent men die, religious people nearly always try to claim them as strong supporters of their creed. The *Christian Commonwealth* acknowledges that the attempt to ascribe to President Lincoln, Charles Dickens and George Eliot a character which they practically repudiated while living, is neither complimentary nor just to their memories. It says there is no evidence that Charles Reade was a Christian in any genuine sense of the term.

A LADY asked Gerald Massey, who is sojourning in Brooklyn, his view of the Rev. Talmage's tantrums, and he hastily penned out the following:—

TALMAGE'S HYMN.

Let all creation hold its tongue
 Whilst I uplift my Sunday song,
 And bang the Bible, fierce and fell,
 And shake the sinner over hell!

Damnation! 'tis my thrilling theme!
 With fires infernal all a gleam;
 I love the glorious tale to tell,
 And shake the sinner over hell!

Your father was Adam—bad lot;
 Eve damned you ere you were begot;
 Of hope and joy I ring the knell,
 And shake the sinner over hell!

The Almighty left you in the lurch;
 Your only chance is in the church;
 Be saved, or, with an extra yell,
 Talmage will drop you into hell!

MASSACHUSETTS has improved since the days when she was famous for hanging witches and whipping Quakers. She has just swept away an old law which prevented a man from recovering any damages for injuries received during Sunday travelling. If a person was injured while riding in a train on the Sabbath and sued the company for damages, the company would reply that it was unlawful to travel on the Lord's Day, and the plaintiff, no matter how seriously he might have been hurt, would be at once non-suited. One gentleman, having sustained serious personal injuries while returning from a Sunday funeral, brought an action against the authorities whose negligence in repairing the highway had caused the accident. As he was not returning by the shortest route, the Supreme Court decided against him on the ground that he was violating the Sunday laws.

THE Iowa Senate has passed a sweeping bill taxing all church property except that used for schools. This is but just. A similar bill ought to be passed in England. Why should every Freethinker in the kingdom help to support all the churches and chapels in it by paying a portion of the rates and taxes from which religious edifices are unfairly exempted? They actually call at our office every year for titles to support the Church that sent us to gaol. Fancy taking part of the profits of the *Freethinker* to pay for the maintenance of Christianity!

THE *Rochelle Register* quite falls in with the proposal of an Alvin Christian that the portion of the community troubled with the "leprosy" of unbelief should be rigidly isolated from the true believers. This particular true believer simplified matters by saying that all who are not practically Christians are to be classed as infidels. So there will be two classes—the genuine Christians, who are few in number, and the rest of the community. The unfeeling editor therefore suggests that a small State such as New Jersey be secured for the saints and the remainder of the universe devoted to the infidels. The saints could thus relieve the ungodly of their unwelcome presence and live in safety amidst a holy atmosphere uncontaminated by the horrid Atheism and progress which would run riot around them.

ORRIN CARPENTER, a rich man and a prominent church member in Lincoln, Illinois, seduced his servant girl, who was found murdered. So far as circumstantial proof went, Carpenter was clearly guilty of the crime. But well-paid lawyers and other influences secured his acquittal. The whole town rose against him, and by the decision of a mass convention he has been banished from the place. A few such conventions are needed here, for there are pious rascals enough amongst us.

NEWSAGENTS in South Lancashire are requested to notice that the *Freethinker* is now on John Heywood's Return List.

ACROSS the counter at 28 Stonecutter Street.—Customer: "'Tower of Babel,' please." Mr. Kemp: "Have you brought a cart to take it home on?" Customer: "No; I mean Mr. Foote's pamphlet, and while you're at it just give me the 'Ten Plagues.' I want *them* badly!"

Two followers of the meek and lowly Spurgeon have just resigned the pastorates of the two Baptist chapels in Weston-super-Mare. One, the Rev. David Davies, a Welshman, has left a flock of sheep whom he has fleeced to the tune of £300 a year, to fleece another flock at Regent's Park Baptist Church to the extent of £600 a year. Notwithstanding he has doubled his salary, the pious David was mean enough to accept from his late flock a cheque for £100 knowing at the same time that the church was burdened with a debt. The other sky-pilot, the Rev. J. R. Russell, has gone to Barrow-in-Furness and taken with him £27 subscribed by a people who cannot even now afford to pay a minister a decent salary. Both pilots declare they have been called by God, but would they have listened to Jahveh had he "called" them to places where the salaries were less?

£. s. d., £. s. d.,
Ever blessed trinity,
Three in one and one in three,
Ever blessed £. s. d.

A FACT.—Scene—a workshop in a famous West-end furnishing house. Present—three men and a boy. Boy: "D'yer, Tommy, there's a boy in one of the other shops as don't believe in God, and we do bash him." Man: "What for?" Boy: "Why, cos he don't believe in God." Man: "Oh, do you?" Boy: "I should — well think I did." Man: "How do you know?" Boy: "Cos I goes to church." Man: "What for?" Boy: "Why to have a — game." Such is religious education in the West-end.

F A I T H.

FAITH is avowedly opposed to the only guide to honest and rational belief, Reason; it is therefore to be denounced as untrustworthy. Reason is a dictator which must not be disobeyed. Reason wears no mask or ornament; it is plain and unmistakable, and if you try to defy it you are untrue to yourself. Faith is therefore an inconsistency. Away back in the remoter periods of life there was no faith, or if there was it was insanity, and meant inability to engage in the struggle for existence, and consequently destruction. Throughout all the subsequent ages, Instinct and Reason, with their trusty henchman Experience, were all that were required or relied upon in matters of so-called ordinary importance in daily life. With these as their guides, animals and men wrought and fought, and conducted their affairs; and there is now no greater call for Faith in the conduct of ordinary life than before. Indeed, considering our knowledge and advantages, the reverse is the case. Things are good or bad, real or unreal, true or untrue, but beyond what Reason and the experience of ourselves and others can vouch for, is unworthy of speculation. Faith is of more recent date. It is comparatively modern, and though the worse for wear, is still fashionable. I have said that in early times faith was not required; brutes and men had but to live and fight and die. Men however, profiting by the purely natural instincts of their ruder forefathers, acquired the fruits of their labor, dominion and leisure. Men have become imaginative; they have conjured up visions of immortality and a spirit-world, and from a natural desire to live as long as possible have

conceived the idea of living forever. But they have gone much further. They have presumed to be on intimate terms with deities invariably worse, more wicked and insane than they themselves could possibly be; and when others have doubted or demanded evidence they have held out the sugar-stick of Faith with the alternative argument of the sword or stake, and damnation for as long a period as possible, *i.e.* forever. And all beliefs and religions emanating from such sources are alike untrue. They are certainly childlike and interesting, and thousands of such, if we cared to set up as manufacturers of religions, could be spun from the imaginative babbling of our nurseries. Look for one moment at the religion which of all others is asserted, by its so-called believers of course, to be the profoundest and most plausible, the religion upon which is founded the Christian "Faith." Notice the wildness of extremes in the conceptions, heaven, hell, everlasting bliss, eternal damnation; a god who is love, tenderness and pity, yet full of hate, frenzy and relentlessness; golden streets, fire and brimstone, devils and deities. From what source, save ignorance and worse than childish imaginations, could such stories come, as that an all-wise and all-creating deity is in partnership with parts of himself who are separate and distinct from him, that after having manufactured a whole universe, putting *himself* of course to infinite trouble and requiring a rest, he has *or have* been spending all the rest of his life *or lives* in following the fortunes of a few "chosen" wretches, dragging through wildernesses with a scurvy and treacherous gang of thieves who could not be trusted for a moment out of sight, helping in the robbery, plunder, and wholesale murder of their industrious neighbors, presiding over brutal orgies in self-honor, giving commandments and breaking them, destroying a world when angry with it, and bragging while neglecting it, and working a stupendous miracle in order to convince some blockhead of the self-evident; and yet after all, and long before after all, being obliged to confess that the whole thing had been a big blunder.

Faith and nothing but Faith could have permitted such rubbish to fill the minds of the abject followers of such a "religion." It is Faith which enabled Balaam's donkey to converse with and convince an ass; pigs to accommodate devils, whales to swallow Jonahs, and us to swallow the whole. If there is one thing that I detest, that I abhor, that I am almost afraid of, it is Faith. Faith makes us monsters, cannibals, murderers and suicides. If you want to kill me right away please give me a medium dose of Faith.

Yet no clergyman scruples to tell you that the Faith by which alone can ye understand these things is praiseworthy, wholesome and necessary. I presume clergymen are educated and mostly intelligent, and I would not say for a moment that they do not believe in what they teach—they *do* believe in it, and they would be worse than rogues if they didn't; they have to make a living, and they live *by Faith*. But what about me? I can't live by it—there's not enough of it to go all round. Well, my friends and myself go without, and we get along very well. There are fewer whales and camels to swallow; we live longer, having more time to spend in the exercise of Reason upon the true and the real. We do not build churches but we open classes to facilitate the study of real and positive Science. We are active, we agitate, we fight for freedom, and we are not afraid of the jealous persecutions of those who make such a good thing out of Faith. But Faith, instead of increasing, as it ought, is steadily declining; it is in fact coming down with a run. It is a child's balloon pricked by the pin of scepticism, the air which has inflated it being allowed to mix and lose itself among the very atmosphere above which it had sought to soar, until nothing but a shapeless carcass is left, which never again can raise itself from its collapsed condition.

No really scientific man at the present day recognises Faith. It is outside his hypotheses altogether; he has no time for it. Scepticism is a virtue, and the spirit of the age is fast becoming virtuous. But until Faith with its insane assurances is universally denounced, and with its accompanying vices, horrors, and intolerance, looked upon as a crime; until men shall rise and say we shall have none of this thing that has cursed and degraded a race, that has kept back the time of the world, that has been a cloak for ignorance, laziness, and unthrift, a tool in the hands of the crafty and unscrupulous, and the weapon of bloodthirsty zealotry; that has trampled upon the Reason which man dare not disobey—until that time, time misspent, notwithstanding the progress of partial truth, will not be prevented drifting the minds of a multitude towards drivelling idiocy and premature dotage.

J. R. NICHOLSON

LAST Sunday one of the pastors of the little village of Pownal was walking to church, when he saw a man with his coat off, digging in his garden. The good man beheld with grief and astonishment, and, coming up to the fence, began to recite in a solemn voice: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days thou shalt labor and do all thy work—" "See here," said the man in the garden, looking up, "be you talkin' to me." "Yes, my poor man I am." "Wal, you needn't worry about me, then. I ain't agoin' to do any work; I'm only diggin' worms to go-fishin' with."

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF HYPOCRISY.

Of late years it has become the fashion with some employers to affect an extraordinary interest in the souls of the workmen in their employ—too often, unfortunately, to the exclusion of any interest in the welfare of their bodies; and to such an extent has this grown, that I know of one firm which actually employs a person to act as the earthly representative of that heavenly bank where there is no encouragement to thieves to break through and steal, and where workmen are diligently exhorted to keep a good account. Nor is this interest surprising. Religious employers no doubt feel weighted with a heavy responsibility. They know that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God; and, with a self-sacrifice worthy of all praise, they feel it incumbent upon them to bestow all the profits of their business upon themselves, and so prepare their workmen for heaven by keeping them in poverty on earth, as it is written—"Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." Christ suffered an earthly death that we might eternally live; rich employers are dooming themselves to endless misery that we may inherit eternal life. What self-abnegation! What singleness of purpose and purity of motive we have here!

These reflexions have been induced by observing the way in which the Church is recruited by a certain large city firm. The eternal welfare of the men employed therein is secured by having a chaplain whose duties are to point the way, "not, my dear friends, to the attainment of earthly riches, but to the acquisition of that eternal wealth which is secured from any fear of malversation or the haunting dread of earthly decay and corruption." The boys employed in this office attend school each morning, where that unsectarian and undenominational production, the Apostles' Creed, is chanted and occasionally succeeded by a theological discourse, for be it known to all whom it may concern that the provisions of the Conscience Clause are not yet extended to factories. A boy is preached at, persuaded, and worked upon by the chaplain in various ways, until he consents to allowing the desecration of a bishop's fat hand being placed upon his head as a sign of confirmation in superstition. For the men religious services are frequently held at a church near by, sometimes at dinner-time, in the evening, to which they are invited to go and be seen of their employer. A Communicant's Union is also a feature of this semi-conventual establishment, the members of which agree to imbibe the wine and eat of the loaf at certain periods, in company of each other and of their employer; and when those eminent revivalists of superstition appear among the meek inhabitants of this patient country, Moody and Sankey tickets are lavishly distributed among the workmen, who might dare to want more happiness in this life were they ever to lose belief in another.

There can be but one result of all this importation of religious twaddle into the workshop, and that is the encouragement of hypocrisy. It must be remembered that the sincerely and honestly religious among the workmen hold aloof from what seems to them an invitation to serve both God and Mammon. The men whom the employer's bribes really reach are those who would become Mussulmans, Parsees, or devotees of Mumbo Jumbo, were such creeds to be smiled upon by the powers that be. Such men know that promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west, but that the employer appointeth whom he will; and bearing that fact carefully in mind they attend divine (and earthly) service, and lo! they are not disappointed. For the employer, with even the best intention to advance to better positions the best workmen in his employ, irrespective of speculative opinion, cannot but feel prejudiced in favor of those who bring themselves most prominently before his notice by joining with him in religious worship. Hypocrisy is acknowledged to be one of the worst of human vices, and employers should know that in making material advancement the reward of orthodoxy, they are merely giving encouragement to those who are only too ready for the sake of profit to utter with their lips what they do not believe in their hearts.

If employers are actuated, as they profess to be, by disinterested motives in their anxiety for the religious welfare of their workmen, I ask them to consider for one moment what will inevitably be the result of their meddling. All our qualities, both good and bad, are the result of education and training, and by making material advancement depend upon adhesion to certain forms of religious belief, employers are encouraging hypocrisy and its attendant vices, and are doing what they can to evolve a race without uprightness, honor or veracity, destitute of true manliness, with no moral backbone, and ready, for the sake of the loaves and fishes, to worship any deity, to swallow any creed, to accept any master, to believe any fable.

G. TREVOR.

WHEN a clergyman remarked they were to have a nave in church, an old lady whispered that she knew the party to whom he referred.

DR. HAWK, a popular New York divine, once asked the vestrymen of his church to increase his salary, because of his increased family expenses. "Don't trouble yourself," said the vestrymen, "the Lord has said he will care for the young ravens when they cry." "I know that," said the clergyman, "but nothing is said about the young Hawks."

CHRIST ON MARRIAGE.

"The children of this world marry and are given in marriage, but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage."—(LUKE xx., 34-35).

Now my married and much married Christian friends, here are words of comfort for you from "the fountain of truth," from your Lord Jesus himself. "But they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage." Ought not this, together with the fact that Christ himself was never married, to convince you that you cannot attain to the next world, although you may die and be buried in "a sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection?" Therefore, "such of you as have been joined together in holy matrimony," cease from your vain hopes of eternal life hereafter; devote the time and energy you are giving to religion—which will avail you nought—to making the most of this life, to the improvement of yourself and fellows.

Give heaven to priests and nuns of the Roman Catholic Church, pious old maids and bigoted bachelors, who pretend to be strangers here seeking a home on high.

Young unmarried Christians, consider the words of your Redeemer. You flighty young women, great at Sunday-schools, choirs, love-feasts and prayer meetings; you young men, Bible readers, tract distributors, and occasional spouters; take warning. Give up winking at the opposite sex during divine service, walking with them afterwards, or becoming intimately acquainted during some midnight meeting. For should anything happen which will make marriage a respectable necessity, after a while you will be doomed, as sure as the Freethinker, to remain outside heaven, if it is your "home." You will be like some of the heroes in the popular novels; you will have married against your (heavenly) father's instructions, and therefore he will turn you away from home and cut you off, not with the proverbial shilling, but without eternal life, "for of such is" not "the kingdom of heaven."

W. WRIGHTSON.

PROFANE JOKES.

A DEACON gave notice at a prayer meeting of a church meeting to be held immediately after, and unconsciously added: "There is no objection to the female brethren remaining."

"BOYS, can you tell me anything remarkable in the life of Moses?" asked a Sabbath-school teacher. "Yes, sir," shouted one of the boys; "he broke all the commandments at once."

"If it be true that the hairs of one's head are all numbered," said the man after he had escaped from his wife's clutches, "there will be one angel at least who will show up with a big deficit."


"DON'T you think it a little inconsistent in a church member," said Parson Jones to a wealthy parishioner, "for you to go out riding on the Sabbath?" "No, indeed," replied the wealthy parishioner; "that is my way of saving 'soles,' you know."

"MOTHER, what was that you was sayin' about the children of Adam sufferin' for somebody's sins, last night?" "What I meant to say was that because of the sin of Adam, the father of mankind, in eating the forbidden fruit, his children all are punished." "Well, then, accordin' to that, if my pa does something wrong I ought to be licked for it, eh?" "That'll do sir. Now hurry out after the coals."

At a school examination a clergyman was descanting on the necessity of children growing up pious and godly citizens. To emphasize his remarks he pointed to a large scriptural picture hanging on one side of the school-room, and said: "Boys, what is that picture for?" An urchin who understood the condition of the room better than he comprehended the speaker's rhetoric, exclaimed: "To hide the dirt, sir!"

PICKLING THE BISHOPS.—An amusing little anecdote of the difficulty that foreigners find in acquiring the English language properly, comes to hand. A Frenchman consulted his dictionary concerning the word equivalent to "preserve." He found it thus, "preserve, to pickle, etc." So he naturally presumed that the terms were synonymous. Speaking very warmly one day about the bishops, and desiring to extol them greatly, he startled his audience by ejaculating fervently, "May Providence pickle the bishops!" Of course he left a very different impression on his hearers' minds from the one he had intended.

THE *Truthseeker* gives a good story of a Colorado farmer, who entertaining friends during a revival, thought it the proper thing to have morning prayers. After reading a chapter in the Bible he commenced. Ten minutes passed, twenty, then half an hour. The listeners grew restless but still he prayed with unabated vigor and with no sign of a termination. At last his wife, seeing that morning prayers if continued all day long would seriously discommode household affairs, leaned over and whispered to him, "John, don't you think you have prayed long enough?" "Yes," he replied; "but I don't know how to wind the damn thing up."



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