

# THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

Vol. IV.—No. 28.]

JULY 13, 1884.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

## COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 77.



ABRAHAM'S BOSOM.

"And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."—LUKE xvi., 22.

## HEAVEN OUR HOME.

WE are constantly informed by the sky-pilots that Heaven is our home. This earth is a miserable vale of tears, through which we must pass with fear and trembling to the happy haven of rest, where there is no sorrowing or sighing, where celestial pocket-handkerchiefs will wipe away all tears from our eyes, where we shall eternally regard the Lord "with a foolish face of praise." This is the scene of our pilgrimage, our weary desert, our barren wilderness. By-and-bye we shall cross the river Jordan and enter the Land of Promise, and have nothing to do but sing the Hallelujah Chorus for ever and ever.

We confess, however, that this prospect is not very alluring. "Doing nothing," said a wise Yankee, "is the hardest job I know, if you keep at it." In Holloway Gaol Sunday was the dreariest day in the week. There was no work and no play. The very officers looked blue, and the prisoners were all glad when it was over. Yet when we went to chapel the parson told us that Heaven was an eternal Sunday. What a prospect! It made one long to go below, where, if the climate is hot, there is at least something to break up the monotony of existence.

Heaven is our home, say the sky-pilots. Why, then, don't they go home? Razors are cheap enough, and strong rope can be bought for a penny a yard. But razors gleam and ropes dangle in vain. The black gentry love *this* world too well to leave it for another. They prefer the bird in the hand to any number of birds in the bush. They prefer a nice snug rectory or vicarage here to any mansion in the sky, and they would take a well-carpeted drawing-room on

earth for all the golden flooring they may inherit in the New Jerusalem. Love not the world nor the things of the world, is a doctrine they honor more in the breach than in the observance. No class of men adhere to the world more tenaciously than they do. They stick to it like a limpet to its rock. When they fall ill, are they glad? Do they rejoice? Do they sing hymns of praise and thanksgiving? Do they long to be at home with the Lord? Oh, no. They pull a long face and rush off to the doctor, as anxious as though they were leaving Heaven for Hell instead of Earth for Heaven. They pray lustily for a speedy and perfect recovery, and cry out "Oh Lord, not yet, not yet." Not satisfied with this petition, they frequently get their congregations to make up a purse for them, and scuttle off to the seaside or some fashionable watering-place. Prayer is the same in town and country, but the air is different, and that is the important matter after all. The streets of Bath, for instance, are black with sky-pilots, on the look-out for health and rich widows; and, go where you will in the holiday season, you will find them in flocks, seeking carnal strength and postponing to the last possible minute their journey home.

Now look at another picture. Why did those Soudan Arabs throw themselves with such transcendent bravery on our British squares? Why did they rush through the deadly storm of bullets, and smile at the flash of bayonet and sword? Because they really believe in heaven, and trust in the promise of Allah through his Prophet that the true believer who falls in battle against the infidel is sure of reaching Paradise. As his blood ebbs away, and the noise of the fight sounds dim in his ears, he sees through the mists of death resplendent visions of the festivals of heaven. There are the blessed company moving along its happy fields in joyous talk; there stand the tables crowded with celestial fruit and delicious wine gleaming in golden cups; there hover the beautiful houris with bosoms white as ivory and eyes black as night, weaving the mazes of their shadowy dance. He meets his fate with rapture; his death is a voluptuous trance. Such is the effect of ardent faith. Those Arabs embrace death because they believe in heaven, and our sky-pilots avoid it because they do not and never did.

Perhaps the sky-pilots will be good enough to tell us where Heaven is. If they want to guide us there they should at least know its locality. Where is it? Up above, they reply. But there is no "up above" in Nature. High and low, up and down, above and below, are purely relative terms. "Up above" will not do; it is no answer at all. "Ah," said a Christian spouter to me once, "there is the astronomical heaven above us, but *our* Heaven is up above up above." And as he spoke his face glowed with rapture. He was in the seventh heaven of delighted imbecility.

Suppose one man dies in England and his brother in New Zealand. Their souls go straight up—in opposite directions. It is clear that if one gets to Heaven the other cannot. The farther they travel the farther they are apart.

If heaven is a place it must be somewhere. Yes, say the sky-pilots, it is somewhere, and that is their only point of agreement. But surely that is not enough. We suggest that they should all fly off into space in search of it. When they have found it they can come back to tell us all about it. Until then we shall decline to believe that they know any more of Heaven than we do, except as a very profitable article in their trade prospectus.

The only heaven we know of is on earth, the Heaven of wisdom, virtue and happiness; and the only Hell we know of is on earth too, the Hell of ignorance, vice and misery. And these we believe are the only Heaven and Hell that there ever were or ever will be.

G. W. FOOTE.



## MR. BRADLAUGH'S OATH.

So long as the recent decision is maintained, Atheists and Agnostics, and such Theists as do not believe in future rewards and punishments, are aliens and outlaws in this boasted land of liberty. We sincerely hope that Mr. Bradlaugh will succeed in upsetting this judgment, for it appears to us to be in conflict with strict legal theory and practice, as well as infamously in opposition to natural justice. That the Christians of England accept without the slightest practical protest this penal verdict on unbelief, this disqualifying law for honest scepticism, shows conclusively the conscious or unconscious unfairness, hypocrisy and wickedness which Christian belief induces, and it shows the necessity of organising anti-Christian forces, whose efforts shall compel Christians, especially Christian politicians, to yield us our rights as men.

For the present the Crown has obtained the right of enforcing three separate penalties of £500. If by some almost incredible display of leniency only one of these should be pressed, we may be sure that it will be very much to the disgust of the "Christian" House of Commons which refused to allow a heretic to swear according to the statute in order that he might obtain a legal decision thereon, and subsequently compelled him to vote three times and incur three penalties in order to defeat their mean-spirited endeavors to expunge his vote and so deprive him, as they thought, of all chance of bringing the matter into a law court.

The principal and decisive count on which Mr. Bradlaugh is found guilty declares that he "having no belief in a Supreme Being and being a person upon whose conscience an oath as an oath has no binding force (of all which said matters the said House then had full cognisance and notice by means of the avowal of the said Charles Bradlaugh" did "against the form" of the statute vote without having made and subscribed the oath appointed. Mr. Bradlaugh's non-belief in a Supreme Being was not proved. The evidence upon the point consisted wholly and solely of Mr. Bradlaugh's own statements and admissions, and Lord Coleridge himself pointed out to the jury that the defendant had always avoided answering this crucial question. He also in conjunction with Baron Huddleston, but in opposition to Justice Grove, pointed out to the jury that Mr. Bradlaugh's abstention from giving evidence must be regarded as evidence against him, although his lordship acknowledged that it was "very honorable" on the defendant's part that he had not stepped into the witness-box to pronounce the "few words"—the personal assertion, however false, of belief in a Supreme Being—which would at once "put an end to all this trouble." We consider this improper. It makes a defendant convict himself by his own negative evidence, a course altogether opposed to the spirit of English law, which throws the entire burden of proof upon the prosecution.

It was not proved that an oath was not binding on Mr. Bradlaugh's conscience. His avowals to the contrary were disregarded, and we consider that the judges misdirected the jury in assuming without correction that affirmation under the Evidence Amendment Acts of 1869 and 1870 proves from the witness's own words and action that an oath has no binding force on his conscience. It only proves that the judge thinks so, or assumes to think so, and not that the witness thinks so too. Several judges have permitted Mr. Bradlaugh to take the oath, so that they, it must equally be assumed, were satisfied that an oath *would* have a binding effect on his conscience. Every sensible judge must know that an oath, as a religious ceremony, has no binding effect on the consciences of at least half the witnesses that come before him, and that it is the oath as a legal ceremony, with statutory penalties for perjury attached, that forms the real practical oath of the law courts. Three-fourths of the House of Commons itself should be prosecuted, for the oath "as an oath," according to the Lord Chief Justice's definition, has no binding effect worth speaking of on their consciences. How many of them consider that they are calling down God's vengeance or protection according as they break or keep their oaths? Do any of them think of supernatural terrors when they swear allegiance? Do they expect to go to heaven if they keep their oath, or to hell if they break it?

Non-belief in a Supreme Being is not conclusive evidence, as was assumed, of inability to swear in the superstitious

sense. The Polytheist; the Christian Trinitarian who rejects the Unity; the Buddhist who believes his future transmigrations for better or worse are determined by his truthfulness; the Spiritualist, who probably believes in endless progress; might have no actual Supreme Being, and yet might be far more powerfully influenced by the idea of future rewards and punishments than the Christian, especially if that Christian believes, as he is supposed to do, that his sins will all be washed away by faith in the blood of Christ. On the other hand, many Theists—Moses and the prophets included—would be held incapable of taking oaths as witnesses because they have, or had, no belief in heaven and hell and immortality. The Christian, indeed, ought to be pre-eminently incapable of taking an oath, for his Savior has distinctly commanded him not to do so. If religious hopes and terrors influenced his action, they would prevent him swearing in the first instance.

The Crown omitted to produce evidence that Mr. Bradlaugh had not taken the oath at some time previous to his going through "the form" on February the 11th. The evidence and the answers of the jury only covered one day out of several hundreds, during which he might, for anything that was proved or decided to the contrary, have duly sworn at the table of the House.

Several of these points it seems to us ought to have been distinctly proved by the prosecution, and not left to be assumed. The assumptions were even distinctly untrue. The House, for instance, did not have full cognisance of Mr. Bradlaugh's Atheism by his avowal; nor that an oath would have no binding effect on his conscience, for he asserted the direct opposite of this. His affirming in a law court did not prove his Atheism, but only that the presiding judge thought he had no belief in supernatural rewards and punishments in a future life and their connection with oath-taking.

A battle is not lost till it is over. Whatever the result of this particular engagement may be, we may rest assured that Mr. Bradlaugh will not fail in doing his part towards turning the defeat into a victory. W. P. BAILL.

## BLASPHEMY IN THE CRICKET FIELD.

IRRELIGION is everywhere, and anti-religion is following suit. The passive position of the majority of men in regard to religion is changing gradually but plainly into one of active hostility. The great crowd of the indifferent is becoming by degrees antagonistic. In other words, men are turning from quiescence on religious questions, a quiescence by no means acquiescence, to a condition of occasional, and in some cases habitual, blasphemy.

All this is as it should and must be. Hence it is interesting to find blasphemy rife, or at least germinating, in all sorts of places. By blasphemy, of course I mean the speaking in jest or earnest against the religion of the majority of this country. The prevalence of this blasphemous spirit is even noticeable in connexion with our sports. I fear in some instances of sport (so-called) blasphemy is prevalent of an order as distasteful to a Freethinker as to a Christian. The language that loads the air of "'appy 'Ampton," or makes unmusical the evening at suburban running grounds of doubtful character, is not commendable.

But a healthy tone of blasphemy is noticeable in connexion with the healthiest form of sport this summer weather. The cricket field is not free from the virtue. Truly cricket, like other good things, is largely given over to the evil one in the shape of the clergy. The clerical influence is still strong here. Fortunately, however, cricketing clergymen are as a rule very good fellows, much better than their calling. They leave their professional habits in the dressing-room with their professional garb. Your cricket-suit is a rare leveller. So it comes to pass that on village greens, and even at Lord's and the Oval, the clergyman is much less objectionable than elsewhere. Only he ought not to keep his white tie on, like the curate I saw on Saturday last teaching the young idea how to bat on Southsea Common.

These same professional gentlemen (I do not use the word in the cricket sense) are often better defenders of their wickets than of the faith. Every cricketer knows the story of the rustic bowler who, after much toil, succeeded in bowling the middle stump of a parson after a long hard-hitting innings. "There goes your pulpit," said the exhausted yet



satisfied one, and I fear an adjective that was in his speech is omitted in my transcript of it.

Nor must we omit to mention that two of the best cricketers in England, A. G. Steel and C. T. Studd, are both deeply religious men; are said to be members of the Salvation Army, while the elder brother of the latter, captain of the Cambridge eleven this year, is a blue ribbonite and tub-thumps at the east end of London.

There are, however, rare exceptions. The open-air life of men who play much cricket tends to keep their heads clear, and if they are not, as a rule, beings of striking ability intellectually, they are generally common-sense persons, who, like Gallio, "care for none of these things" of religion.

The establishment of the Pioneer Cricket Club for the playing of the game on Sundays is a sign of the times. The majority, probably all, of its members are Freethinkers, and I have the honor to be its President. We may, therefore, fairly regard the P.C.C. as a club of blasphemers, *i.e.*, once again, of those who protest against religion.

Further, the conversation on a cricket-ground, as in most places where many men are gathered together (not in the name of the Lord) is often more than tinged with disrespect or contempt for revealed religion. As a case in point take the following that occurred within the last few days. The Australian team at present in England can, as literally all the world knows, put an eleven into the field that takes an immense amount of beating, and generally does not get it. So well and so pluckily do they play alike a winning and a losing game, that an unreasoning dread of their prowess has extended not only alas! to the elevens that oppose them, but even to the spectators and critics. Amongst a company of the latter order, lately, the tone of dependency as to English cricket became so lugubrious and certain knights of the rueful countenance chanted the praises of the Australians so persistently, that two of the group less cast down, prepared two several parodies of the Apostles' Creed for the use of the down-hearted English cricketers. One of the parodies was generally voted the more blasphemous, the other the more artistic of the two.

I can leave my readers to decide which is which.

PARODY I.—"I believe in Spofforth, the bowler almighty, maker of breaks and shooters; and in Bannerman, the short mid-off and bat, who is conceited but very useful; Bonnor, the giant hitter; Giffen, bowler, batsman, fielder; the ashes that are dead and buried; England descending into hell; Murdoch ascending in average and known as the right hand of Scott and the other almighties, to be ever renowned as judge of cricket and sport. And I believe in the dodgy Boyle, Midwinter, and Blackham who keeps; the community of fielders, the bowling of Palmer, the hitting of Macdonnell, and the team everlasting. Amen."

PARODY II.—"I believe in Spofforth, the bowler almighty, breaker of Englishmen's wickets, and in Jack Blackham, greatest of keepers; our Lords, who were conceived of the Devil, born of terror and shame; we, who suffer under funks, are slogged, bowled and slaughtered. They descended upon us, and the fourth time are playing hell with us. They are going back again, to be the great gods of advancing Australia, from whence they will come to thrash us again and again. And I believe in iron Billy Murdoch, the long Georgy Bonnor, Bannerman never defeated, Giffen of Adelaide City, the cool head of Boyley, and the decadence of England. Amen."

EDWARD AVELING.

## ACID DROPS.

PÈRE HYACINTHE has preached an eloquent sermon, in which he says that Catholicism and Protestantism are both dead. Christianity will in future be represented by true believers, of whom, of course, Père Hyacinthe is one. The first statement is quite true if the word "dying" be substituted for the word "dead." The second is a mere dream or fancy commonly indulged in by Christians, who always think their own particular interpretation of God's word the infallible one.

SOME of General Gordon's unpublished writings are being put forth in the pages of the *Fortnightly*. His religious speculations are rather curious. He says, for instance:—"We must conceive that as the throne of light (God) is on the Rock (Calvary), the Devil's seat would be on the other side of the globe over lat. 31.47 S., long. 144.45, close to Bass Isle, South of Otaheiti. Now, it is remarkable that if a line be passed through Jerusalem and the centre of the globe, this axis would present the northern hemisphere as nearly all land, while the southern hemisphere would be nearly all water." This is the sort of stuff that religion breeds in

minds of such quality as General Gordon's. Moonstruck madness is the natural result of an intense belief in the Bible.

By the way, Christian journals need not laugh at Gordon's tossing a coin when he is in a mental fix; for when the Holy Ghost had to choose between Joseph and Matthias, who were selected by the primitive Church to take the place of Judas, we read that he (is the Ghost *he* or *she*?) ordered them to cast lots. What difference is there between that and tossing?

A CURIOUS service or ceremony took place at Chichester Cathedral last Sunday. The bishop and other clergy, accompanied by the choir, proceeded to the spot where the new lightning-conductor enters a well. Here a psalm and a hymn were chanted, and the bishop, dean and archdeacon offered prayer. Then the bishop delivered an address and a peal was rung on the cathedral bells. This pious inauguration of the lightning rod reminds us of the old custom of blessing the bells. We observe, too, that bishops have more confidence in a simple rod of metal than in all their prayers. To save their credit they try to sanctify the piece of iron or copper, just as they ask God to "bless this stone" when, in the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost they lay the foundation block of a church or other religious edifice.

A LATER account of this Lightning Service gives us further particulars. The Dean, in his prayers to Almighty God, hypocritically said: "Not, therefore, as putting any confidence in the work of our own hands have we sought by labor and human device to protect from lightning this ancient house which we have inherited from our fathers; for we freely declare that our confidence is wholly in Thy protection." The bishop, speaking of the thunderstorm, said that thunder was God's voice and that the people were "startled from their sleep with the roaring of His voice." This would be blasphemy if we said it. From the mouth of a lord bishop it is eloquent piety. With the inconsistency which an outsider is not readily able to distinguish from time-serving hypocrisy, the bishop said "the lightning was the weapon of the Lord," but the Cathedral authorities, in restoring the lightning-conductor, had used "the most improved means that philosophy and science had devised for the rendering harmless of that terrible missile of God."

ANOTHER instance of religious excitement causing insanity and murder is reported from America. A boy named Andy Adams has cut his sister's throat and brained his mother with an axe because the Lord told him to offer them as a sacrifice. The action of this youth was much less wicked than the corresponding actions of Abraham and Jephtha, for the Lord had faithfully promised in this case to restore the victims to life again. Why haven't the professed believers in the Bible canonised this pious boy as a new father of the faithful, or put him in authority over themselves, as the Israelites did with Jephtha? Instead of this they have arrested him for his imitation of these Bible worthies, and have stopped the series of religious meetings which he had been attending.

WHOM God hath joined let no man put asunder. According to a Dundee paper, three couples were married in fun by their minister during a Sunday-school excursion. They are now dreadfully afraid that they are wedded in earnest both legally and religiously. In America a similar ceremony, performed at a church so-called in frolic by one of God's duly licensed agents, has resulted in litigation.

A NEW sect has sprung up among the Russian Tartars. They want to commence a reformation of Mahommedaism by smearing the present mosques with pig-fat, to render them unclean. They express their views in the "columns of several Tartar journals." Good gracious! how fast the world must be progressing. The untameable Tartar is now a literary man, corresponding in the columns of the native press! And Charles Lamb's Man-Chew Tartars now scruple at fat pork.

THE Rev. Z. B. Woffendale used to be an able debater on the Christian side; he has now descended to writing stories of infidel Bible-burners for a tract society. Another tolerably good man gone wrong. Christianity has a very deteriorating effect on the brains of its believers.

It is reported that fever has broken out at Spurgeon's Orphanage and at Müller's Bristol Homes. Both places are said to be supported by prayer. Why don't they pray the fever away? If they still believe St. James's doctrine of anointing with oil, they might ask the Lord to send them on a few casks of the fluid at this critical juncture.

ACCORDING to a Society paper, Hurlingham sports are in full swing on Sunday. Lawn tennis goes on briskly in the afternoon, and the Duchess of Manchester is a frequent performer. On the other hand, poor old Sarah Sykes at South-end is being fined for selling a bit of sweetstuff on the same day. This is a free country, and all of us are equal in the eye of the law.



A PROMINENT stationer in Glasgow has been forced by a ring of ministers to discontinue the sale of Ingersoll's lectures. They terrorised him eventually through his landlord, and when the alternative was "cease selling Ingersoll or starve with your wife and children," he had practically no choice. The same Glasgow ministers are often loud in their praises of Christianity as a religion of tolerance. That is the text, and this is the commentary. The truth is that if the black army could have their own way they would suppress all opposition and silence all criticism. Their strongest argument is the gaol, and they would use it constantly if they had the courage as well as the power; but being of a mean, cunning turn of mind, they prefer intrigue and intimidation.

At Bethsham Faith-healing House the Rev. Dr. Forr gave a "blessed testimony" of his healing from insanity. We doubt this cure altogether. On the face of it the evidence is directly to the contrary.

We have just come across a circular from a sky-pilot, who asks for subscriptions to maintain his family, numbering twelve persons. He reckons that his salary amounts to sixpence a day for each member, and as he can obtain no assistance from any of the societies for the relief of poor curates, he appeals for another sixpennyworth of victuals. He probably thinks himself the poorest of the poor, but there are millions far worse off, and no doubt many in his own parish. Why doesn't he apply to one of the right reverend fathers in God, who live in two palaces each, with an income of £10,000 or £15,000 a year? It is downright impudence to ask laymen to maintain the parsons of a church whose income is at least £10,000,000 a year.

It is high time that a branch of the Malthusian League were started in the Church. This begging sky-pilot has gone in for ten children, and of course wants other children's parents to support them. If the black gentry go on breeding in this way they will entirely swamp us, and our civilisation will end in universal softening of the brain. This parson's eldest daughter suffers in the spine; his eldest son has been hopelessly insane for nearly twenty years; and another daughter has become "mentally afflicted and most troublesome and destructive." This is the state of parental morality that has resulted from eighteen centuries of gospel. A man paid to teach others goes on procreating lunatics and cripples, and does his best to create a little hell on earth. He will meet his deserts if the recipients of his circular subscribe for prussic acid or arsenic for the whole family.

A Jew in Berlin left £100 a year to his nephew so long as he remained faithful to the Jewish religion. The young man having turned Christian, the Court decided that he should still receive the annuity. The bequest was confirmed and the condition attached to it annulled. If an Atheist had money left to him on condition of his becoming a Christian, would any Christian tribunal maintain the bequest and set aside the condition?

MOODY, in his farewell address, has given the poor Old Testament the invaluable benefit of his support. He says it was the only book that Christ had, and if it was good enough for him surely it is good enough for us. To be consistent, Moody must begin hanging witches, killing heretics, stoning sabbath-breakers, and so forth. His faith in the Old Testament, however, stops short of practising its inhuman precepts at the peril of his own neck.

He says the Bible is one book. Yes; as the Gospels and the Holiday Number of the *Freethinker* would be one book if the bookbinder bound them together in one volume. In no other sense can the Bible be said to be one book, although Christ did confirm the story of Lot's wife, and the old woman whom Moody takes as his model did believe the whale swallowed Jonah, because God if he liked could have made a man to swallow the whale.

MOODY says if you get the Bible down deep in your soul "it will soon set on fire your houses and your complete human system." What do the fire insurance people say to this? The Bible will have to be classed with phosphorus, Greek fire, dynamite, and other incendiary and explosive substances. Possession of a Bible will be held to vitiate a fire-policy. We knew that this was its moral character, but we didn't know that the physical effects followed quite so speedily. Henceforth people must be on their guard against so dangerous a combustible.

This eminent revivalist and money-maker told his audience to write down that Christ is a lamp (an old oil-lamp that wants snuffing out badly, we presume), medicine (pills like the celebrated "Fast Trotters," perhaps), a bit (by which priests control us like asses), water to wash us (how dirty the liquid Christ must be after 1800 years of cleansing sinners), fire to inflame us (to persecute the heretic and the Atheist),

salt (to sprinkle on our tails), treasure (as Mr. Moody has found him), and so forth.

THE minister of Anerley Congregational Church announces a series of Sunday evening sermons on the "Looks of Jesus." The titles are as follows:—The Grieved Look, the Searching Look, the Silent Surveying Look (from the top of the exceeding high mountain, we presume, where the Devil placed him), the Upward Look (probably while he was preaching to the devils in hell and longing for a breath of fresh air), and the Reproachful Look. Cannot this enterprising preacher also give us the Insane Look which must have been displayed when the omniscient and hungry man-god blasted the fig-tree for not bearing unseasonable figs?—and his Furious Fanatical Look when he cursed the clergy of his own pious nation as vipers, whited sepulchres and children of hell?—and his Domineering and Destructive Look when he scourged the money-changers?—and the Conceited Look of the workman's son who described himself as greater than David and equal with God? When these Looks have been duly preached upon, we will give the reverend gentleman a few more.

THE Rev. F. Pugh has been lecturing on the biblical solution of the land question. He showed how pious Joseph, as viceroy of Egypt, took advantage of the famine to buy up the starving Egyptians and their lands as the king's possessions for ever. The reverend lecturer and the Baptist audience whom he was addressing seemed to think this was a capital transaction in land on Joseph's part. The land-laws of the Israelites, being ordained by God, were of course made much of. But we fail to see the beauty of a kind of entail which restored the land to aristocratic families and spendthrifts every fifty years; and the compulsory observation of the Sabbatical year, the obligation to leave the land fallow one year in seven, is altogether out of date in these days of scientific farming. In this, as in every other respect, the Bible is dreadfully behind the age.

LORD ST. LEONARDS, after seven weeks' detention, has been let off by the pious Recorder. His offence was criminally assaulting a servant-girl. Eighteen months ago Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp were sentenced in the same court to twelve, nine, and three months' imprisonment. Their crime was poking fun at legends about a man who died eighteen centuries ago. According to this beautifully graduated scale of punishment, one joke is equal to fifteen criminal assaults. Such laws are only fit for Christians and lunatics. They are certainly a disgrace to a country that calls itself civilised.

THE Salvationists are going it hot in South Australia. At Hindmarsh a "Captain" Gore (what an excellent name for a spouter of the gospel of blood!) mounted "a real live donkey" and headed the Army procession after the manner of his lord and master Jesus Christ. The subsequent proceedings at Chiarini's Circus beat all the performances we ever heard of. The male and female soldiers danced jigs until they dropped with exhaustion, and all kinds of musical instruments were played at once, from the big drum to the bones, everybody playing the tune he liked best. Of course it all ended in a "collection." That is always kept in view by these revivalists, who show a good deal of method in their madness.

THE *Christian Herald* gives two more alleged conversions of infidels. As usual no names are given and no particulars by which these falsehoods may be exposed. The *Universe* has a leading article on the pious fictions of the *Christian Herald*, whose editor converts Roman Catholics as well as Freethinkers "with all that indefiniteness and absence of evidence which is so necessary to a Protestant story, and is so essential to the successful conducting of any lie whatsoever." One of our readers wrote twice to the editor of the *Christian Herald* for the name and address of the Croydon infidel we referred to last week, but he has received no answer, and of course never will. Lying for the glory of God is a recognised Christian virtue.

IGNORANCE begets fear, fear begets superstition, and that is the basis of all religion. This truth has just been illustrated by the women of Toulon, who have petitioned the mayor to get up a public procession to supplicate God for the cessation of the cholera. The present government in France is not likely to sanction such nonsense, but the women and the priests may prove troublesome if the plague continues. The second and the third sex appear to believe that God Almighty is at the bottom of all mischief, and very likely they are quite as right as those who believe the opposite.

WHEN Lord Rosebery visited Sydney they showed him the Central Telephone Office, where a number of young girls were attending to several telephones apiece. His lordship, who was much interested, asked if they did not get very confused. The reply was, that the only instance of confusion hitherto reported was that of one the *employées*, who sometimes prefaced her prayers to the deity with the usual query, "Are you there?"



## SPECIAL NOTICE.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, July 13, Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville, London, N., at 7.30, on "An Hour with the Devil."

Wednesday, July 16, Henley Hall, Henley Street, Battersea Park Road, at 8, on "Bible Blasphemy."

July 20, Milton Hall, London; 24, Plumstead; 27, Milton Hall, Ang. 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. Nov. 16, Nottingham.

## 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.

We shall esteem it a favor if our readers will forward us any notice of *Progress* they may see in their local newspapers.

C. G. W.—We shall always be glad to hear from you.

E. B. ROSE.—It is idle to expect these pious liars to publish a contradiction or make an apology. They are more brazen than "Old Squareface" himself.

H. BISBY.—Another copy has been forwarded. Papers too frequently get lost in the post.

V. W. HARDWICK.—Thanks. Jokes are doubly welcome.

E. DAWSON.—Bales to hand. Your club appears to be similar to many South Lancashire clubs that play cricket on Sunday. The occurrence is by no means uncommon.

L. KING.—Not quite up to the mark.

J. A. WILLIAMS.—If the story had reached us in time we should have been glad to use it, but it is rather out of date now.

W. FITCH.—Mr. Whitmore's tract has been repeatedly shown to be extremely inaccurate and utterly misleading. To continue circulating the tract after these exposures is nothing less than dishonest.

D. EARLY.—We are unable to say whether Canon Hoare is any relation to that shady sky-pilot at Sydenham.

CONSTANT READER.—Many thanks. Such scraps of information are always useful.

H. J. THORPE.—We thank you for your efforts to make the *Freethinker* known. The *Freethinker* Tracts we have just issued are the very thing for distribution in the way you describe.

CRITIC.—You are clearly mistaken, for three-fourths of the comic sketches that have appeared since our release are from the same hand that executed those which appeared before our imprisonment. You are also mistaken as to *Progress*, for while the price is reduced by one-half the contents are only reduced a little over one-sixth. The reduction was not made for the sake of those who already purchased the magazine, but to bring it within the reach of a larger circle of readers. You wonder how "such a well-written number should tacitly be admitted to be worth but threepence." The argument is absurd. According to this Shakespeare should be published at £1,000 and Eliza Cook at 6d. The price of any publication is entirely a commercial matter, and has nothing to do with the literary value of the contents.

G. GRANT.—Received with thanks.

DEIST.—The Stirling oath case was dealt with at the time. The verse is scarcely up to the mark.

R. K.—Number shall be forwarded.

W. ANDERSON.—Remittance duly to hand. We will see that the wrapper is properly addressed. Sorry your *Freethinker* went astray two weeks ago and fell into the hands of a Christian, who very narrowly escaped being removed to an asylum.

J. T. CONGREVE.—We commented last week on the case of Henry Gibby, and we agree with you that those who sent him to prison as a hypocrite were guilty of still worse hypocrisy. Thanks for the cuttings.

G. COWGILL.—The sentiment is good, but you want more practice in writing verse.

W. DAVIES.—The joke may be useful, but the story is libellous, and we don't want to go to gaol just yet.

F. MILLAR desires us to state that a special meeting of the West Ham Branch of the N. S. S. will be held to-night, July 13, at the Cromwell Club, Plaistow, to deal with the project of a Secular Hall Company for the district.

H. E. SMITH writes that the Finsbury Branch of the N. S. S. holds its adjourned quarterly meeting on Sunday evening after Mr. Foote's lecture, when a full attendance of members is requested, to deal with important and urgent business.

W. EDWARDS.—Do please send all orders for literature to Mr. Ramsey. Neglect of this causes annoyance and delay.

F. SMITH informs us that as the Ball's Pond Society have not moved in the matter, he and a dozen Freethinking friends have engaged Mr. O. Trumper to lecture at 11.30 on Kingsland Green, and hopes Freethinkers in the district will attend to make the first lecture a success.

F. W. M.—Received with thanks.

J. ROBINS.—Mr. Pitt Taylor seems a nice judge. Freethinkers can hardly expect justice in Christian courts. We are glad to hear that you feel better after avowing your opinions.

## EDITORIAL.

OUR Summer Number has been unavoidably delayed, but we hope to have it ready by next Thursday. There is sure to be a large sale, and we intend to make provision for it; but as there is a possibility of the first edition being rapidly cleared out we shall be obliged to execute all orders in rotation. Those who wish an early supply should therefore order at once.

We have just published sixteen *Freethinker* Tracts for general distribution at the cheap rate of sixpence per hundred, a price which will just recoup us for our outlay. The first edition numbers three hundred and twenty thousand. Further details will be found in our advertisement columns.

*Progress* has greatly improved in circulation by the reduction in price. The extra number of copies we printed are nearly all disposed of. The June number is out of print. Only a few copies have been reserved for binding. The third volume, with an index, will be ready shortly.

We close with another piece of good news. Mr. Wheeler is steadily improving in health at the seaside, and we hope soon to see his pen active again in our pages.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

THERE was a crowded audience at Claremont Hall last Sunday evening to hear Mr. Foote's lecture on "Sky Pilots." The chair was taken by a scientific friend from Bath. This evening (July 13) Mr. Foote lectures again in the same hall on "An Hour with the Devil."

MR. J. B. COPPOCK informs us that he and other friends have succeeded in getting *Progress* laid on the table in the Nottingham Free Library. We hope this good example will be widely imitated. *Progress* is, we are happy to state, rising in circulation through the reduction of price.

THE *Midland Echo* gave an appreciative report of Mr. Foote's lecture at Baskerville Hall, Birmingham, which it describes as "a most interesting and able discourse, lit up by flashes of humor and sarcasm." It says, that "Mr. Foote combines a good platform address, clear enunciation, and a flow of pure English delivered distinctly with dramatic effect." No doubt it surprises those who have never heard a Freethought lecturer to find him possessing a flow of pure English. Our advocates are regarded as vulgar ignoramuses by people who take their opinions at second hand; but, as a matter of fact, the Freethought party, in proportion to its numbers, commands more literary and platform ability than any religious sect in England.

*Modern Society* describes the clergy as "the black-coated brigade," and says that "they rob the nation to the extent of something like ten millions annually." This is plain speaking with a vengeance. The same paper quotes a remark of Dr. Littledale that "a clergyman may be thoroughly idle, dull, and inefficient without in the least barring his way to benefice, canonry, deanery or bishopric." This is precisely what we have always been saying. A big fool cannot make a good lawyer or a good doctor, but he may make a very good parson.

Two men at Langton have been charged with obstructing a thoroughfare by burlesquing the Salvation Army. They followed General Booth's procession with a donkey dressed in a Salvation bonnet and cloak, and a bull-dog attired in regulation jersey and bonnet. The larger animal was labelled "Salvation Jenny" on one side and "Hallelujah Ass" on the other. The magistrates said the Salvationists themselves habitually obstructed the roads, and dismissed the men on their promise not to repeat the offence. They have cracked their joke and don't need to repeat it.

THE Rev. Henry Ward Beecher has greatly shocked the orthodox by his lecture on Evolution. He thoroughly believes in Darwin, and says so. One minister said his remarks were worse than Ingersoll's. Orthodoxy and "infidelity" alike agree that he has placed himself in direct antagonism to the Bible. Some of the American papers are asking whether it is honest of Beecher to still call himself a Christian. The same question might be put to scores of ministers on this side of the Atlantic.

A MAN at Evansville, Indiana, gave notice as one reason for desiring a divorce from his wife, that she prays daily that he may die, and as he is a firm believer in the efficacy of prayer he fears that her appeal may be answered. He ought to start up an opposition, but perhaps has more faith in his wife's prayers than his own. He is, however, clearly unscriptural.



tural if he has; for the Bible only says that the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. It says nothing about women.

MR. W. J. RAMSEY gives three lectures in Wellingboro' this Sunday, July 13; subjects, "Heaven and Hell," "A New Gospel Harmony," and "In Prison for Blasphemy."

THE National Parks League are about to call three public meetings in Regent's, Victoria and Battersea Parks to protest against the new order forbidding the sale of liquors and solid refreshments as heretofore in these highly popular places of public resort. Those who wish to assist in this commendable movement should communicate with the secretary of the League, Mr. William Wynne, 28 Barrow Hill Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.

THE *Christian Globe* has an account of the introduction of Christianity into Madagascar. The Queen having been converted, the "insolent behavior"—such at least is the Christian pretext—of the idol keepers "led to the burning of the royal idols, and immediately afterwards to a like destruction of those belonging to private individuals and separate tribes throughout the central provinces" where the Queen's authority was secure. This is how Christianity always acts when it wields supreme power. Rival religions are put down by physical force; and missionaries regard such a triumph as "a matter for great thankfulness."

THE National Sunday League will hold a public meeting at St. Andrew's Hall, Newman Street, London, on Thursday the 17th inst. at 8 o'clock, to support the motion of Mr. George Howard and Mr. Thomas Burt on the Sunday question. The Rev. H. C. Shuttleworth will preside.

SIR J. C. LAWRENCE, at the last council meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, denounced Mr. Sharman's efforts to obtain the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, especially in connection with "the filthiest and most obscene publications." This impudent libel provoked a letter in the *Inquirer* from the Rev. E. M. Geldart, who delivered such an admirable speech at the great St. James's Hall demonstration. Mr. Geldart says: "Much as I object to a great deal in the incriminated numbers of the *Freethinker*, to describe them as 'the filthiest and most obscene publications' is either an ignorant or a wilful perversion of the truth, or rather, if ignorant it is wilful still, as a man ought not in ignorance to make charges of this kind." Mr. Geldart and Mr. Sharman deserve our thanks for their constant efforts to protect us from misrepresentation, but the great majority of their Unitarian brethren are grossly hypocritical and unjust. It is a strange irony that after imputations of obscenity on the *Freethinker* have been laughed or reasoned out of existence everywhere else, they should still survive in Unitarian circles. Perhaps, after all, Unitarians are so near us in opinion that they are obliged to vilify us lest they should be thought too friendly. We suppose much must be pardoned when weak people are thrown back on the blind instinct of self-preservation.

THE Manchester Branch of the N. S. S. will have their children's annual picnic on Sunday, August 3. Children under 13 free. Tickets for adults can be obtained of the secretary. Buses leave the Hall in Grosvenor Street at 10 a.m. Freethinkers intending to join the party should communicate at once.

THE annual children's excursion from the Hall of Science, London, will take place next Sunday, July 20. Brakes will leave at nine a.m. All the children go free and are provided with refreshments. A few brakes will be reserved for adults; tickets 2s. 6d. each. Subscriptions are invited to help defray the cost.

DR. EDWARD AVELING will give the last of his evenings of readings and music at Milton Hall on Sunday, July 13. The farce "Poor Pillicoddy," which was so successfully performed at the Ball's Pond Secular Hall, will be repeated with the same cast. This is Dr. Aveling's last appearance in London for some weeks.

MORE heavy poker playing in late years has gone on in Chamberlain's old club-house than in any other building in Washington city. Fortunes were made and lost there. The place is now owned by the Young Men's Christian Association. Soon after the change was made a well-known sporting man dropped in, one evening, a trifle mellow by some brandy a friend had given him to sample. The new occupants were holding a praise meeting, and a dozen of them were singing the old refrain:

"There is always room for more,  
Come in! come in!"

He thought he appreciated the situation, and blandly replied: "No, gentlemen; play out the deal. I'll come in on the next hand."

## THE JUDGMENT SEAT.

It is the common practice of Christians when they find themselves hard pressed by the arguments of Atheistic opponents to take shelter behind the reckless statement that at any rate, if wrong, they are none the worse for their Christianity, but if right the loss on the other side is beyond all calculation. In fact Christianity is declared to be a sort of quack medicine—a bread pill, which if no good for the spiritual ills of humanity, is guaranteed to produce no ill effects; whilst poor unbelief is condemned as a deadly poison which can serve no good purpose, even if unproductive of evil. Having made this statement, Christians think it beyond contradiction, and seek to inquire no further. They feel, or think they feel, comfort in believing as they do, and they cling to this comfort, although they know it may be founded on a delusion. They try to be satisfied with what is possibly false, and do not care to encounter the rude shocks they may meet with in searching after truth. But is it a fact that the believer is none the worse for his belief, the Atheist none the better for rejecting it? Out of his own mouth the Christian stands condemned, for in this statement we see the fruit of the mean and cowardly spirit engendered by giving credence to tales of a God whom he has been taught to say he loves, while his better nature revolts at the history of his crimes, and of whose tyranny he stands in abject terror. More honorable, more upright, more manly, more noble, more to be trusted by his fellow-beings would be the man who, believing in the existence of God—the God of the Scriptures—should profess to hate him, than he who cringes down before this monstrous tyrant and meanly talks of love and service. But let us inquire a little further and see how the Christian is affected by his belief, the infidel by his unbelief.

Suppose that the Christian is right—that there is a life after this, and a God ruling over all, absolute in power? What kind of a God is he? Shall we form our estimate of his character from the teachings of the pulpit, of the Sunday-school, of pious small talk? Or shall we read what is recorded of his acts in the Bible, and judge for ourselves? In the one case he is a God infinite in justice, in mercy and in love. In the other his injustice, his cruelty, his barbarous malice are without limit. We have our choice of Gods. We cannot reconcile the two, but let us take each by itself and consider how in either case such a being would deal with the believer, how with the sceptic.

First, then, let us assume that the world had a creator, who created it for good, and placed us upon it with a sincere desire for our happiness. We will be charitable enough to suppose that the Bible account of his deeds is a wretched libel inspired by his great enemy. How will the Christian fare who reads that odious slander and credits it? How can that man hold up his head before an all-powerful, an upright, a just, a merciful judge, when he has passed a lifetime in attributing to him acts which could only be perpetrated by a bloodthirsty monster, a wicked tyrant, a cruel oppressor? How? He never means to do it. The fetters of religious teaching were placed upon him in his early youth, and year by year the galling chains of moral servitude have been twisted tighter and tighter round his soul. A worse slave than any negro on a plantation, he has not even dared to *think* but as the iron will of his spiritual pastors and masters dictated. *He* hold up his head? The man who holds up his head seeks justice, and that is what the poor wretch fears to meet. He bows down his head and only implores mercy: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy. Exercise your justice on the unbeliever, your small mercy on my fellow-Christians, but keep your great mercy for me." That is the spirit of his prayer, the spirit of inhuman selfishness which has been developed in him from his earliest years by religious training, the same spirit which teaches him to count the sufferings of all the world as nothing, so that his own paltry soul is saved at last—the same spirit which causes him to rub his hands in glee and exult at the contemplation of millions suffering eternal torment, because the justice of God is thereby manifested towards others in the same degree that he hopes his mercy will be shown upon himself.

He has believed that his creator required from him much that he was incapable of performing—demanded the full complement of bricks, but furnished an insufficiency of straw. Sometimes he grew weary under his heavy task; he fainted by the way, his labors for the moment ceased; but the



whip of his hard task-master roused him again, and he resumed his work, lamenting his faults of omission. Sometimes the chains of his servitude pressed too heavily upon him, galled his human nature beyond endurance, and he struggled with his bonds—maybe for a time cast them off and fled; but his tyrants pursued and overtook him, their thirsty bloodhounds dragged him down, and his last state was worse than the first. He returned, striking his breast and bewailing his sins of commission. And now he appears before the throne of God, howling for divine mercy, and so denying divine justice. Why, for all that man's moral errors—be they real or fancied, be they red as scarlet or but as specks upon the driven snow—his religious training is for the main part responsible. From the first it instilled into his mind that he was born in sin, a sinner by nature. liable—nay, compelled by the very necessities of his being—to sin all the days of his life; that if he would do good he could not, unless help was given him from above. As well might we expect to acquire this world's wealth by asking aims instead of by honest labor, as to develop a high moral nature by supposing that the heart of man is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and that it can produce no good but by influence from without. Then, having thoroughly imbued him with an idea of his own utter weakness and helplessness, his pious teachers set before him as a standard of morality a fancy system, an arbitrary code of laws, without foundation in reason or the common good, and in many respects impossible of attainment. So, if he had any energy left which he might employ in benefitting himself and his fellow-mortals, it was frittered away in striving after something beyond his reach. To crown all, we have that truly Christian selfishness before spoken of, which leads man to sacrifice everything for his own soul's good, and his moral training is complete as far as Christian teaching can accomplish it.

Luckily, when the Bible tells us that "the heart of man is desperately wicked," the Bible lies. Most fortunately, when the penitent bows his head and says "there is no health in me," when he strikes his breast and exclaims, "I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my exceeding great fault," he only sometimes speaks the truth. There is so much of goodness, so much of charity, so much gentleness, so much kindness, so much benevolence, so much honor and honesty in poor human nature, with all its weaknesses and all its faults, that even religion, even Bible teaching, cannot all its faults stamp it out. A devout Christian is often a good man, and no man is so utterly bad as Christianity might make him, were it to work unopposed by the right feeling within his own breast. But with more or less of virtue and more or less of vice mingled together in his daily history, he lives the life and dies the death of a sincere believer. He stands before the judgment seat of this righteous, this merciful, this just God. How is he to deal with him? Why in justice he must try him according to the man's own notions of right and wrong; and therefore he must condemn him for a multitude of things done and left undone, which in another would be innocent. The poor criminal must pay the penalty of his belief. He stands charged with a host of crimes which have been made crimes for his special benefit. He can but repeat his old cry for mercy, and yet perhaps in his own time he showed but little mercy to the unbeliever or to his fellow-Christian who differed from him on points of morals or of faith.

E. J. BOWTELL.

(To be concluded.)

RELIGION AND RIDICULE.

RELIGION, thou tyrant Magician,  
Thy spells are beginning to fail;  
Thy poison, thy dagger, thy thunder,  
No longer avail.

Thy terrible form in charmed armor  
Shall cease to encumber the earth;  
For thou shalt be slain with derision,  
And martyred with mirth.

Even children shall scout thy pale horrors  
As ghosts of the past that are dead;  
They shall mock thy mad follies, and brook not  
The blood thou hast shed.

Thy spectres, our shadows gigantic,  
Like Brocken clouds melt in the sun;  
In the light and the hope of man's glory  
They fade one by one.

Shall we shrink from the laughter that lays them,  
The jest that thou canst not endure?  
Shall we deal not the death-wound that daunts thee,  
With sharp blade and sure?

Bright Ridicule never shall leave thee;  
For she above all hath the charm  
To read thy spells backward, and rob them  
Of power and of harm.

So her arrows shall pierce through thine armor,  
Until thou art stretched on the plain,  
And the children of men sing rejoicing,  
"The monster is slain."

Laid low by a Savior most potent,  
With power from of old time to slay  
The vampires and vultures devouring  
Man's heart day by day.

But if she mistake in her aiming,  
Her arrow returns whence it starts;  
For only the false and the evil  
Can fall by her darts.

W. P. BALL.

REVIEWS.

*Our Corner*, edited by ANNIE BESANT; July.—Mrs. Besant continues her interesting Autobiographical Sketches, bringing her history down to her first acquaintance with Mr. Voysey and his rose-water Theism; Mr. Bradlaugh has a vigorous reply to Mr. J. L. Joynes who recently criticised his articles on Socialism; "D." continues his searching review of Mr. Henry George's theories; Miss Hypatia Bradlaugh concludes her story of a Russian exile; Dr. Aveling writes on Insects and Flowers; and Mr. J. Robertson contributes the first part of an able paper on the Art of Keats.

*Bible Saints and Sinners*, by A. B. MOSS; Part I.; Watts and Co.—Another addition to the large number of Mr. Moss's well written pamphlets. We forbear any criticism until the work is completed.

PROFANE JOKES.

THE longest reign in history—the deluge.

THE Protestant Bishop of Derry was disputing with a Roman Catholic priest about purgatory. "Well, my lord," replied the priest in conclusion, "you may go farther and fare worse."

"AH, Sambo," said a sick planter to his attendant nigger, "I fear I'm going, and I've a long journey before me." "Nebber mind, massa," was the encouraging answer, "him all down hill."

A LITTLE four-year old said to his mother last week, "Mother, I believe God thinks I am dead." "Why" asked the mother, somewhat astonished at the remark of the child. "'Cause I havn't said my prayers for a week!"

NOAH poor man, never knew what it was to slip down into the cellar of the ark when the boys were in the kitchen, with a beer-mug under his coat tail, to come up with a satisfied expression, observing that he had "just been down to see if them taters was sproutin'."

A SCHOOL BOARD boy, who was competing for a prize, sent in the following biography of Abraham: "He was the father of Lot, and had two wives. One was called Ishmale and the other Hagur; he kept one at home, and he turned the other into the desert, where she became a pillow of salt in the daytime and a pillow of fire at night."

"Do you think it wrong to patronise the horse cars on Sunday, deacon?" asked Mrs. Goode. "Decidedly!" replied the deacon; "decidedly wroog, Mrs. Goode; it's a desecration of the day, ma'am. I never take a horse car on Sunday, ma'am. I consider it wrong, decidedly wrong. I walk, ma'am, and I receive my reward in an approving conscience, not to speak of the fact that I have saved five cents, ma'am."

PUNCTUATION.—A country schoolmaster, who found it rather difficult to make his pupils observe the difference in reading between a comma and a full point, adopted a plan of his own, which he flattered himself, would make them proficient in the art of punctuation; thus, in reading, when they came to a comma, they were to say "tick," and to a colon or semicolon, "tick, tick," and to a full point, "tick, tick, tick." Now, it so happened that the parish minister called in and asked one of the boys to read a chapter in the Old Testament, which he pointed out. The boy complied, and in his best accent began to read—"And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, tick, speak unto the children of Israel, tick, saying, tick, and thus shalt thou say unto them, tick, tick, tick." This unfortunate sally, in his own style, acted like a shower-bath on the poor Dominie, whilst the minister and his friends almost died of laughter.



**S. DAVIS & CO** MANUFACTURE EVERY DESCRIPTION. 2/6 WEEKLY.

COMPLETE FROM 20/-

ILLUSTRATED PRICE LISTS POST-FREE

SMALL SIZE £4.10.0 LARGE D9 £6.10.0

DAVIS' "PERIOD" WASHER FROM 20/-

NO EXTRA FOR CREDIT

1/- WEEKLY 15/-

DAVIS' BAKERS PATENT BOX

1/- WEEKLY 21/-

COMPLETE 55/-

**S. DAVIS & CO'S LONDON BRANCHES:**  
 10, HACKNEY ROAD, E. (near Shoreditch Church). 125, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, W. (near Enston Road).  
 68 and 67, CHEAPSID, E.C. (near Bennett's Clock). 144, THE GROVE, STRATFORD, E. (corner Gt. Eastern St.).  
 18, COMMERCIAL ROAD, E. (near Leman Street). PERIOD HOUSE, BOROUGH, S.E. (nr. St. George's Church).  
 CHIEF OFFICE AND WHOLESALE DEPOT: 10, 11, 12, 13 & 15, BLACKMAN STREET, BORO'

**MACHINES EXCHANGED.**  
 REPAIRS AT EITHER ESTABLISHMENT.

**SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS.**

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

**S. HARTMANN,**

8 LONG LANE, ALDERSGATE STREET, LONDON, Wholesale Boot & Shoe Warehouseman, And Importer of Foreign Boots & Shoes. A large and well-selected stock always on hand. Most advantageous place for cash buyers.

**PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING COMPANY'S PUBLICATIONS.**

- The Dying Creed, by Colonel Ingersoll. 32 pp. 0 2
- The Clergy and Common Sense, by Colonel Ingersoll ... 0 4
- Do I Blaspheme? by Colonel Ingersoll ... 0 1
- The Darwinian Theory: Its Meaning, Difficulties, Evidence, History By Edward B. Aveling, D.Sc. ... 0 6
- Frauds and Follies of the Fathers, by J. M. Wheeler ... 0 6
- Profane Jokes. Nos. 1 and 2. Each ... 0 1
- Old Thoughts for New Thinkers. Being Selections from the "Pensées Philosophiques" of Diderot. Translated from the French by W. Hardaker ... 0 1
- The Age of Reason, by Thomas Paine Cloth ... 1 0 ... 1 6
- Natural Man, by Arthur B. Moss ... 0 1
- Christianity, a Degrading Religion, by A. B. Moss ... 0 1
- The Devil's Pulpit, 2 vols., cloth ... 4 0
- In Prison for Blasphemy, by W. J. Ramsey. Being an account of nine months' experience of Christian charity. Illustrated ... 0 1
- The Blasphemy Laws: Should they be Abolished? By W. Hunter, LL.D., M.A., Barrister-at-Law ... 0 2

**MR. FOOTE'S WORKS.**

- Arrows of Freethought. 112 pp. ... 1 0
- Blasphemy No Crime. The whole question fully treated, with special reference to the Prosecution of the Freethinker ... 0 1
- The Futility of Prayer ... 0 2
- Atheism and Morality ... 0 2
- Secularism the True Philosophy of Life. An Exposition and a Defence. (In Wrapper) ... 0 4
- Death's Test, or Christian Lies about Dying Infidels ... 0 2
- Atheism and Suicide ... 0 1
- The God Christians Swear By ... 0 2
- Was Jesus Insane? ... 0 1
- Brown's Story; or, The Dying Infidel. 16pp. 0 1
- Law and Gospel. Letters to Lord Coleridge, Judge North, Gaoler Harcourt, and Lawyer Giffard ... 0 1

**BIBLE ROMANCES (1d. each).**

- (1) The Creation Story. (2) Noah's Flood. (3) Eve and the Apple. (4) The Bible Devil. (5) The Ten Plagues. (6) Jonah and the Whale. (7) The Wandering Jew. (8) The Tower of Babel. (9) Balaam's Ass. (10) God's Thieves in Canaan. (11) Cain and Abel. (12) Lot's Wife.

The First Series, Bound in Elegant Wrapper, Price One Shilling.

Second Series—(13) Daniel and the Lions. (14) The Jew Judges. (15) St John's Nightmare. (16) A Virgin Mother. (17) God in a Box. (18) Bully Samson.

**"PROGRESS"**

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE, EDITED BY G. W. Foote and Edward Aveling.

The JULY NUMBER contains— Prisoner for Blasphemy, by G. W. Foote. Some Humors of our School Board. '98 in Wexford, by H. Savage Music, by Pan. Do we still need Religion? by an Ex-Student of Theology. Song of the People, by L. J. Nicolson. International Socialism, by E. Belfort Bax. Tennyson and Walt Whitman. A Dialogue. The Doctor's Wife, by a Swedish Authoress. A Vision of the Gods, by S. Britton.

Price Threepence.

Progressive Publishing Company, 28 Stonecutter St.

**BLOWS AT THE BIBLE.**

By JOSEPH SYMES.

Sixteen Pages. Price One Penny. No. 5 Now Ready. A new number will appear every fortnight.

To Secularists in general and Readers of the "Freethinker" in particular. THE Committee of the HALL OF SCIENCE COMPANY, OLDHAM (LIMITED), beg to solicit aid in raising a Fund to pay off the Mortgage now on the Hall, which is being withdrawn by the present mortgagees. The Committee are prepared to issue Preference Shares—£1 each—in allotments of £1 and upwards, for which the Company guarantees £5 per cent per annum.—J. E. Broadbent, sec., 46 Rock Street, Oldham.

**YOUR MONOGRAM**

in Indiarubber, 1s Your Name in full, 1s. 4d. Box, Pad, and Marking Ink included. Send catalogue. Agents wanted.—G. F. Ireton and Co., 92 Gracechurch Street, London, E.C.

Now Ready.

**"FREETHINKER" TRACTS.**

Large size, two pages each. No. 1, Bible Blunders, by G. W. Foote; No. 2, Who's to be Damned if Christianity be True? by J. Symes; No. 3, A Few Words to a Christian, by G. W. Foote; No. 4, The Salvation Craze, by G. W. Foote; No. 5, How a Fairy was Transformed, by J. Symes; No. 6, The Bible and Teetotalism, by J. M. Wheeler; No. 7, The Fanatical Monkeys, by Charles Southwell; No. 8, Salvation by Faith, by Col. Ingersoll; No. 9, The Death of Adam, by W. Nelson; No. 10, The Clothes of the Bible, by Mrs. A. Besant; No. 11, "The Atheist's Grave" and "I Sometimes Think" (poems); No. 12, The Devil's Doom, by A. Moss; No. 13, Is Unbelief a Crime? by J. E. W.; No. 14, What Must it be to be There? by "Scoffer"; No. 15, Christian Murderers, by W. P. Bull; No. 16, "The Real Trinity" and "The Parsons' Idol" (poems).—6d. per hundred, or by post 8d., assorted or otherwise. Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter Street, E.C.

Reduced to One Shilling, the

**THREE TRIALS for BLASPHEMY,**

Before Lord Coleridge and Justice North.

WANTED, a good GENERAL SERVANT, in Free-thinker's family.—W. Garton, 5 Park Villas Loughton, Essex.

VERY fine ENGLISH and DUTCH DICTIONARY, in two vols. Over one thousand quarto pages in each; bound in half calf; in first-rate order; price 6s. Also English and Dutch Dictionary, call, 1s.—28 Stonecutter Street, London.

JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY, in two vols, large quarto size, perfectly clean—a splendid copy; over 1,200 pages in each vol.; price 6s.—28 Stonecutter Street.

GERMAN POLITICAL LEADERS.—Biographies of Bismarck, Armin, Falk, Lasker, Jacoby, Virchow, and many others. Cloth, new, 1s. 6d.—28 Stonecutter Street.

Remainder—New. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CONDITIONED, comprising some remarks on Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy and on Mr. J. S. Mill's examination of that Philosophy, by Dean Mansel, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Oxford. Cloth, demy 8vo., 2s.—28 Stonecutter Street.

CLEANINGS IN IRELAND AFTER THE LAND ACT, by Mr. H. Hall, formerly "Daily News" Commissioner, of the French Peasant Relief Fund. Cloth 8vo., 116 pp., with colored Map of Ireland. The author travelled through Ireland during last summer, and having had great experience of systems of land tenure in other countries, his able work, which gives full details and facts, is of the greatest value and interest. Offered at 6d., or post free 8d.

**Cheap Pamphlet Reminders.**

Credibility of the Gospel Narratives. The whole of the stories in the Gospels shewn to be absurd, contradictory and false; published at 2s., offered at 6d.

Ernest Jones's Lecture on the Inquisition of Rome. G. J. Holyoake on the Social Means of Promoting Temperance. Four pamphlets by R. D. Owen on "Neurology and Cerebral Physiology," "Wealth and Misery," "Darby and Susan," and an "Address on the Hopes and Destinies of the Human Race." "The Political Poems of Victor Hugo and Garibaldi." The lot post free for 4d.

**Thwaites' Liver Pills**

Are acknowledged to be the best Family Medicine in the World by the many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after you had read it you might say it was only advertising puff; but I ask One Trial of the LIVER PILLS; if not better than any you have tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. I recommend them for INDIGESTION, LOSS OF APPETITE, DIZZINESS, BILIOUSNESS, COSTIVENESS, NERVOUSNESS, PALPITATION OF THE HEART, PILES, ETC., all of which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what we call a sluggish Liver. Try some of the LIVER PILLS as soon as you can, as they are PURE HERB PILLS, and may be used at any time by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking cold. Prepared only by GEORGE THWAITES, 2 Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees. Sold at 1s. 1d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post for 15 or 36 Penny Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

TEETH, 2s. 6d. each, on vulcanite; upper or lower set, £1. Best quality, on vulcanite, 4s. a tooth; upper or lower set, £2. No extras. Completed in four hours when required. Best teeth on Platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18-carat gold, 16s. Painless extraction daily, with gas, 6s.; without, 1s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.—MR. STANTON, R.D., 128 Strand, London. Hours nine to eight.

J. WORSTER, WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANT, "Duke of Ormand," Princes Street, Westminster. The "National Reformer," "Freethinker," and other Freethought journals at the bar.

Printed and Published by G. W. FOOTE at 28 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.