

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

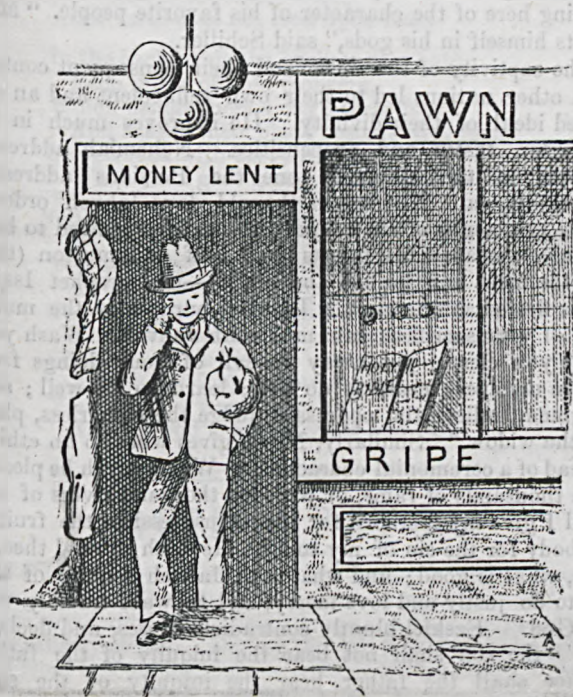
Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC SKETCH.



THE REDEEMER.

A PIOUS PARTY.

WE seldom touch on politics in the *Freethinker*, partly because there are so many other organs for the discussion of that subject, and partly because our space is too limited for the treatment of other questions than those which come within our special purpose. Now and then, however, we break through this rule, and we feel bound to do so when every voice is needed on behalf of some great moral principle. At the time of the Phoenix Park murders we thought it necessary to say our word against that blind passion of revenge which threatened to turn Ireland into a huge prison for the guilty few and the innocent millions. Fortunately there is no such need at present to speak for the Franchise Bill and against the Lords, for there is a roaring agitation going on that requires very little fanning. Yet it is well to draw attention to the fact that those who are denying common justice, in the shape of political rights, to two millions of their fellow men, are the particular friends of religion. The Tories are not only, as Mill said, the stupid party; they are the pious party. They are also the immoral party. People acquainted with history and the world are perfectly aware that these three qualities are extremely compatible, and have a strong tendency to run together.

The pious party prosecuted the *Freethinker* and procured our imprisonment. Sir Henry Tyler who set the ball rolling, the City of London Corporation who pushed it along, and Sir Hardinge Giffard who guided it to its destination at the feet of Judge North, were all Tories. Tory money paid for all the expenses, and Tory tongues did all the pleading. It was a Tory job from beginning to end.

It is the same pious party that has for four years vilified Mr. Bradlaugh, robbed him of his seat, tried to ruin him, answered his manly appeals for fair-play with brute force, and manufactured against him so many brazen falsehoods and cunning misrepresentations, that one might almost fancy the Tory leader to be neither Lord Salisbury nor Lord Churchill, but "the father of lies" himself. The principals and accomplices in this nefarious conspiracy have not

succeeded, because their ability was not equal to their malice. They have also got "the wrong sow by the ear." Mr. Bradlaugh has shown himself more than a match for the whole pious gang, their plotters, their lawyers, and their purse-holders. Even now, when they fancy he is in a fatal corner, they are probably deceived as they have been all along. Mr. Bradlaugh's legal fights remind us of Frederick the Great's campaigns. That great soldier often met with what looked like irretrievable defeat, but proved it to have been only a rebuff, and he always won in the end.

Mr. Newdegate, who began the worrying of Mr. Bradlaugh, is as everybody knows a fine old port-wine Tory. He still takes the British Constitution a great deal under his protecting wing, but he does not so habitually wear that self-satisfied smirk which illustrated his dull face before Mr. Bradlaugh taught him a memorable lesson. He is now very much in the position of a well-mangled cur, who has had an ugly crunching from the big dog he worried; and his friends have for some time been subscribing for plaster. Not having obtained enough yet, they have just issued a whip for five hundred pounds' worth more.

This whip takes the form of a circular from "The Newdegate Law Costs Committee," who style themselves "noblemen and gentlemen," probably lest the public should never suspect them to be either. They start with the statement that "Mr. Newdegate has rendered in the Bradlaugh case a great public service." Well, it is perhaps a consolation to them to think so, but they would find it difficult to specify this "great public service." All Mr. Newdegate has done is to lose a lot of money as well as his case, and to get a cutting reprimand from the Lord Chief Justice of England. At least that is all we are aware of. If he has gained anything else, which can be discerned without a Tory microscope, it would be well to have it pointed out. The Newdegate committee do nothing of the kind. They are as vague as the incompetent dragoman, who, when he was asked by the travellers, "Well, where is Jerusalem?" swept the horizon with his hand and answered "There."

They next state that Mr. Newdegate "has expended large sums of money beyond those incurred in legal expenses." Indeed! We should like full particulars of this outlay. It would be a pretty document for posterity if they are inclined for an historical study of the influence of piety on morals.

The first name on the Committee is the Marquis of Salisbury's, the chief spokesman of the arrogant Tory majority in the Lords. His God is, in more senses than one, the Lord of Lords; a bogey to frighten common people from asking for their rights in this world, raised by Priestcraft for the profit of Privilege. If this hectoring aristocrat had his way, he would make everybody go to his church and subscribe to his creed. For the purpose of injuring an Atheist he is quite willing to associate with the impenitent descendants of those who crucified his Lord, but he is equally ready to do them a shrewd turn when the opportunity arises. It was publicly stated a few years ago, without any contradiction, that in all the leases on his estates around the Haymarket there is a special clause against sub-letting to Jews. We hope the chosen people are sensible of this noble toleration.

Sir Stafford Northcote comes next. Poor old gentleman! He is corrupted by bad company, and wears the air of a smiling villain with great bravado. But you can see all the while that he is ill at ease and would like to skedaddle. Why does he not retire from politics altogether, and devote himself to distributing prizes at local institutes? Nature has exactly fitted him for such work.

The Earl of Redesdale figures next. This "nobleman" cut a silly figure in the House of Lords a couple of years ago when he introduced a little Bill for the disfranchisement of all Atheists, which Lord Salisbury himself helped

to smother. The only other member of the Committee we need notice is Lord Mayor Fowler, a person we know something of, as he sat on the Bench during our trial at the Old Bailey, looking the very picture of Christian impudence. Ever since he became Lord Mayor, this "gentleman" has, to borrow a phrase from his orthodox friends in Holloway Gaol, been "on the pious lay." He sprinkles his public speeches with pious expressions, and if ever he comes down in the world, he might get a living in a pulpit. This pious worthy is, we presume, the prime mover in the well-fed agitation against the London Municipal Bill; and, like Mr. Newdegate, he knows something about secret-service money spent in the cause of God and his Tory friends. At any rate he is the Mr. R. N. Fowler, M.P., who said "kick him out" when Mr. Bradlaugh was struggling against illegal violence in the lobby of the House of Commons; and whom the junior member for Northampton has more than once seen beyond all question full of the spirit. He and the rest of the Newdegate Committee are very pious, and are willing to sacrifice all they have in the Lord's service. They are worth, between them, probably a million a year. Yet, instead of either of them giving Mr. Newdegate a cheque for that paltry five hundred pounds, they actually appeal to others to make up the amount. How generous! They are a pious party, and the Lord should be proud of them.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE EVOLUTION OF JAHVEH.

In the beginning when men created gods they made them in their own image, cruel, unrestrained, and vacillating. All the early religions give evidence of the savage nature of ancient man. The departed gods, viewed in the light of modern ideals, were all ugly devils. The boasted God of the Jews is no exception. Although the books of the Old Testament do not give us the earliest and doubtless still more savage beliefs of the Israelites, the oldest portions, such as the legends embodied in Genesis and the historical books, sufficiently betray that Jahveh was no better than his compeers. It is evident that originally he was only one of many gods. He is always spoken of as a family deity—the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. Human sacrifices were at one time offered to him (see Gen. xxii.; Lev. xxvii., 29; Numbers xxv., 4; Judges xi., 31—39; 1 Samuel xv., 23; Micah vi., 6, 7). He is anthropomorphic, yet anything but a gentleman. In his decalogue he describes himself as "a jealous god, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children until the third and fourth generation." He delights in blood and sacrifice. He is entitled "a god of battles," "Lord of hosts," and "a man of war." He has the form, the movements, and the imperfections of a human being. Man is said to be made in his image and after his likeness. It is plain these words must be taken in their literal significance, since, a little further on, Adam is described, in the same language, as having begotten Seth "in his own likeness and after his image" (Genesis v., 3).

Jahveh walks in the garden in the cool of the day. He has to come down to see the tower of Babel (Genesis xi., 5). He covers Moses with "his hand" so that he should not see "his face"; and while Moses stood in a cleft of the rock Jahveh shows him "his back parts" (Exodus xxxiii., 23). He makes clothes for Adam and Eve, and writes his laws with his own finger. After six days' work we are told that "on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed" (Exodus xxxi., 17). When Noah sacrificed we are told that "Jahveh smelled a sweet savor" (Gen. vii., 21). He creates mankind and then regrets their creation—"It repented Jahveh that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him at his heart" (Genesis vi., 6). He puts a bow in the clouds in order to remember his vow, and again and again he repents of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. (See Exodus xxxii., 14; Numbers xiv., 2 Sam. xxiv., 16; Jonah iii., 10; etc.)

Jacob wrestles with him; and when things do not go as they wish, Moses, Joshua, David and Job no more hesitate to remonstrate with their deity than the African hesitates to chide the fetish that does not answer his prayers.

In the early books Jahveh is both irascible and unjust. His dander is soon up, and his vengeance usually falls on the wrong parties. Eve eats the forbidden fruit and all her female descendants are condemned to pains at child-

birth. Pharaoh refuses to let the Hebrews go and the firstborn child of every Egyptian family is slain, and other dreadful afflictions are poured on the innocent people. David, like a wise king, takes a census of his nation and Jahveh punishes him by slaying seventy thousand of the people by a pestilence (1 Chron. xxi., 1—17). He slaughters fifty thousand inhabitants of the little village of Bethshemesh for innocently looking into his travelling-trunk on its return from captivity (1 Samuel vi., 19). He smites Uzzah for putting his hand to save the ark from falling (2 Samuel vi., 6, 7), and withers Jeroboam's hand for venturing to put it upon the altar (1 Kings xiii., 4). He sends bears to kill forty-two little children for calling Elisha "bald-head" (2 Kings ii., 23, 24), and his general conduct is that of a barbarous, bloodthirsty and irresponsible tyrant. We say nothing here of the character of his favorite people. "Man paints himself in his gods," said Schiller.

The captivity of the Jews and their consequent contact with other nations led to their own refinement and an enlarged ideal of their divinity. He improves much in his character, tastes and propensities. Nehemiah addresses Jahveh in the elevated tone the Persians addressed Ahura-Mazda. Whereas in the old days Jahveh ordered whole herds of sheep and oxen to be sacrificed to him, doubtless because his priests liked beef and mutton (they had the meat and he had the smell)—the prophet Isaiah in his first chapter writes, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Jahveh. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Similarly, Micah gives worship an ethical instead of a ceremonial character: "Will Jahveh be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jahveh require of thee but to do justly and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Ezekiel bluntly contradicts Moses, and declares that "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son" (xviii., 20).

The second Isaiah even looks forward to the time when Gentiles will acknowledge the Jewish Jahveh, and Zechariah declares "Thus saith Jahveh of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (viii., 23).

Jewish vanity did not permit tolerance to extend beyond this. Even in the New Testament God only offers salvation to those that believe, and mercilessly damns all the rest. "An honest God is the noblest work of man," and theists of all kinds have found great difficulty in supplying the article.

Herbert Spencer, in his paper on "Religion" in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*, well says: "If we contrast the Hebrew God described in primitive tradition, man-like in appearance, appetites and emotions, with the Hebrew God as characterised by the prophets, there is shown a widening range of power along with a nature increasingly remote from that of man. And on passing to the conceptions of him which are now entertained, we are made aware of an extreme transfiguration. By a convenient obliviousness, a deity who in early times is represented as hardening men's hearts so that they may commit punishable acts, and as employing a lying spirit to deceive them, comes to be mostly thought of as an embodiment of virtues transcending the highest we can imagine." And so the idea of God develops

"Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought."

For the process is not simply from the savage to the civilised—it is from the definite to the dim. As man advances God retires. With each increase of our knowledge of nature the sphere of the supernatural is lessened till all deities and devils are seen to be but reflexions of man's imagination and symbols of his ignorance.

J. M. WHEELER.

A CLERGYMAN was telling a marvellous story, when his little girl said, "Now, pa, is that story true, or is it only preaching?"

"PA, asked Walter, "what is a Buddhist?" "A Buddhist, my son," replied pa, "is a—well—a sort of horticultural chap—you've heard of budding fruits, you know!"

SNEER FOR SNEER.

YEA, sneer, all ye black-coated crew,
With the hate you so well understand!
Condemn ev'ry act that we do,
And call us the scum of the land.
Though your furious anger is hurled
At ev'rything bearing our name,
We can gaze in the eyes of the world
With never a semblance of shame!

We are not surprised you pretend
To believe all the rubbish you teach,
For your living would be at an end
If you discontinued to preach.
But we treat your professions with scorn,
For we spy your base motives with ease.
Our creed is not salary-born,
Our faith does not feed upon fees!

In the backwoods the bushrangers hate
Each influx of bold pioneers,
Which brings them a day nearer fate,
And shakes their black bosoms with fears.
So you look with dread for the day
When your gold-greedy trade shall be lost,
Your hypocrite creed swept away,
And the country relieved of your cost!

Yea, sneer, all ye black-coated tribe,
At the free-lances out of your fold.
You have yielded your minds for a bribe,
You have bartered your reason for gold!
Oh, miserable hypocrite creed,
A curse for long centuries past,
Your glory is waning, indeed,
And the end is approaching you fast!

F. W. B.

ACID DROPS.

At the Sunderland Police-court Father Aloysius Joseph Logan, a Roman Catholic priest, and a woman named Annie Harper, were convicted of being drunk and disorderly together at the railway station. During the day they had been going about from one public-house to another with a crowd following them and shouting "Amen."

CLARA RUSSELL, a Scripture reader at Rugby, has been fined £5 and the costs for relieving her mistress of a gold watch and other light articles. Probably her favorite scriptural reading has been the narrative of the spoiling of the Egyptians and the stories of the religious plundering expeditions of Moses, Joshua, David and other special favorites of the Deity.

AN American visitor describes Jerusalem as "full of cranks." Its sacred character attracts "religious drift-wood" of all kinds, so that the Holy City has now become an abode of Second Adventists, Restitutionists, Latter-Day Prophets, and a thousand and one other "peculiar people," besides of course numerous representatives of the orthodox Greek, Roman and Protestant Churches. Thanks to Mohammedan supremacy, these Christians are not often able to quarrel over the Holy Sepulchre and spill each other's blood as they used to do. By such devices as admitting rival sects through separate doors and on distinct days of the week, and by stationing a body of soldiers on the spot to maintain order, the infidel Turk has actually succeeded in making these gentle Christians keep the peace towards each other except on special occasions, when the love of God proves too strong for mere prudential considerations.

ACCORDING to the Constantinople correspondent of the *Standard*, a case of the kind has just occurred. It appears that the floor of the Chapel of the Virgin in the Holy Sepulchre needs replacing by new stone, and both the Roman Catholic and the orthodox Greek clergy claim the right of repair, and consequently of taking the fees for admission to the edifice. Feeling ran so high that the presence of Turkish troops alone prevented the rival Christians from deciding their disputes by blows.

THE Salvation Army disturbances still continue in Switzerland. At Bienne 300 soldiers had to be called out and the meetings are prohibited for the present. The Christians of Switzerland don't want to be evangelised by strangers. They have been born again as much as they desire.

CHRISTIANS think it right to imprison Freethinkers for hurting their feelings, but they forget, or rather their hopeless diaunion and not their will compels them to endure without legal punishment, the offensive views and revolting doctrines put forth by rival sects or by less thoughtful and humane brethren nominally of the same Church. A "pro-

minent" Christian, who apparently has been humanised a little by an admixture of Science with his Christianity, says that his religious feelings have been "severely shocked" during his visits to a certain theological seminary, by hearing the Professor expatiate before his class of theological students on the classified properties of God, what he is, and what he is not. "Such a lecture," he says, is to scientific people like himself "nothing but arrogance and blasphemy." If blasphemy is to be punished, surely Christians should be sent to gaol for it as well as Freethinkers, or rather before them.

THE *Christian Globe*, having exhausted its stock of fulsome appellations for the Rose of Sharon, now calls him "The Greater David." It says that when the blind beggar appealed to Jesus as the Son of David, this meant he was a greater David. Both were born at Bethlehem, and of the one the Lord said "I have found a man after my own heart, that shall fulfil all my will," and of the other, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Whatever may be thought of the greater David, the man after God's own heart was a consummate scoundrel. He not only seduced the wife of a faithful warrior, but treacherously caused her husband to be put to death in order to obtain unrestrained possession of her.

SAYS the *Christian Globe*, "as a conqueror David was the most perfect type of Christ." Let us see how he treated the vanquished. "And he brought forth the people . . . and put them under saws and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln: and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon" (2 Sam. xii. 31). What ideas Christians must have of their Savior when this worse than Bashi-Bazouk is considered a perfect type of him!

"STAND out of the way," said Talmage, in his last sermon, "and let this colony of tender-footed modern Christians come up and get their crowns." We always thought that it was the head that was the most tender part about modern Christians.

THE *Christian Herald* printed a brief account of the career of the late Joseph Barker in its last number. We suggest to the editor that a verbatim report of the debate between Thomas Cooper and Joseph Barker on "God" would be much more lively reading.

GOD'S holy word, apart from deliberate corruptions and interpolations, has certainly not been miraculously free from mistake. We have heard of an edition which made the seventh commandment read "Thou shalt commit adultery." Another makes Matt. v. 9, read "Blessed are the place-makers." One of the most curious slips is the omission of the letter c in one version of 1 Cor. xv. 51: "Behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be hanged." A Bible published by the Oxford Press in 1810 makes Hebrews ix. 14, read: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from good works to serve the living God." Judged by their conduct, we should think most Christians take this as the correct version.

CARDINAL MANNING, speaking at the opening of a new Catholic chapel at Birmingham, remarked that "they who would draw their Christianity out of the written Scripture had proved for centuries the inefficiency of that rule of faith by the multitudinous contradictions and ever-increasing diversity of interpretation that had been put upon that word." The astute cardinal is quite right. The Protestant sects have made a veritable "nose of wax" out of their Jew-book fetish, but that is no reason why intelligent mortals should go to the elderly gentleman at the Vatican for their beliefs.

CARDINAL MANNING laments that we lived "in a day when philosophy had become godless. Men had turned their backs on Christian science, and science was now godless. There was one more branch of unbelief, and that was godless education—the culture and development of the human reason and the fitting of man for the life of this world without God." Just so, your eminence, and all the lamentation in the world will not alter the happy consummation. But, says the Cardinal, "morals could not be taught without God." What bosh! The systems of morals taught by Aristotle, by Confucius and by Buddha were all independent of any such idea; it indeed has never had any but a disturbing effect on morality, which concerns itself solely with human conduct and "the fitting of man for the life of this world."

THE *Christian Million* has a story of a little boy who wrote his prayer on a piece of paper and sent it up as a "messenger" to his kite and then cut the string. Returning to his mother "with his face all sunshine and rainbows," he told her that he guessed God had got his prayer by that time. The *Christian Million* thinks that though the unbeliever will no doubt smile at the boy's faith, yet his prayer sent up in such confidence was far more likely to reach its destination than many more eloquent petitions. We agree that one high-

flown petition is as likely to arrive at its address as another. The *C. M.* concludes by telling us that if we "look up expecting an answer to" our prayers, "the Lord will surely prove to us a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God." The more Christians know that their hopes and assertions are not realised in practice the more they bolster them up with such strong expressions as "surely," "beyond all doubt," and so forth. We beg to remind them that this is dangerously akin to wilful lying.

CALVINISTS, of whom Mr. Spurgeon is a representative, believe that only the elect can be saved, but at the same time they have also to accept the biblical statements that Jesus died for all and that whosoever will shall be saved. The Calvinistic theory of free-will and predestination was thus parodied by Lorenzo Dow:

You can and you can't,
You shall and you shan't,
You will and you won't;
You'll be damned if you do
And be damned if you don't.

The blasphemy is not ours. We merely quote the irreverent verse from the *Christian Commonwealth*, which equally rejects Spurgeon's Calvinism and Moody's "commercial view" of the atonement. The *C. C.* believes that an honest return to primitive faith and practice (including miracles and communism?) would harmonise the "conflicting systems" which "now divide, and often disgrace, the various sects of what is usually called Christendom."

THE *Western Independent* publishes a long letter from a rabid correspondent, who labors under the common Christian delusion that Freethinkers are a section of the criminal classes, and ought to be punished as such by the State. It seems to be an utterly intolerable offence in his eyes that a number of men have "arrogated to themselves the pompous titles of Freethinkers, Secularists, Atheists," and so forth, and his wrath boils over when he finds that they have claimed liberty, and have actually dared to hold a Secular Conference at Plymouth to organise and strengthen the Freethought movement, or as he says "to insult, to degrade, to mock, to misrepresent and libel the whole community." "Robbery" is to his mind our object. We are "persecuting tyrants," under whom freedom is impossible. We actually dare to "denounce the alleged persecutions of the Christians, as if" we "were free from the sin"—only faultless saints like this inspired correspondent having, we presume, the right to complain of the misdeeds of others. And this Christian madman, this representative of the venomous slander and intolerant bigotry of religious fanaticism, has the audacity to sign himself "A Real Freethinker." His ideas of truth and justice are evidently drawn from the Bible.

SAUL was looking after his father's asses when Samuel was appointed by the Lord to anoint him King of Israel. The Israelites were apparently in search of the same kind of beasts. The asses were found, and so was Saul.

THE Devil is said to quote Scripture for his purpose. He chooses by preference the psalms of David.

DOG-MATISM—Teaching a child its cat-ecchism.

DAVID says "the wicked flee when no man pursueth." He ought to be a good authority, as he was so often on the run himself.

DAVID slew the giant Goliath with a stone. It requires no great courage to throw a stone at a giant—and run away.

A CHALLENGE TO FIGHT.

Scene—A Mountain with Valley beneath.

DAVID, in valley (to Goliath): Yah! I'll pull your nose for you if I come up to you! I'll make you into mincemeat, you long-legged son of a Philistine!

GOLIATH (from above): Go on, now! None of your cheek, or I'll blow you to pieces, and let your friends pick up the fragments.

DAVID: What will you do? I'll show you. (He picks up a stone and throws at Goliath. It hits him on the head and raises a lump).

GOLIATH (blubbling): Oh, oh! You paltry coward—wait till I get you down our court! [He waits].

C U R T A I N.

WHERE ARE THE MISSIONARIES.—There had been a funeral, and among the wreaths was one bearing the name of "Jesus." Referring to this afterwards, 1st Little Boy says: "Ah, did you see 'Jesus'?" 2nd L. B. (excitedly): "No. Was that him a-driving the horses?" 1st L. B. (contemptuously): "No—in course not." 2nd L. B.: "Then was that him with the long coat, as went inside?" 1st L. B.: "No; he wasn't there at all." 2nd L. B.: "Then who is Jesus? Where does he live? What does he do?" 1st L. B. (sulkily): "Oh, I don't

know—he don't live anywheres as I knows on. I was a-talking about that 'ere wreath."

THERE are a number of prairie wolves loose in Epping Forest. They were introduced by a gentleman who set them at liberty in ignorance of their true character, and they have since multiplied. Our joker says that the real *prayer* wolves—for this is the mode of spelling he prefers—frequent pulpits rather than forests, and are dressed in sheeps' clothing dyed black. When steps are taken for trapping the foreign wolves, he thinks this two-legged native species should by no means be neglected, as their depredations are by no means limited to the farmer's poultry-yard.

A SERMON by the Rev. Reuben Thomas, reported in the *East London Observer*, rightly says that "Christianity had something in common with other religions, but that which made it Christianity was not that which it possessed in common with them, but that in which it differed from other religions." The common possession is human morality, taught alike by Buddhist, Hindu, Confucian and Mohammedan. The special features of Christianity are its miracles, its hell, its atoning blood, its ecclesiastical organisation, and its intolerant spirit.

THE *Church Times* says: "When we reflect that in less than three centuries Christianity had vanquished the Empire, every thoughtful man must see that its success would have been absolutely impossible if the Lord had not been with it." Was the Lord, then, with Buddhism, which spread over India in a less space of time, or with Mohammedanism, or modern Mormonism, which in this enlightened age had more followers within twenty years of the death of its founder than Christianity had in its first century? It was not till established by the tyrant Constantine that Christianity vanquished the Empire, and down to the present time this "precious gift of God" has not been communicated to a quarter of the world's inhabitants, and is repudiated by the strongest and most cultivated minds in the lands where it has been adopted: the tendency to disbelieve growing everywhere with the advance of scientific knowledge and critical discrimination.

THE much boasted-of Protestant bishopric of Jerusalem has been allowed to die out, the Prussian government, upon whom devolved the right of appointing a new bishop, having declined to have anything to do with the matter. A Prussian pamphlet on the subject declares that the Protestant mission in Jerusalem has "simply been entirely barren of results, either good or bad." At the so-called cathedral, which will not accommodate 200 persons, the cross has been replaced by the Decalogue in Hebrew characters, in order to attract the Jews.

A VISITOR described the late Bishop of Jerusalem, Dr. Alexander, who was a perverted Jew, as always addressing his congregation with the words, "Let us bray." This invitation did not prove so attractive to the visitor as it did to the nobleman, distinguished by urbanity and absence of mind, who, when he heard the parson say, "Let us bray," responded, "By all means, if you desire to do so."

THE Rev. H. Fletcher, rector of the beautiful village of Grassmere, dissatisfied with the number of communicants at his church, has issued a notice that he will not give Christian burial to any person who has neglected to appear at the communion table, and who has died without expressing contrition for the offence. Perhaps, as in the case of most threats, the Rev. H. Fletcher never intends to carry out his programme, or he may be reminded that in respect to the burial office he is simply a State official, and must act as the law directs.

PRINCIPAL TULLOCH has put out a book on "Modern Theories in Philosophy and Science," wherein he says of Darwin: "He was not a philosopher. His genius was almost solely a genius of observation and narration lacking both in spiritual and synthetic insight." This judgment upon the man who has put forward the most magnificent synthetic generalisation of the century will sufficiently speak for the Presbyterian Principal's claims to deal with the subject.

THE *Liverpool Echo*, referring to the drumming and howling of the Salvation Army, says: "The truth is that life is becoming burdensome by the braying and dinning of a handful of Christians who arrogate to themselves a mission to preach to everybody else, and who, in the main, have not a single qualification for the task."

THE *Christian Age* says: "There are still many unsolved mysteries connected with our Lord's manifestations to his disciples after his death and his triumphant conquest of the tomb." Quite true. Among these unsolved mysteries are why the Jews were not converted by such a miracle, why Jesus is only said to have appeared to believers, and why even these are in hopeless contradiction as to his appearances?

A BRIGHT little school boy was disgusted when told that ram-rods were not named from Nimrod, the mighty hunter.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, August 3, Hall of Science, Old Street, London, E.C., at 7.30, on "Sky Pilots."

August 10, Hall of Science, London; 17, Claremont Hall, London; 24, Milton Hall, London; 31, Milton Hall, London. September 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.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—Mahomet, J. O. D., L: Murtred.

S. BROWN.—Neither Voltaire nor Paine recanted. See Mr. Foote's "Death's Test" for full information as to the end of both these great Freethinkers. We never heard any death-bed story about John Stuart Mill, but we infer from your query that there is one growing up. When it takes a definite shape we will deal with it, but we can safely declare it a lie beforehand.

A. PARKER, 8 Parade, Crown Road, Fulham, sells this paper and other Secular publications.

HELEN P.—Mr. Robert Forder, 6 Cambridge Terrace, Islington, N., will supply you with all the particulars as to the National Secular Society.

F. W. BINSTED.—We regret the omission. Shall appear.

A. L. P.—Persevere in the good path. We are always delighted to find the women on our side.

J. STANDAGE writes on behalf of the Southend Sunday Prosecution Defence Committee, stating that in consequence of Mr. Petherick's illness he has taken the matter in hand *pro tem*. Subscribers and correspondents may still send to 29 Osnaburgh Street, N.W.

J. ROBERTSON.—The price of Mr. Bradlaugh's "Anthropology" is fourpence. We can supply you.

UNKNOWN.—The extract from Brougham on Voltaire was used by Mr. Foote in his trials, and appears in the report.

BANDEN BYNE.—The verse is more appropriate for the *National Reformer*. Other in due course.

E. L.—Your question as to where religion ends and superstition begins was answered by Hobbes, who wrote that superstition is a religion out of fashion, religion is a superstition in fashion.

R. GARbutt, No. 10a New Delavel Colliery, Northumberland, has a lot of back numbers of the *Freethinker* to dispose of.

W. EGLESTON.—Glad you like our Summer Number so well. It is having an extraordinary sale. Thanks for the enclosure.

D. OAKLEY.—We regret to hear that you were disappointed by the non-appearance of one of our outdoor lecturers last Sunday. Mr. Ramsey will supply you with all information as to the sale of literature. You might have a parcel direct from our office. The shop is closed at two on Saturdays.

C. W. LEE.—Mr. Foote's "Bible Romances," Mr. Bradlaugh's "Genesis," Paine's "Age of Reason," and "Supernatural Religion," for a start.

W. PEARSON.—We cannot deal with the death of Voltaire again at present.

YOUNG ATHEIST.—The son of a bastard can only be considered illegitimate on the Biblical view. Dent. xxiii. 2, says: "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord." We never heard of the Duke of Marlborough being a bastard, nor do we see that it matters if he was, since he was made a duke for his military services.

SIGNALMAN, R.N.—The real reason the clergy avoid discussion is because it is found to militate against their creed. We are glad to know, as we do from many sources, of the progress Freethought is making in the navy.

INQUIRE asks if the "high legal authorities" who requested Mr. Arthur Brown, the coroner of Nottingham, to violate his oath in the case of the death of Sir W. Williams, are connected with the legal authorities who sat in the Bradlaugh oath case?

F. SIMMONDS.—See answer to S. Brown.

LUCIFER.—"Bill Jones on Prayer," by the late James Thomson (B.V.), which appears in the August number of *Progress*, has not been printed before. It is an original poem, now published for the first time, with the consent of Mr. Thomson's executors. The Progressive Publishing Company have in the press a complete collection of his "blasphemous" writings. The volume will be ready shortly.

SWANSEA FREETHINKER.—We dealt with the *Western Mail* last week. It isn't worth another paragraph.

JOHN POOR.—Pleased to hear that, although you have discontinued your subscription, you get your *Freethinker* through an agent. That is generally the best way.

P. SUGNA.—We suppose it was the current number of the *Boy's Own Paper*, but it went into the waste-basket, and we cannot be more specific now. Thanks for cuttings.

H. A. BARKER.—We have no room for political matter.

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

It is particularly requested that all orders for literature should be sent to W. J. Ramsey, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, to whom all Post Office Orders should be made payable. Considerable delay and annoyance are caused by the disregard of this rule. In remitting stamps halfpenny ones are preferred.

EDITORIAL.

MR. WHEELER'S return to work enables Mr. Foote to devote a little more time to literary labors outside the *Freethinker*. He has begun the completion of his "Bible Romances," all of which will be published this summer. Numbers nineteen and twenty, "Gospel Ghosts" and "A Rising God" will be ready next week.

Our Summer Number is selling amazingly. Its success eclipses everything of the kind in the history of Freethought. There have been some hints of a fresh prosecution, but we fancy the bigots, like Mr. Gladstone over the Lords, will think once, twice and thrice before they again try to abolish the *Freethinker*.

We desire to call our readers' especial attention to *Progress*. The August number is one of the brightest ever issued. It contains, among other articles, the continuation of Mr. Foote's "Prisoner for Blasphemy."

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE large room of the Invicta Club, Woolwich, was filled on Thursday evening, July 24, with what the snobbish journals call "a highly respectable audience," including a very fair sprinkling of ladies, to hear Mr. Foote lecture on "Judas Iscariot." The lecture was delivered under the auspices of the Woolwich Branch of the N. S. S., and was intended to be the first of a regular series in the town, which sadly needs a little education in Freethought.

MR. FOOTE received an exceptionally warm welcome at Milton Hall last Sunday. Despite the summer season, there was a fine audience, even more numerous than the previous week. Next Sunday Mr. Foote lectures at the Hall of Science on "Sky Pilots."

We have received the first three numbers of the *Liberator*, a new Freethought paper, started by our friend and old colleague, Mr. Joseph Symes. As our readers may surmise, it is a very lively journal, and well calculated to make the orthodoxy of Australia gnash its teeth and tear its hair. With his usual gallantry, Mr. Symes defends the *Freethinker* against its mean, unscrupulous defamers out there. From time to time we shall bring the *Liberator* before our readers' notice. For the present we wish its editor all success, and may his pluck never be rewarded with the gaol.

We learn from Mr. Symes's paper that the *Freethinker* has actually been seized at the shop where the *Liberator* is published. The official who has rashly undertaken to protect religion in Melbourne is Mr. Langridge, Commissioner of Customs, who apparently thinks that it is part of his duty to stop contraband thought as well as contraband goods. The Melbourne Secularists, however, deny his right to do anything of the kind, and they promise to test the question in the law courts.

THE Melbourne *Age*, which we have just received, has a very curious article on this subject. It tries to blow hot and cold. It would like to send the culprits to gaol, but it fears that punishment would not silence them. Do not, cries the *Age*, make martyrs of Mr. Foote's followers, for the experiment has failed on him; "the result of his year's imprisonment being that he has gained notoriety and sympathy, has been presented with a testimonial, has increased the circulation of the *Freethinker*, renews the offence of gross illustrations, and sets the English judges at defiance." So the *Age* recommends the authorities to leave Mr. Foote and his writings alone. How pretty! The charitable Christians would readily murder us if they were sure of gaining something by it; but as they are not, they decline the trouble and expense of our assassination. Really, when they bring out the next Revised Version of their infallible Scripture, the Christians should insert this as a practical illustration in the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians.

OF course the *Age* exhausts on us its vocabulary of abuse. We are gross, stupid, blackguard, and so forth, in the well-known strains of Christian charity. We circulate in White-chapel. Well, why not? The place is full of gospel and dram shops, and evidently needs a great deal of purification. But, as a matter of fact, the *Freethinker* circulates all over the globe, wherever the English language is spoken. We doubt whether any paper in existence goes into more parts of the world or has a more varied body of readers. There is no circle of society in which the *Freethinker* is without friends and admirers. And it is at least as well written as ninety-nine out of every hundred of the orthodox journals that vilify and denounce it.

THE *Age* finds our illustration (No. LXI.) of Dives and Lazarus "intolerably offensiv and blackguard." But it does

not stop there; it goes on to describe this "beastly picture." It "represents Dives in hell, pleading for a drop of water, while Abraham and Christ, surrounded by bottles, are tantalising him with the sight of drink." And this is the "blackguard" illustration! Why, it is perfectly true to the Gospel story. The Christians should blush at *that*, and not at our picture of it. Oh, they may say, there are no bottles in the original. True, but the water may as well have been kept in such vessels as in any others; and what is there particularly "blackguard" in a bottle? —

WELL, the upshot of all this abuse is that we had better be left alone. Just so; that is what we want, and all we ask. But we cannot help smiling at the enemy's tactics. At first they said, "We will put the *Freethinker* down." They tried it, and failed. Now they say, "Pah! who would meddle with such a blackguard paper?" They remind us of the disappointed fox in the fable. And then he said the grapes were sour, tralala, tralala, la, la.

A SECULAR Society is being formed for North Middlesex. Freethinkers in Wood Green, Edmonton, Tottenham, Hornsey, etc., are invited to attend a meeting on Sunday next, at seven p.m., at 5 Mansell Terrace, Green Lanes, Wood Green. E. T. Oates Lockwood secretary *pro tem*.

"ISHMAEL" writes us that, having heard it stated that no one dares sell Freethought papers in Tottenham, he accepted the challenge, and on the following Sunday was there with the *Freethinker*, of which he sold eight copies. Next Sunday he sold seventeen, and has increased the sale week by week, till last week he sold forty-eight *Freethinkers*, besides other literature. "Ishmael" now thinks of opening a shop for the sale of advanced literature. There must be many other districts where a like pluck will be rewarded with a like success.

THE Central London Branch of the National Secular Society have their outing by brakes on the 24th. This year they visit Orpington in Kent. We wish them fine weather for their trip.

As a contrast to the elegant description of Mr. Foote by a Welsh correspondent of a Tory paper, we are sent a cutting from the Tory *Gloucester Standard*, whose London correspondent, speaking of the meetings in Regent's Park, says: "The Atheists seem to me to have the best audiences and the most educated speakers."

It had been generally supposed that Ingersoll and Beecher had given the Devil his death-stab years ago, but he either escaped with his life or has been resurrected, like the reputed Nazarene, and is now figuring prominently in the far Northwest. In Dakota there is a Devil's Lake, on the banks of which is a rapidly-growing town of the same name; while the region abounds with such Satanic ornamentations as Devil's Heart, Devil's Punch Bowl, Devil's Tooth, Devil's Backbone; and one of the financial institutions bears the portentous title of Devil's Lake Bank.—*Man*.

MR. EDWARD CLODD is writing in *Knowledge* on "Dreams: their Place in the Growth of Primitive Belief." Mr. Clodd finds the soul theory to be based on the dreams of early savage man.

MR. RUSKIN has been writing on "Saints." He considers that his favorite heroine, his mother, would most certainly have been a saint, "but for my father and me." Mr. Ruskin believes in saints being made and not born, like St. Nicholas, who, when he was an infant at the breast, distinguished between fast days and other days, and would not take the breast on Wednesdays and Fridays. This precocious child of God after all only became the patron saint of thieves.

THE Rev. H. Shay has been tried by the Illinois Congregational Association for speaking of their Christ as a "divine bastard," and for denying the miraculous conception, the divinity of Jesus, and the substitutional atonement. He was convicted of heresy, but he was not expelled from the Congregational Association. He will continue to preach as heretofore. As he was not convicted by a two-thirds majority, it is expected that his congregation will still support him; so he will go on denying the fundamental doctrines of Christianity and leading his flock astray along the road that leads to Freethought.

THE Divorce Bill in France will be law in a few days, the French Chambers having accepted the Senatorial amendments. The Senatorial Committee also agreed to the abolition of public prayers. The priests feel these blows severely, but the Republic is now too securely established to dread their impotent efforts to undermine it.

THE Rev. Mr. McKay, of Pittsburg, thinks that nine out of ten newspaper men are "Infidels." Probably this remark is more nearly correct than most pulpit statements. Education

means knowledge and thought and the rejection of the supernatural. Hence the Latin adage which says that where there are three doctors there are two Atheists.

A CONVERTED ROBBER.

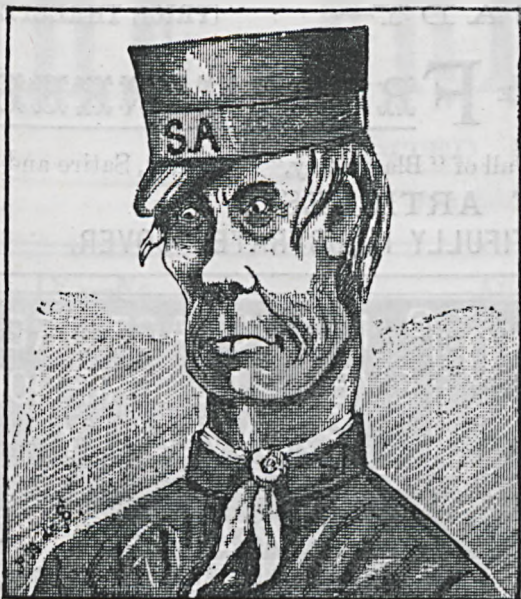
A CHRISTIAN contemporary gives an account of the conversion of a robber chief in an Italian prison. There is nothing specially remarkable in the story. It is merely typical of thousands of similar narratives to be found *ad nauseam* in the pages of Christian literature. A missionary who endeavors to convert Italian Christians by reading the Bible to them is cast into prison for this dreadful offence—Christians apparently having failed in the difficult or impossible task of converting each other to mutual tolerance and charity. He found a band of robbers in the prison whose chief had been sentenced to be shot. From the misdirected sympathy with miscreants which the Christian doctrine mischievously encourages, "the missionary's heart was greatly moved as he looked on the cruel man, who had committed more than one murder, and many unmentionable crimes." For a long time this human wild beast obstinately ignored the missionary's greetings and only "glared at him" in reply through the bars of his cell. Ultimately by a present of some fruit the savage wretch is won over, and the man of God converts him to the true kind of Christianity. The villainy of a life-time is now supposed to be swept away. Nothing is said of the victims whom the robber has despatched unprepared and unforgiven into another world. No feeling of sorrow for *their* ruin on earth and *their* anguish in hell troubles either the missionary or the rejoicing convert now safely booked for heaven by means of simple trust in Jesus. Why think of victims or of restitution, when such a glorious prospect satisfies the selfish hopes of the hardened scoundrel whose opportunities of worldly revelry and crime have passed away for ever? He knows that Christ has saved him, that God has forgiven him, that the burden of his sin has been removed for ever and will no longer weigh upon his conscience with even as much as a feather's weight; for Christ died for him, Christ has redeemed him with his blood, and all is peace and hope and joy. Soon after this joyous state of mind had been brought about, the bandit chief was led out to be shot by twelve soldiers. His last words were: "This is the happiest day of my life, for I shall be with Christ soon."

The doctrine of the full and complete efficacy of death-bed conversion, and of salvation by faith at any moment, is thoroughly in accordance with the teachings of Scripture. Christ himself forgave the dying thief upon the cross, and promised that he should sup with him that very night in paradise.* Christianity is indeed a comfortable religion for criminals. Belief at the last moment ensures salvation. Credulity is the supreme virtue. All other virtues are but as satellites shining by its reflected light, or even dragging the unenlightened, unbelieving soul into the infinite abyss of perdition and despair. The evil that Christianity has done in distorting men's ideal of morality is simply incalculable. On the one hand it terrorises men and women out of their common sense, and consecrates infinite malice as divinest justice and benevolence, and on the other hand it regards crime as nothing if sanctified by a *credo*, and lovingly pets and enthusiastically blesses the godly villain, while placidly ignoring and abandoning the dead and buried victim for whom no further hope or opportunity remains.

For our own part, we have no sympathy with confirmed criminals and dying desperadoes; and we regard the cultivation and indulgence of such a feeling as a gross misappropriation of good sentiment from its rightful objects. Our pity, our sympathy, our help are due, we feel, to the hard-working, much-enduring members of the community, who suffer so grievously, both directly and indirectly, from the depredations and cruel misdeeds of these selfish wretches.

W. P. BALL.

* The next three nights Christ spent in the heart of the earth according to Matt. xii., 40, or in hell according to the Apostles' Creed and 1 Peter iii., 19-20. Hell, therefore, is evidently identical with the heart of the earth. The converted thief must have felt rather disappointed at waking up in such warm quarters after Christ's promise. Modern parsons, finding great difficulty in meeting "infidel" objections, are beginning to hint, where necessary, that the word translated "paradise", is only *hades* in the original. Presently, if necessary, they may hedge a little more, and say that *hades* here means "hell," and that Christ thus denounced in the most striking manner the immoral doctrine of death-bed conversion.



A SALVATION "CHUCKER OUT."

THE CREATION PHANTOM.

OF all the absurdly wild notions entertained by the popular theologian of the present time there is not one so utterly devoid of foundation as the creation phantom. According to some theological teachers, this earth of ours is the work of an omnipotent being whose extraordinary capacity for creative work is superlatively strengthened by a no less extraordinary omniscient intellect. To a thinking mind, a God possessed of intellectual qualities cannot be the creator of this world of ours. The reason that he could not be so is obvious, as the intelligent being's intelligence could not be other than the result of the functional activity of an organism which must of necessity be a part and parcel of the world included in that creation, the so-called work of the all powerful and all wise creator, God, who thus is made to figure as the creator of himself. Using language in its commonly accepted sense, there is, therefore, no logical room in our thoughts for an intelligent creator of this world. In taking this view of the case, it is clear that, for the purpose of this article, the possibility of creation has been assumed; and it is here that ground is opened up for considerable controversy. Unthinking and loosely thinking theologians, between whom there is very little practical difference, are fond of contemplating, with reverential mien, the wonderful feats performed by their God, in the manufacture of this world of ours in the short space of six days. Of course, if this theory of theirs were true, the feat would indeed be a most wonderful one in creative action, but one feels constrained to ask the simple question, "Is it true that this world of ours was made in the form in which we now behold it, by a God, in six days?" Such a question is pertinent to the solution of the inquiry, and however inconvenient and distasteful it may be to theologians, such questions will trouble people's minds, and they will receive such solutions as the state of the thinker's capabilities will admit of. A candid inquirer, with a mind free from theological taint, will have but little difficulty in answering the query in the negative; for looking at the facts freely and without the warping influence of the superstitious illusions so prevalent to-day, the grander truths of science will be revealed to his vision. In the study of evidence, theologians show a temerity not to be met with amongst thoughtful Freethinkers. It is often found that the soaring ideas of a preacher have no sounder foundation than a wild imagination as their basis; and the most positive statements as to the origin of man are too frequently built on nothing better than the ignorance and impudence of the teacher.

The qualifications which characterise theologians vary very much, but the license which they all enjoy in the way of expounding their own stupid inanities is pretty well on a par, even to dullness. Of course they are all regarded with reverential respect by their deluded following; but to the unprejudiced observer their office is subversive of the best interests of our common humanity. Even on the supposition that there was a god grand enough and powerful enough to conjure into existence this marvellous world of ours, nothing can be more absurd than to believe such a being can be so degraded as to refuse to be satisfied with our conduct here unless we accept as truth all kinds of nonsense taught from the pulpits in the name of religion. Men engaged in propagating error instead of endeavoring to portray beautiful and wonderful realities are a disgrace to the order of beings to which they belong. It is positively an affliction to a Freethinker that such an army of men should prostitute their talents, and live in luxury and idleness on the rewards they receive for upholding exploded fallacies, and flaunting in the air the dirty rags of superstitious folly. To do this successfully they appeal to the weakness of man's nature,

and instead of proceeding on the lines of his mental enfranchisement, the stamina of his intellectual vigor is sapped by their own created demon—fear.

Will the theological preachers give up the theory of a six days' creation? Can they give it up? Will they give up the theory of a creation in any form? No. They cannot give up the creation theory and remain in the pulpit as expounders of Christianity. The whole system of theology, as taught in Christian countries must stand or fall with the theory of a God-created world. Science has already done much towards shaking men's faith in the teachings of the churches with regard to the origin of man; and the acceptance of modern philosophy is incompatible with the doctrine that man by the murder of an innocent-minded martyr can be regenerated to convictions out of joint with the times in which he lives; or, that man was made perfect by a God, who made himself so imperfect as not to be able to discern the imperfections of what theologians are pleased to call his noblest work! Apart from all other considerations, a theory of a God-created world on the ground of there being a *first cause* must stand self-condemned, for by parity of reasoning, the absolute necessity for a "first cause," as contended for by some expounders of theology, involves as much an admission that the God of creation must also have had a *first cause*. On what ground should we be expected not to take this view of the matter?

The idea of a cause for every effect is as unavoidable as the idea of an effect being the result of a cause sufficient to produce the effect thought of: in fact, it is impossible to separate, in thought, one from the other. This does not necessarily involve a conception of a cause adequate to the production of this earth of ours, or, indeed, the universe. We observe in the phenomena by which we are surrounded every moment of time a concatenation or chain in relation to which the words "cause" and "effect" are convertible terms, the one being no more cause than the other—both being both at one and the same time. The conception of a "first" cause of everything is therefore out of the question; there is no room in our thoughts for that which is beyond human experience in dealing with such an abstract contradiction as an uncaused first cause. Such a contention as the theologian is wont to shelter himself with as a reason for his faith in a "creator" of the universe is on the principles of common sense incompatible and inconsistent with the simplest forms of reasoning.

W. W.

REVIEW.

To-Day, August.—The organ of scientific Socialism is becoming more and more nebulous. There are writers of ability who contribute to its pages, but they too often write on what they don't understand. If the Socialists of to-day had some of the direct vigor and practical power of the old Chartists, whom they so frequently talk about, their utterances would be a little more lively and entertaining, and perhaps a little more instructive.

PROFANE JOKES.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT: "Now, children, what shall I talk about this morning?" Small girl: "About three minutes, please."

A SOMERSETSHIRE laborer was asked by his sky-pilot if he used the Lord's Prayer. He replied that he did, and proceeded to display his acquaintance with it by particularly enlarging upon the beauty and force of the second clause, "Holloaed be thy name." "Don't you see, sir, we are to holloa it on earth as the angels holloa it in heaven? I'm fond of singing," he added reflectively.

THE *Christian Age* tells the following anecdote of the late Rev. Dr. Hatfield and his choir-master, Mr. Jones, who was getting up a grand musical performance by his choir of an anthem he had composed to the words of one of Watt's psalms. The first verse ends with the words—

"Oh, may my heart in tune be found,
Like David's harp of solemn sound."

Mr. Jones came to his pastor to get his approval of a change of these lines, so as to read—

"Oh, may my heart be tuned within,
Like David's sacred violin."

But the Doctor said he could improve even that, and he wrote, to the amazement of Mr. Jones—

"Oh, may my heart go diddle, diddle,
Like unto David's sacred fiddle."

Mr. Jones sang the psalm as written by Watts. We haven't heard whether the doctor was prosecuted for blasphemy.

"You seem to feel unusually well this morning," said an imp of darkness to his Satanic Majesty. "Yes, indeed," responded the old sinner, flicking his tail playfully. "I have just heard some good news." "What is that?" "Bob Ingersoll is lecturing again."

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