

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH. — No. 86.



SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

"Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, in Mount Moriah."—2 CHRON. iii., 1.

MY RESURRECTION.

STARTLE not, reader! The editor of the *Freethinker* did not die last Friday, after seeing that week's copy of the paper through the press, and rise again in time for the next number and his Sunday morning lecture at the Hall of Science. He has not tried to imitate Jesus Christ, who somehow put in three days' time between late on Friday and early on Sunday. No, miracles are not in his line. He leaves them to those who have more faith or more impudence. Speaking in the first person, it is not my own resurrection I am going to relate, but another person's. It is *his* resurrection, and properly speaking his story. I merely act as his medium, like the honest gentlemen who play "the missing link" at Spiritist *séances*, and place their bodily apparatus at the disposal of disembodied spirits for a certain time, and an equally certain consideration.

"Very well," you say, "and who is this other person?" Gently, reader; don't be in such a hurry. Did you ever know a man big with information unburden himself in the rapid, unceremonious way you demand. Respect the function of the story-teller, especially when he is really an historian. Remember that the delivery of a good story (I don't say this is one, but we'll assume it is) is as difficult and tender as the birth of a child. Let us begin at the beginning, and proceed carefully, as befits this extraordinary affair.

When writing my Bible Romance of "A Rising God," which might just as appropriately have been called "The Rising Son," for it dealt with the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the son of God, who is the son of nobody, but a poor, miserable, disconsolate orphan, like Adam himself,

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who in this respect, if in no other, *was* made in the image and after the likeness of his Creator; I had occasion to treat that remarkable episode which was so admirably depicted by our artist last week, and which might perhaps be described as the muster of the first Skeleton Army. Jesus, who was so often on the cross, finally got on the cross altogether, a condition in which he has remained ever since. But it was a great trial at first. It made him cry out with a loud voice and give up the ghost—temporarily, of course, for he got it back again soon after. There was also a great earthquake, which nobody ever heard of except the Christians; and the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, a circumstance which no Jew ever heard of from that day to this. But that was not all: there was a still greater wonder. According to Matthew, "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the grave after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

Now, although I dealt with this marvel in my Romance, I felt that I had not exhausted the subject, so I pondered it until it nearly exhausted me. Further researches afforded me very little relief. What though the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts omit the words "and came"? What though Fritsche explained the words translated "after his resurrection" as meaning "after he had raised them"? What though Alford objected to this as utterly inadmissible? All these things left the matter pretty much as it stood. Professor Plumtre offered a spark of light on the question of who those "saints" were by "seeing in them those who, believing in Jesus, had passed to their rest before the Crucifixion." But when I reflected that this learned Professor, after all, knew exactly as much

about the matter as I, that spark of light went out, and all was dark again. Alack and alack! Such are the difficulties that beset the man who would "prove all things" in that simple Book which a wayfaring man though a fool may understand, and which no wayfaring man except a fool ever *does* understand.

In this mood I read again, after an interval of some years, the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus; an ancient Scripture, supposed by some learned owls to be the work of Christ's disciple of that name, by some sharper critics to be a pious forgery, and by some still more sagacious to be an honest document once in considerable use by Christians, and written in much the same way as other Gospels, including our four canonical ones; that is, by some unknown person, at an unknown time, in an unknown place, for the use of unknown churches, with an unknown amount of truth, an unknown quantity of tradition, and an unknown ratio of invention. Now the Gospel of Nicodemus is especially full of information on the very subject of my perplexity. It relates how, after Christ's resurrection, the two high priests, Annas and Caiaphas, were frightened, and proceeded to investigate the matter. In company with Nicodemus, Joseph and Gamaliel, they went to Arimathæa, where they found Charinus and Lenthius, two sons of old Simeon, who had actually been dead and buried before Jesus, and raised from their graves simultaneously with him. Being brought to the Jerusalem synagogue, this astonishing couple of escaped corpses, who had not yet recovered their speech, made the sign of the cross with their fingers on their tongues, and immediately asked for pens, ink and paper. Each wrote an account of his resurrection on "two distinct pieces of paper," and then vanished; and on examination it turned out that "what they had wrote was found perfectly to agree, the one not containing one letter more or less than the other." No such instance of Gospel Harmony ever occurred before or since. Most inspired historians flatly contradict each other on essential points, but these two agreed on the minutest details. What a pity their documents are not now extant! Nicodemus states that Pilate put them "in the public records of his hall"; but nobody has ever seen or heard of them since, and the Lord only knows what has become of them.

According to Charinus and Lenthius, when Jesus gave up the ghost there was a great commotion in hell, where it appears all the patriarchs and prophets from Adam down to John the Baptist were then residing. Satan and Beelzebub indulged in mutual recrimination. Christ entered and put them to flight, and liberated all their captives. Beelzebub and Satan then had another round, but the Lord cut it short, dethroned Satan, put Beelzebub in his place, and, leaving the poor devils behind, sailed away to glory with Adam and all his posterity who had been "damned by the forbidden fruit." Some of them, however, including Charinus and Lenthius, were brought away from Paradise to the earth again to be raised up from the dead with Christ. They were allowed "only three days from the dead," to celebrate the passover, and to "bear testimony for Christ the Lord."

Nicodemus's long-winded narrative, nine chapters of which I have stewed down to one paragraph, fits in with Matthew's brief account, amplifying and supplementing it in the most admirable manner. Here then, I thought, is a good basis to work from; the matter will now perhaps be cleared up, and my mind will obtain rest. Thereupon I walked out into the quiet night, under the solemn stars and amid the ghostly rustle of trees, absorbed in contemplation, inhaling deep breaths, only occasionally broken by a puff from my friendly pipe. Suddenly I was confronted by a strange old man of venerable aspect. Centuries seemed to have ploughed their traces on his features, ancient memories brooded in the depths of his hollow eyes, his long white locks and beard looked like the accumulated snows of a thousand winters, and his low sepulchral voice sounded like faint echoes from a profound abyss.

"Stranger," he began, "do not be alarmed; my appearance portends no evil to you or any being; while to me this meeting brings the long-craved boon of death, and rest from the weary burden of earthly existence. For more than eighteen centuries I have roamed the world like the Wandering Jew of tradition, waiting for the occasion which has now come. This roll (here he placed it in my hand) contains the true record of what you are pondering. You alone of all mortals have been seized with

a burning desire to explore its depths, and only to such an one am I permitted to entrust my long-hoarded treasure. My task is now ended, and peace visits me after centuries of unrest. Farewell! Farewell!"

I looked, and he was gone. I stood alone as before in the quiet night, under the solemn stars and amid the ghostly rustle of trees, but no longer absorbed in contemplation. I was filled with an eager longing to peruse the mysterious roll, and I strode swiftly home.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

CHRISTIANITY AND SPIRITUALISM.

WHEN dealing with other superstitions than their own, Christians are at liberty to resume the use of their reason. They are then able to perceive the ridiculous weakness of the arguments for the supernatural, and the natural reasons which account for the successful propagation of belief in unseen beings. Thus the *Rock*, in an article on Spiritualism, notices that "it is so impossible to disprove the existence around us of spiritualistic agencies that these men assume that their existence is proved, and the assumption vitiates all their conduct and reasoning." But the *Rock* fails to observe that Christian reasoning is vitiated in exactly the same way. It is so impossible to completely disprove the existence of God and of heaven and of immortal souls that Christians assume the reality of their suppositions just as Spiritualists do of theirs. In both cases "the *may be* is taken for the *is*, with a credulity that would be ludicrous if it were not so mischievous."

The *Rock* can readily see that a great part of the success of Spiritualism is due to the "self-interested" motives of ambitious and money-seeking mediums, and it regards the progress of the movement as lamentable rather than as surprising. Yet Christians point to the success of Christianity—which was far less rapid than that of Spiritualism, Mormonism, and various other religions or quasi-religions—as convincing proof of the divine origin of Christianity. Human nature two thousand years ago was, in the main, very much like the human nature of to-day, and ignorance and credulity were far more widely prevalent. If vanity and ambition and the love of power or influence over others, combined with "baser motives," will satisfactorily account for the labors of the Spiritualistic propagandists of to-day, surely similar motives will also account for the efforts put forth by the early Christian propagandists. Whatever amount of sincere belief on the part of teachers and disciples existed in the one case, self-evidently has its counterpart in the other, or the movement would collapse for want of support. The only reason there are no martyrs among the modern Spiritualists is that there has been no persecution, and consequently no opportunity for martyrdom. Such mediums, however, as have suffered imprisonment for fraud are regarded as martyrs by the more devoted Spiritualists, who subscribe for their defence when alive and cherish their memories when dead. So that even in this respect many Spiritualists would probably claim to be on a par with the early Christians.

The *Rock* thinks, rightly enough, that the "exhibitions offered to outsiders" by Spiritualism are "crazy and puerile." So were many of the "exhibitions" of Christ's thaumaturgic powers. Withering a fig-tree for not having figs at the wrong season of the year, was surely a "crazy and puerile" exhibition of bad temper. Sending devils into two thousand swine to drown them surely indicates a "crazy and puerile" turn of mind both on the part of the alleged wonder-worker, and also to some extent on the part of those who believe such childish legends. The exhibition of a tempted God perched on a pinnacle of the temple with the devil floating around is a conception still more "crazy and puerile." To the impartial observer, Christianity and Spiritualism are alike in being discredited and condemned by the "crazy and puerile" manifestations which are alleged by believers to be fundamental facts or truths of their respective systems.

We are not in the least surprised, as the *Rock* is, that the professors of this "new craze" have the "audacity" to "appeal to the Bible for countenance." This fossil book, founded on superstition and full of the foolish beliefs of ancient times, when carried forward into progressive ages as the supreme guide to living truth, necessarily becomes a tower of strength to dealers in cherished delusions and

profitable errors. The assertion that Spiritualists "travesty the sacred record" is no more true of them than of Christian sects in general. The New Testament certainly teaches Spiritualism both in its universal sense and in its modern technical sense. Moses and Elijah came to Jesus at the Transfiguration, or else their alleged appearance was a sham. Jesus appeared to his disciples after death, and passed through closed doors just as the spirits of the departed are alleged to do in Spiritualistic *séances*. Lazarus was recalled to earth after being in the land of spirits several days. According to Matthew, the bodies of a number of saints left their graves and appeared unto many. The Old Testament gives us the case of the Witch of Endor, who raised the spirit of Samuel to gratify the king of Israel. So that while we quite agree that Spiritualism is a "craze," whether in the Bible or out of it, we must point out to Christians that their own religion includes Spiritualism as its basis, and depends entirely upon the rising of the "Jerusalem ghost" and of the individual ghosts of all mankind. The main difference between the Spiritualistic and Christian beliefs is that the one is a new craze and the other an old one. The wish for continued life and the desire to rejoin or converse with departed friends and relatives are the exciting and maintaining causes of the myth or belief whose evolution is unconsciously and very imperfectly and unscientifically shown forth in the Bible, and whose transformation or readjustment is still going on before our eyes among the Spiritualists of to-day.

"The sect has a dialect of its own, and special cant phrases familiar to the initiated," says the *Rock*. So have Christians in general, and every Christian sect in particular. When Spiritualists speak of "plane of existence," "higher plane of being," and so forth—an ideal far more suitable to the moral instincts of human nature than the corresponding orthodox ideal—Protestant Christians have but two planes of existence in which to place the spirits of all mankind. Roman Catholics have adopted purgatory as an intermediate plane of existence, whereby they do away with some of the moral difficulty of classifying all kinds of men as either extremely good (and fortunate) or extremely vicious and utterly incorrigible.

The concluding remarks on Spiritualism apply so well to Christianity that in quoting them we will substitute the more noticeable and more widely spread evil for the less influential belief or fraud which the *Rock* attacks. "There are epidemics of delusions as well as of diseases; and" Christianity "is one of the most childish and nonsensical of these." "Occasionally," continues the *Rock*, "like diseases, they become endemic." This, unfortunately, has been the case with Christianity; but science is at work, and by cleansing out the dark places of the human mind and promoting rational healthy exercise of the mental faculties, it is gradually but surely extirpating the disease and the liability to it.

W. P. BALL.

ACID DROPS.

A LEAGUE of Catholics is being formed "to protect the vital principle of doctrinal Christianity in popular education"—that is, to neutralise Secular education as far as possible by religious dogmas. The Duke of Norfolk and the Marquis of Bute are among the promoters of the league. It would be difficult to find two more abject specimens of superstition even in the House of Lords. The Duke of Norfolk believes in the healing powers of St. Winifred's well, and, with more reason, sent his wife to Lourdes as a cure for sterility. The Marquis of Bute takes out of Cardiff alone, in rents and dock dues, over a million per annum, giving absolutely nothing in return; and devotes his monstrous fortune to the purposes of the priests. In intellect he is spoken of in the society journals as contemptible.

The Pope has given his assent to "a spiritual pilgrimage to Lourdes" on the part of the faithful who cannot go in persons. All these are asked to make the spiritual pilgrimage by subscribing for a heart of gold, a cross of diamonds, a mosaic monument to be erected in Rome in honor of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, and a sum to go to the sanctuary at Lourdes for the celebration of 200 masses. Another project for the priests to fatten on the fools!

As masses cost a lot of money and poor people cannot afford a whole one to themselves, Father Greene offers by advertisement to put them on the yearly list for one shilling, or on the permanent list for ten shillings. On receipt of the money they, or rather their relatives in purgatory, will be prayed for wholesale, so as to cheat God and the Devil at the same time.

Surely this worthy priest's name is wrongly printed—Greene is a more appropriate name for his dupes.

BOTH in the House of Lords and the House of Commons reporters have to retire during the farce of offering up prayers. We presume this rule is for the purpose of avoiding any unseemly reports in the public press. Fancy the *Echo* putting on its bill—"Supplication of the Bishop of Gloucester for more Wisdom to the Peers;" or "The Descent of the Holy Ghost on Mr. Newdegate and Sir Henry Tyler!"

A WRITER in *Truth* tells of a visit to St. Paul's Cathedral to hear Canon Liddon. When the Canon began to preach one of the choirmen fell fast asleep. The man next him kept awake. About the middle of the sermon the first one woke up, but then his companion had gone off. On the other side another choirman was fast asleep. Some the writer could not see, but all the boys in the choir who were not asleep were playing. One was sucking sweets, another had a scent squirt. One boy set up paper figures for the amusement of his companions, and another genius gave an imitation of Punch and Judy with the sleeves of his surplice.

"INDIA yearning towards Christ" is the title of an article in the *Christian World*. What India is really yearning for, in our opinion, is more freedom and less poverty, more justice and less British cheek.

MISS CHARLESWORTH, the young evangelist who left her father at the age of seventeen to go teaching the world under the blood-and-fire banner of General Booth, says that the people in Switzerland were not opposed to the Salvationists, but the Army was really maltreated by a mob of roughs who were hired by "infidel members of the Government." Being "infidels" they were of course wicked men, and they trembled at the Salvationists' denunciation of their vices. "Colonel" Clibborn, however, tells a very different tale. He turns up at the Copenhagen Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, specially to defend the Army and protest against its treatment by the Swiss authorities; and he says that "most of the people were unfavorable to their practice, and among Christians opinions were hostile." The "infidel officials" of Miss Charlesworth's story are evidently creatures of her own imagination. She always was a romantic young person. The only cure for her is a husband and two babies.

REUBEN MAY, the cadging missionary of Golden Lane, who has so often been shown up in *Truth*, is beginning to be pilloried in the *Christian World*. More than one correspondent writes that he is soliciting fresh subscriptions, but declines to send them last year's balance-sheet. Reuben knows a trick worth two of that.

GOOD news for the Christian Evidence Society! The conductors of the Palestine Survey Expedition think they have identified the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea, in which the body of Mr. Jesus Christ was laid after his crucifixion. No doubt they will also find his grave-clothes in a good state of preservation, together with the stone that was rolled against the mouth (an excellent fit) and some unquestionable relics of the seal that never was set on it.

M. CLERMONT GANNEAU writes in the *Times* on "Jewish Antiquities," and advocates the establishment of a Palestinian Museum. As the manufacture of Jewish antiquities is a distinct branch of modern industry the museum will doubtless be furnished with the key to the Garden of Eden, the coat of skins made by Jahveh for Adam, Aaron's blooming rod, the original ark, and other articles enumerated in our Summer Number.

THE Archdeacon has threatened to excommunicate a church organist at Wellingborough for playing the organ for a week or two in a Congregational chapel. This is an A 1 sample of Christian charity. The pious Archdeacon isn't going to wait till the Judgment Day for a sharp division of the sheep from the goats.

AT the Edinburgh Police-court, last Wednesday week, the Rev. Christopher Taylor, hailing from a place near Carlisle, and residing at a temperance hotel in Edinburgh, pleaded guilty to having assaulted a boy with his umbrella. It appeared from the evidence that while in a state of intoxication he chased a number of boys along the street and committed the assault complained of. He was fined 7s. 6d., with the alternative of five days' imprisonment.

THE Rev. C. C. Macdonald, of Aberdeen, preaching before the Trades' Congress, declared that the "coming of the Lord" might reasonably be held to signify "the ascendancy of the principles of religious liberty and equality, or in other words the sovereignty of the people." Paul would have been startled by this interpretation. He and all the early Christians expected the personal coming of Jesus in their own day, and so far from thinking of the sovereignty of the people, he wrote to the Romans in the reign of Nero: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

A CORRESPONDENT informs us that bills are posted in his neighborhood calling on clergymen, property-owners and the public, to co-operate in preventing Jews from working sewing-machines on Sunday. The bill styles such acts on the part of Jews "aggressions" and "encroachments," and asks: "Are we as a Christian nation to be insulted by an alien race working on a Sunday?" Why, it is the Jews who keep God's holy Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, and it is the Christians who deliberately break it!

THE Rev. W. Preston, M.A., tells us in the *Rock* that "God's faithfulness to his word is seen to-day" in the fulfilment of the divine promise that "seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." From this we may see, says the sapient preacher, "that the word of God is the real law of Nature." This wiseacre will match up with the parson of Holloway Gaol, who finds a most convincing proof of God's faithfulness and truthfulness in the fact that we find lilies in the fields and birds in the air, just as Christ's references would lead us to expect. Why even in Genesis, God shows us that he knew that grass was green and that fishes live in water. And is it not so, O beloved brethren? Wherefore we see of a surety that God is faithful and his word sublimely true. Amen.

BUT harvest does not always come as the Lord promised, and millions die of famine because he sends the rain-clouds in the wrong direction, flooding the narrow valleys while he parches the vast plains. Is it not so, O beloved brethren? Wherefore the Lord is a liar. *Quod non erat demonstrandum.*

THE *Christian Herald* strongly supports the idea of the cholera in France being a special punishment for the unjust war in Tonquin. But the Lord doesn't discriminate. Italy is now suffering much more than France, there having been 300 deaths from cholera in one day in the town of Naples alone. The *C. H.* concludes its paragraph thus:—"Above the groans of the smitten ones throughout France he who believes that 'The Lord reigneth' will hear his voice saying, 'Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.'"

NAPLES suffering by the cholera affords a lamentable instance of the pernicious character of superstition. Instead of resorting to medicine and sending their sick to the hospitals, the Neapolitans set up the figures of saints and pray before their shrines. They have, however, lost faith in St. Rocco, the patron saint of last week, and say: "Wait till the 19th when the turn of St. Genuaro comes, then the city will be cured; St. Rocco is of no use."

WE noticed recently that the Exeter Hall bigots had dismissed the young lady attendants. Perhaps this explains the complaint made by "An Associate" in the *Christian Commonwealth* that there is "actually nothing" there now "to attract young men," of whom he notices "fewer gather there of an evening than formerly did." He speaks of "the incivility of the officers," and says: "The coldest formalism exists in all departments; in the devotional there is a sad want of reality and life." The best way to alter the "deplorable state of things" which he laments, would be, we think, to employ the hall for useful secular purposes.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* is extremely anxious that people should settle the difficult question of the relations between science and religion by ignoring the matter. Christians should "cease to notice the miserable twaddle of the men who in the name of science seek to overthrow the Bible." The *Christian* courtesy and truth of such epithets as "miserable twaddle," applied to the writings of Frederic Harrison, Spencer, Huxley and others, are self-evident. In this advice itself there is much prudence and much cowardice. The *C. C.*, either stupidly or hypocritically, says it believes in free discussion; but Christians must "utterly refuse to support" journals which insert communications from the scientific "enemies of Christ." It believes in free discussion, which must be entirely avoided. Christians are to discuss freely with sceptics by leaving them "severely alone," so that scepticism may die out for want of opposition. Christian papers don't talk like this when it is a question of sending a Freethinker to gaol. They didn't cry out that Judge North ought to leave us "severely alone," except in the sense of condemning us to solitary confinement in a stone cell as a criminal.

THE *World* says: "Formerly the fool of the family was sent into the army; nowadays he shuffles into the Church. . . . Clergymen can generally make their work what they wish it to be. So long as they do not violate public decency, and keep out of the county court, the police court and the newspapers, they may scamp their work at will. Their stipend is paid regularly, and if they can sleep ten hours out of the twenty-four and eat three square meals a day, they are satisfied." A large percentage, however, do not contrive to keep out of the papers. Far more criminals are found among the sky-pilots than in any other of the professions.

THE *New York Independent* has had a suggestive series of articles headed "Our Departures from the Westminster Way."

No fewer than thirty-eight instances have already been enumerated in which modern Presbyterians have departed from the Confession. Yet the ministers are sworn to preach this Confession and nothing else. What a set of perjurers they must be.

THE Presbyterian ministers may comfort their consciences with the thought that they are not alone in their perjury. How many of the Church of England clergy believe in the Thirty-nine Articles? How many evade the reading of the creed of St. Athanasius as ordered by the canons of the Church? What else but perjury is their swearing that they believe they are called to the ministry by the Holy Ghost?

THE advertisement of a well-known syrup is accompanied by a testimonial from a Baptist missionary, who declares that he had been rather sceptical, having vainly put his trust in many reputed infallible remedies. But all were of no avail until he tried the syrup. Of course one of the "infallible remedies" must have been prayer; but the Baptist missionary appears to have turned up the Savior and tried the syrup.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* reminds the pious that it is "fervent effectual prayer" that prevails. James was good enough to tell us (v., 16) that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We quite agree with the inspired apostle and the *C. C.* that "effectual prayer" is effectual, but we hardly see the special need of inspiration or of typography to remind us of so self-evident a proposition. Paul makes the statement of even less value by his declaration that "there is none righteous, no not one."

THE same periodical sorrowfully acknowledges the truth of the following quotation from a leading provincial paper:—"It is a fact that nine cultured men out of a dozen now-a-days do not believe the whole of the Bible is God's revealed word, and quite half of them will tell you that there may be a God or there may not be—they don't know anything at all about it."

SOME Christian journals note as a curious fact that the latest sect in Russia believe it their bounden duty to slay all who do not agree with them in their religious views. We never knew of a Christian sect, except perhaps the Quakers, that believed anything else, or failed to practise it when they had the chance.

THE American Bible Society has, during the past year, devoted \$762,000 to spreading the Scriptures. The American Bible Society and its money are soon parted.

AN advertisement for a cook in the *Christian World* says "Presbyterian preferred." We wonder what occult cooking virtues reside in the profession of a religious belief. Had a vegetarian been preferred, or even a good Methodist, we should not have been surprised. Jews, however, are noted for fried fish, and evangelicals should be good at gammon. Salvationists who revel in the blood should excel at black puddings, and perhaps a Presbyterian cook as probably Scotch, will be great on porridge.

THE resort of northern Londoners, known as "Highgate Woods," has fallen into the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and is likely to be built upon in order to add to the income of that wealthy body. It is surely time these gentry were notified by Parliament that they hold their vast property in trust for the benefit of the nation.

TALMAGE says that American young men chew and smoke one hundred million dollars' worth of tobacco. No wonder the Church collections are falling off; in time all the collections will end in smoke.

"GOD will not hold us responsible," says Rev. H. A. Jones, "if we have not the mental capacity to distinguish between right and wrong." Then, Mr. Jones, you will certainly be saved.

TWO more clergymen on the black list. The Rev. Charles Lilley of Ware, Herts, has had to be summoned for the nonpayment of £9 16s. 8d., poor-rate due to the parish of Abbots, Roothing; and the Rev. Mr. Evans, was told by the judge at the Colchester County Court, that his evidence was not to be believed.

A SHOCKING tale comes to us from Chicago illustrating the pernicious effects of the Christian superstition. The Rev. H. M. Collinson, described as pastor of the Fullerton Avenue Presbyterian Church and an extreme Calvinist, in a fit of despair resolved to kill both himself and his wife. There was no quarrel between them, but he shot her through the head, killing her instantly. He then aimed at his own temple, but held the weapon rather low so that the bullet passed below the brain.

A RELIGIOUS contemporary says that Providence has sent a bountiful harvest this year, but the bakers frustrate its goodness by artificially keeping up the price of bread. It does not strike our contemporary that, after all these years' experience, Providence is a bit of a fool not to be a match for a baker's ring.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Sept. 21, Ram's Horn Hall, Ingram Street, Glasgow:—11.30, "Judas Iscariot;" 2.30, "Sky Pilots;" 6.30, "Twelve Months in a Christian Gaol."

Tuesday and Wednesday, Aberdeen. Thursday and Friday, Dundee.

September 28, Edinburgh.

October 2, Hall of Science, London; 5, Liverpool; 9, Hall of Science, London; 12, Halifax; 16, Hall of Science, London; 18, Falls-worth; 19, Manchester; 20, Longton; 23, Hall of Science, London; 26, Plymouth; 30, Hall of Science, London.

November 2, Burnley; 6, Hall of Science, London; 9, Birmingham; 13, Hall of Science, London; 16, Nottingham; 20 and 23, Hall of Science, London; 25, Claremont Hall, London; 30, Hall of Science, London.

December 2, Claremont Hall; 7, South Shields; 9, Claremont Hall, London; 14, Oldham; 16, Claremont Hall, London; 21, Hall of Science, London; 28, Milton Hall, London.

January 18 and 25, Milton Hall, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

- ALL business communications to be addressed to the Manager, Mr. W. J. Ramsey, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C. Literary communications to the Editor, 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. 3s.; Three Months, 1s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
- 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.
- RECEIVED WITH THANKS:—J. Saunders, H. Risby, J. Sykes, A. E. Davis.
- T. TURNER.—Mr. Foote will bear your request in mind.
- VARIOUS.—A Freethinker thinks freely on all subjects. An Atheist does not believe there is a god, but does not say there is not one. A Sceptic is literally one who keeps his eyes open. A Deist believes in God but not in Revelation. An Agnostic knows nothing, believes nothing, and says "mum" to everything.
- W. C. SAVILLE.—We have no space for your lines at present. The matter shall be dealt with.
- P. K. W.—We know nothing of the "Mulberry Lecturer" mentioned in the *Times* of 1790. There is an "universal information office" somewhere, which offers to retail its omniscience at one shilling per item. Had you not better apply there?
- J. R. WALLER.—Glad to hear from you. We are much over-set just now, but your verses will appear soon.
- SATAN.—It is a matter on which you must exercise your own discretion, but clearly if you find that you cause annoyance you ought not to repeat it in that case.
- J. H.—Thanks. Send us cuttings as often as you like.
- F. CORNISH.—The tract you refer to, which states that Judas's thirty pieces of silver were worth £3 15s., was doubtless written by some good Christian who wanted to raise his Savior's value as high as possible, and therefore reckoned the pieces as each worth half-a-crown, which happens to be the largest silver coin now in currency.
- J. A. BACON.—We are always glad to see Australian papers. We think the Secularists were patient enough with the individual who said that according to Secularists, murder, incest and robbery are right.
- T. WILLIAMSON.—Mr. Bradlaugh's letter to Cardinal Manning is published in pamphlet form and still on sale. We could not think of reprinting it.
- S. BROWN.—"Gospel Contradictions," by Judge Strange, price one penny, will suit your purpose. We have often invited Christians to reconcile Biblical statements, but without avail.
- INQUIRER.—"The Student's Darwin" is 5s.; "The Darwinian Theory," 6d. Any dictionary will give you the definitions required.
- C. E. IBBOTT AND H. CAPE.—The "aggressive Christians" of Tottenham must be carefully but firmly met. We mention Mr. Ramsey's lecture in "Sugar Plums."
- R. ROBERTI.—It is, we believe, a bye-law at Victoria Park that no papers shall be offered for sale without the consent of the Board. We will speak to the Committee about the other matter.
- JAYESTY.—It was duly received, and will appear by-and-by.
- A. E. D.—We regret we cannot find space for it just now. We have a heap of standing matter waiting for insertion. Of course jokes and scraps are always welcome. Glad to hear that Mr. Bradlaugh's Manchester lectures were such a splendid success.
- J. WIDDICOMBE (Chudleigh) writes that he has read *Progress* this month for the first time, and admires it more than any other magazine he ever saw. He is distributing Freethought literature in his benighted district, and finds that several people send to borrow the *Freethinker*. One of his neighbors has come to admit that the Bible is a most "diabolical and inhuman book;" and another has grave doubts about "the damnation story." Altogether our friend is keeping the neighborhood alive, and we hope he will continue in this course.
- MR. SMITH, of Leeds, wishes us to announce that he has the *Freethinker* and other Freethought literature on sale every Saturday from noon till 10 p.m., in the gallery of the Market.
- J. C. (Poekham).—Of course a woman has the same number of ribs as a man. If you doubt it, you would find it safest to investigate it on a skeleton.
- SCHOODE sends us the story of a Manchester parson who recently, when about to marry, hit upon a brilliant expedient to "raise the wind." Some of his congregation were induced to send their children round from door to door begging for subscriptions towards a wedding present. The children are thus trained in the art of cadging, and the minister gets what he wants without asking for it.
- G. BAKER.—The best way to learn any foreign language, in our opinion, is to master the articles and the verbs "to have" and "to

be" with the aid of a grammar. Then take a conversation book and go through it. Then recur to the grammar, and grind at it steadily day after day, simultaneously mastering a few lines of classic prose or verse with the assistance of a good dictionary.

E. GWINNEL.—There is a good deal of truth in what you say, but your projects of reform are too vast for any practical politician. How is it possible to make a clean sweep of all existing laws? Progress is a work of patience.

J. H. LOFTHOUSE.—We are always glad to hear from converts to Freethought.

P. C. SMITH.—Prof. Clifford's epitaph reads: "William Kingdon Clifford, born May 4, 1845; died March 3, 1879. I was not and was conceived; I loved and did a little work; I am not and grieve not."

T. A. WILLIAMS informs us that he wrote to the editor of the *War Cry* respecting the miracle of the paralysed girls, stated to have occurred at one of their outposts. He received a reply that it took place in "America." He asks, "Is not America rather a big outpost, or is it a big lie for the glory of God?"

C. F. WOODBRIDGE.—The price of "La Bible Amusante" is 12s. 6d.

UT PROSIM.—Thanks for your good wishes and support. We wish we could get more persons to sell the *Freethinker* in the public streets.

W. WOODS.—The *Freethinker* Tracts are 6d. per hundred. Mr. Forder, the Secretary of the N. S. S., 6 Cambridge Terrace, Islington, N., will supply you with the other information.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—King's Norton Dispatch—Queenstown Representative—Frontier Guardian—Church Reformer—Aberdeen Express—Man—Truthseeker—Junior Democrat—Liberal—Wellingborough News—Truth—Northern Daily Mail—Morven—Tribune—War Cry—Aberdeen Evening Express—North-Western Gazette—Pittsburgh Leader—Globe—Barrow Herald.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. H. EARLY, 35, Tidy Street, Brighton, secretary of the local branch of the N. S. S., informs us that one of their members, Mr. Lilley, who was recently imprisoned for disobeying the vaccination laws, and made to sleep on a plank bed, to the serious injury of his health, has taken legal proceedings against the governor of Lewes gaol, and hopes to win the case. A Freethinking solicitor is conducting it, and the Brighton Secularists, who consider that Mr. Lilley was ill-treated on account of his Atheistical opinions, are inviting subscriptions to defray the cost of the action. Mr. Early will be glad to receive remittances from any quarter.

THE Central London Branch indulge in another of their enjoyable excursions on Sunday. They start to Harlington by brakes, which will leave the Hall of Science at nine a.m.

ON Sunday, at 3.30, Mr. Ramsey lectures at Stamford Hill. As Christian roughs have on previous occasions attempted to break up these meetings, we trust there will be a large gathering of Freethinkers who will assist Mr. Ramsey in preserving order.

THE *Weekly Dispatch*, reviewing the Rev. W. R. Churton's volume on "The Uncanonical and Apocryphal Scriptures," says: "Our Puritan forefathers certainly had some reason for objecting to the general reading in church and in the closet of the 'fictitious stories and putid fables' included in the Apocrypha, and for denouncing some of them as 'dangerous books, teaching lying and hypocrisy'; but the same may be said of much in the accepted Bible. . . . Those of us who think that much mischief results from the idolatrous reverence paid to the 'Inspired Scriptures' and from the dogmatic enforcement of all the strange views of life and perversions of common sense which these contain, should favor the judicious reading of the Apocrypha along with the Bible, as that can hardly fail to encourage a more reasonable opinion as to the true value of this old Jewish literature as a whole."

WE have always maintained that the orthodox talk about the Bible being the great elevator of woman and the foundation of conjugal morality, is sheer nonsense. Mrs. Stanton, who writes in the *North American Review* in favor of a more liberal Divorce Law, consciously or unconsciously supports our view; for she asserts that "the one form of marriage recognised in the Bible is polygamy, both in the Old Testament and the New. It was at a Jewish polygamist wedding that Jesus performed his first miracle, and polygamy was practised by Christians for centuries."

AFTER Mr. A. Chamberlain's capital speech against religious instruction as introduced into the Board schools by the clerical members, the King's Norton Liberal Union have issued printed forms of notice for withdrawal of children from the objectionable religious teaching, and are urging parents to make use of them. Freethinkers should do their best to assist such movements as the best possible step that can at present be taken towards the ultimate secularisation of national education. Those who would prefer to use the forms issued by the N. S. S. can obtain them of the secretary, Mr. R. Forder, 6 Cambridge Terrace, Islington, N.

WHEN will lies about Thomas Paine cease? A correspondent of the *Aberdeen Evening Express* has only to sign himself "An Admirer of Thomas Paine" to induce another correspondent to write with the bold assertion that the "Rights of Man" was

written by a persecuted Puritan and published in London in 1665. This person says that "two or three copies are in the library of the British Museum, where, in 1862, I accompanied the late Mr. Cornwall to compare the work of the Paines. Owing to the sudden illness of that gentleman on his entering the buildings, this design was not accomplished." We venture the assertion that neither the late Mr. Cornwall nor anybody else ever saw any such book. No bibliographical authority has ever questioned the originality of the "Rights of Man." Paine, of all writers, was least under the necessity of copying from any other person. The assertion in question comes from a person evidently unaware that the "Rights of Man" is a reply to Edmund Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," and that the second part deals with the Constitution of the United States. What does he mean by "the Paines"? There was no Puritan writer of that name. We should not notice the barefaced falsehood but that calumnies on Freethinkers find ready circulation among Christians.

THE new sixpenny edition of Paine's "Age of Reason" seems likely to prove a great boon to poor Freethinkers. Mr. J. W. Roe, of Openshaw, says that he has now obtained and read the work for the first time, never having been able to afford it before. He calls it a masterpiece, and recommends "every man and woman of common sense to procure a copy at once." This is almost too much to expect. If Mr. Roe's advice were universally acted upon we should be able to tell by the sale of the "Age of Reason" the statistical value of Carlyle's dictum about the people of England.

WE learn through Mr. J. B. Coppock that *Progress* has not been removed from the table of the Nottingham Free Library. The committee have taken no notice of W. Lewin's bigoted letter to the *Journal*. Mr. Coppock sent a reply to that letter, which with Christian fairness the *Journal* refused to insert. Curiously, about three days after W. Lewin's letter appeared, *Progress* disappeared, and Mr. Coppock wondered whether W. Lewin or some other bigot spirited the abominable magazine away "all for Jesus." However, the magazine now lies on the table again and is well read.

PROFESSOR CHRISTLIEB, of Bonn, read a paper at the Copenhagen Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, on the state of Religion, and especially of Church attendance in the different countries of Europe. He was obliged to admit a large deficiency of attendance everywhere during the last twenty years. In Paris almost every workman was a Freethinker. In his opinion there were more Atheists in Paris than there ever were in any city before. Strange as it may seem, the state of Germany was even worse. In Berlin there was only one church to every fifty thousand inhabitants, and out of a population of one million only twenty thousand, or two per cent, attended divine service. Hamburg, with a population of four hundred thousand, had only five thousand worshippers, and in one district of Saxony the whole congregation consisted of five women and one man. The writings of Strauss, Rénan, and similar books, were read extensively even in the public-houses on Sundays.

ALL this is excellent news, which we gratefully accept from Dr. Christlieb, without admitting the consequences he predicts. He already "sees" a great increase of crime and an alarming increase of suicides; but as, according to his own account, the town population in Great Britain is fifty times as religious as in France or Germany, while crime here is quite as prevalent, if not more so, we fail to see the fancied connection between Freethought and criminality. The fact is, the working classes in Berlin and Paris are better educated and more thoughtful than the working classes in London, and they take a far greater interest in all public questions. Fortunately, however, the London workmen are improving in these respects. Freethought is spreading rapidly amongst them, and their numerous organisations increase their political knowledge and influence.

THE *Church Reformer* has an astonishingly liberal article on "Immoral and Infidel Literature"—astonishingly liberal, that is, for a Christian paper. Of course it deprecates "the bitter earnestness of the *National Reformer*" and "the still more bitter gibes of the *Freethinker*." Of course it is opposed to the Neo-Malthusian restriction of births as the remedy for over-population, poverty, misery and vice. But it has the good sense and the courage to rebuke the hypocritical Mother Grundism of the pious persecutors who would seek to repress Freethought and Malthusianism by prosecutions and unjustifiable abuse. It would only attack opponents with fair argument and honest teaching.

THE article concludes thus:—"Turning to 'infidelity' we must similarly distinguish serious and earnest attacks on Christianity from blasphemous ridicule. The former we should welcome, trying to learn from them, and convinced that in any case it is best that our opponents should have a fair field and that even what seem to us attacks on the 'Faith once delivered,' may be in reality helping on the Revelation which is progressive. Even the coarser kind of blasphemy may be of use in compelling us to reconsider our position and to rise from the letter to the spirit. At

any rate, all attempts at forcible suppression must be abstained from as useless and opposed to the doctrine of our master."

A DEACON in one of the churches was last week making up a list of subscribers for a new altar. In his rounds he called at a house where he found a little girl of seven at home. He explained his errand to her, and she replied: "Well, I'll ask mother, and I'm quite sure she'll give me the money, for she says we must patronise the people who call here begging or they will be driven to steal and rob!" He hasn't gone back to see if she succeeded.

THE POPULAR CREED.

AN American Socialist has written the following as an expression of the real belief of the middle classes of the present day:—

"I believe in Capital, Father Almighty, maker of weal and woe, and of all things visible and invisible. And in ore power, Usury and Increase, the only begotten Son of Capital, begotten of the Father before all dues. Money of money, wealth of wealth, very cash of very cash, begotten, not made, being of one substance with capital, and whereby all things are made; which for us men and for our perdition came forth from the bottomless; and was invented by 'auri sacra fames,' and incarnate of the virgin money, and was made gold, stamped, and established also for our fleecing under all governments. It is conjured with and buried and made to rise again, according to the bank books.

"And I believe in 'auri sacra fames,' the Lord and Giver of Business, which proceedeth from Capital and Interest, which with the Father and Son together are worshipped and glorified; which spake by the economists. And I believe in one all-gathering and illimitable Thrift. I acknowledge one and every dodge for the fleecing of the poor, and I look for the Kingdom of Iniquity and eternal plunder to come.—Amen."

WHAT ONE CAN DO?

I am but one!
What can I do?—what use when it's done?
Cry the thoughtless many, the selfish few,
As they watch others doing the work they should do,
As they watch others bearing the load they should bear,
As they see others daring the strife they should dare,
Winning the battle that ne'er would be won,
Doing a work that would never be done,
Beginning a task that had ne'er been begun,
But for one!

I am but one!
So's the first thread the spider has spun;
So is the raindrop commencing the shower;
So is the second beginning the hour;
So Paine was but one, and his truth-inspired pen
Set fire in the hearts of a million of men;
One thread of a web that had ne'er been begun,
One tick of the hour that had ne'er been begun,
One brave pen in a cause that had never been won,
But for one!

I am but one!
What can I do?—what good when it's done?
There's a truth to be taught—there's a plan to prepare;
There's an army to lead—there's a banner to bear.
We can't each of us be a "particular star,"
But we can each do our duty whatever we are—
Winning the battle that ne'er would be won,
Doing a work that would never be done,
Beginning a task that would ne'er be begun—
But for one!

I am but one!
What can I do?—what use if it's done?
There are wrongs to set right—there are slaves to be freed;
There are minds still debauched by a terrible creed;
There are rights to protect—there are mouths to be fed;
On the mystic and dark there is light to be shed.
If you can't plan the battle—go stand by the gun:
If you can't be the leader—help what is begun.
The lowliest tasks can be worthily done—
Every one! EDGAR T. BENTON.

USEFUL IN HIS GENERATION.—A man once left some money to be divided as his will directed; but, as not unfrequently happens, owing to each person named thinking himself entitled to more than the others were prepared to concede, a dispute was created, which was eventually settled by law. During the trial at court one of the witnesses kept repeating that he knew the testator was a man of sound mind, and that he led a godly and pious life. Presently the judge inquired of him, "What do you mean by leading a godly and pious life?" "Please, your lordship, I mean that he spent most of his time and money in teaching the poor how to make cheap soap." There was much true wisdom in that reply.

CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.

THE *Christian World* for September 11 has an article headed "India Yearning towards Christ," the purpose of which is to show that, although Hindostan cannot accept the old formulas and dogmas, nevertheless, "Jesus Christ is the true prophet, priest and king of the human race." The only evidence given for this astounding contention is some words of the late Keshub Chundra Sen, speaking of Christ as a great Asiatic teacher, and saying that "The East gratefully and lovingly welcomes back her Christ." It is noticeable that the same issue contains a letter on "Young India and Christian Missions," from H. J. Goffin, a missionary who speaks of Chundra Sen as a time-server, and emphatically tells us that Christ is as much to the Hindu as to the ancient Greek "foolishness" and "a stumbling-block." Mr. Goffin knows well enough that such sentences as those of Chundra Sen mean little in the mouth of a polite Hindu. Baboo Sen really placed Jesus by the side of, and not one whit above, Gautama, Zoroaster, Sankhyachara, Nanak and other religious teachers of the East.

The "yearning" of India, if it exists at all, proceeds not from the heart but from the stomach. Christians who wish for the success of Christianity in India should pray for famines, for it is only at such times that any number of Hindus enter the fold. "Rice Christians" the converted natives are usually called, and they have a saying among themselves, "I am a Christian for my stomach's sake but remain a Hindu for my soul's sake."

But, it is said, Christianity is constantly increasing the number of its converts in India. This is true, but the missionaries rarely state the class from which the converts are drawn. From long acquaintance and correspondence with educated Hindus, I can state with confidence that converts are scarcely ever made from their ranks. Since Dr. Duff baptised K. C. Bannerjea, in 1832, no Brahman of repute has been "turned from the error of his ways."

The immense majority of native Christians are not Hindus, or of Aryan descent at all, but Shanars, Kols, and Santals, the aboriginal barbarous hill-tribes who were never overcome by the Aryan conquerors of the land. The largest success of Christianity has been in Tinevelly, which, indeed, is asking for a bishop of its own. Now if Bengal is, as it has been called, the brain of India, Tinevelly is certainly its big toe. The converts are composed entirely of Shanars, a semi-savage tribe who live by climbing palms. These Shanars were formerly devil worshippers and believers in sorcery and bloody sacrifices. The Bible legends and the doctrine of atonement by blood are quite congenial to their mind. The same may be said of the Kols and Santals. They are as devout believers in evil spirits as the early Christians.

Were the whole of the aboriginal inhabitants of India to become Christians we should express neither surprise nor sorrow, for their training has prepared them to accept the modified devil-worship which is refined a few degrees above their own. There are eighteen millions of aborigines in India. The conversion of this number would certainly sound well in Exeter Hall, since less than half a million can be boasted of at present. But their adherence to Christianity would not mean the conversion of India. On the contrary, the one hundred and forty millions of Hindus proper, and the forty millions of Mohammedans in Hindostan, only think less of Christianity for its adoption by the stupid, ignorant and superstitious hill-tribes of an alien race. Educated Hindus look on the missionaries with good-natured contempt. They know that the Hindus proper will, in the long run, follow the lead of their educated countrymen, and they are not displeased at the missionaries helping to educate the masses out of their superstitions, since they have little chance of superseding them with their own. They know something of the blood-stained history of Christianity, and show no disposition to accept that pernicious superstition. We firmly believe they never will. There is something better in store for them. They reject Christianity because they are above it. They look for salvation to no faith, but to Science, which Christianity endeavored to strangle. The works of Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, Mill, Buckle, Tyndall and Draper have a wide circulation in India. Even Comte has a few educated followers, like the late Judge Mittra. The works of Freethought writers,

like Paine, Ingersoll, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Foote are largely read. I have even had the pleasure of seeing the contributions of Mr. Ball and myself reprinted for Indian readers. The "Bible Romances" are being now translated into Bengalee and Hindustani. Three Free-thought papers, the *Thinker*, the *Philosophical Inquirer*, and the *Anti-Christian*, exist in India. The *Theosophist* is also decidedly opposed to orthodox Christianity.

The people of India have watched Mr. Bradlaugh's struggle for his Parliamentary rights with keen and sympathetic interest. Mr. Conway tells how, when speaking in India of Western liberty, he was asked by a native "How about Mr. Foote?" Natives have asked me "How can such things be in your boasted land of liberty?" and I have had to explain how strong are the forces of bigotry, and by what hard struggles our forefathers won such little liberty as we now possess.

To account for the non-success of Christianity among the educated in India we are often told of what the Hindu has to give up in breaking caste. But the Hindu equally breaks caste who joins the Brahma Samaj, or becomes a beef-eating Freethinker. Many Christians hoped that the Brahma Samaj was a step towards their religion. The development of the movement has proved the reverse. Indeed, during the last few years a distinct revival of Panteistic Hinduism has taken place. The Theosophical Society, the founders of which distinctly repudiate Christianity, has over eighty lodges.

It must be remembered, moreover, that Christianity is by no means having its first chance in India. For very good reasons—viz., to meet the suspicion that the doctrines of the Incarnation, and the Trinity, and other legends, have come originally from India—Christians pretend that both St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew visited India. In the sixteenth century St. Francis Xavier is said to have made as many converts as there are at the present day.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE LAND OF DEVILS.

In an obscure corner of the Turkish Empire is a place once noted for its devils, angels, witches, wizards and miracles. Sometimes this sterile territory was called, by way of sarcasm, a land flowing with milk and honey; but as it appears to have been the exclusive *habitat* of devils, the Land of Devils seems a more appropriate name. Neither Linnæus, nor Buffon, Cuvier nor Darwin seem acquainted with this extraordinary breed, and Barnum has vainly been at the utmost expense to secure a specimen to add to his collection of monstrosities. He only succeeded in procuring what is called a Tasmanian devil, which is not even a degenerate specimen of the true breed. Although extremely common in Palestine about two thousand years ago, it is now as extinct as the dodo. At that time these creatures were a scourge to both man and beast. Pigs especially suffered. In certain curious and ancient documents we read how one Mary of Magdala had seven devils cast out of her, so that we may suppose she had been overshadowed like the virgin of the same name. In these same documents we read many other particulars, as that Satan, the principal devil, at one time appeared as a serpent, at another appeared among the sons of God, whoever they may have been, and on another occasion he was seen by Christ to fall from heaven like lightning. At length it appears he came to grief, being chained for a thousand years. He probably died in confinement, and all the little devils expired of grief—so that they have not been heard of lately.

J. S.

AT Marden parish church, in Kent, the Rev. Mr. Trollope told his congregation that the deficiency in the hop crop was caused by the farmers absenting themselves from church. But the three farmers who still attend the church consider themselves hardly dealt with, as their hops are no better than their neighbors'. The farmers have deserted the church on account of the obnoxious extraordinary tithe, which amounts to 16s. per acre.

THE *Ironclad Age* has pity for the victims of misplaced confidence—the little boys that fish in rain-barrels, and the feeble-minded ministers and priests that, rolling their eyes upward, implore vacuity and nothingness to feed and clothe them and confound their enemies.

"CAN a man be a Christian and not be an active politician in a republic?" is the subject of one of the *Continents* prize essays. We don't know about the active politician; but it seems difficult for a man to be a Christian without being an absconding bank president or cashier.

"PRAYER at the opening of a Savings Bank in New Jersey, U.S.," says the *Christian Herald*, "has given occasion to much ridicule in the columns of the daily press."

PROFANE JOKES.

"It's too bad," muttered a Presbyterian elder from the good city of Cincinnati, as he sat down with his wife to a private luncheon in a Paris restaurant. "What's too bad?" she asked. "Why, that Brother Benson should attend the horse races on the Longchamps last Sunday." "How shocking," exclaimed his partner. "Dreadful," added the elder, "I would not have believed it if I hadn't seen him myself."

SUNDAY OBSERVANCE.—Tommy was busily engaged spinning his top in the front of the house one Sunday morning, in full view of the people who were passing to church. Tommy's mother, happening to look out of the upper window, saw him, and said: "Tommy, I am astonished to see you play to-day. Don't you know that it is Sunday, and it is very wicked to play out there? Go into the back yard if you want to spin your top." "Well," said Tommy, "ain't it Sunday out there, too?"

"How did you like the doctor's sermon?" said one to his companion, as they were walking home from church. "First-rate; I always liked that sermon."


"My son," said a clergyman, putting his hand on the young urchin's head, "I believe Satan has got hold of you." "I believe so too," the urchin replied.

WHEN Theodore Hook was asked for a donation to the Society for the Conversion of the Jews, he replied "that he had no money to give away, but if they sent him a Jew he would try and convert him." This was not quite what the Society required, and Hook never heard from them again.

HIGHLAND preacher (excitedly rebuking the erring): "You are on your way to the bottomless pit, and if you don't take care and stop short, you'll go down and down till you reach the very bottom!"

A WELSH clergyman declined an addition to his salary, for the reason, among others, that the hardest part of his labors, heretofore, had been the collection of his salary, and it would kill him to try to collect the additional fifty shillings per year.

MEDDLING with others sometimes brings us into scrapes, and thereby one of the elders of a certain church once made "bad worse." A young fellow entered the church and took his seat with his hat on. An elder noticing it, stepped up and requested him to take it off. His request not being complied with, he came to the young man a second time, and seeing he still hesitated, the elder gently lifted it off, when, to his chagrin, out rolled a quart of hickory nuts, making more noise than was consistent with decorum. "Man," quietly said the youth, "see what you have done!"



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