

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



THE POLITICAL BALAAM.

THE PARSONS' PARLIAMENT.

THIS is an age of Congresses. Every important section of the community has its annual gathering, where the members see each other face to face, discuss matters of common interest, and encourage each other in their common work. The parsons in this respect are like the rest of mankind; with this difference, however, that as their trade is chiefly talking, their annual parliament is little else than a fruitless palaver? Other congresses, with all their gabble, generally contrive to do some practical work; but who ever heard of any practical work being done by a Church Congress? It might be described in two phrases of Hamlet—"words, words, words" and "damnable iteration."

This year's Congress was singularly dull, even for a Parliament of Parsons. The *Rock* speaks of their "common-place platitudes," and compares their discussions to "cold cabbage reheated." We have the honor to agree with the *Rock* for once.

There were only two breaks in the general monotony. At an early stage of the proceedings the Bishop of Carlisle was presented with a new pastoral staff, which we understand is a costly and highly ornamented article of a bishop's paraphernalia. It was probably intended to enable a bishop (symbolically) to fetch the stray sheep out of ditches, bogs, and other disastrous places into which they might have fallen; but it is now principally used to hold the sheep steady while they are being fleeced. Perhaps, too, the bishop's crook might be likened to a croupier's rake, which is used to haul in the cash at gaming-tables; and the bishop, like the croupier, is always on the winning side whoever loses.

There succeeded a sermon by the Archbishop of York, an address by the Bishop of Carlisle, and then a paper by the Bishop of Bedford on "The Church and the Poor," from which it appears that the clergy are as usual bringing up the rear of social improvement. They have actually discovered at last that the dwellings of the very poor in industrial cities and agricultural villages are a disgrace and a danger to civilisation. Ordinary mortals have known this a long time, and the fact has been stated with great force in many books and newspapers; and now that the parsons are aware of it, it may be concluded that the dullest are convinced and that no further publication is necessary. For the rest, the Bishop of Carlisle's paper and the evening discussion clearly proved that the Church and the Poor have absolutely no connection with each other, except perhaps as cause and effect. Of course the Church is anxious to secure the support of the people now that they are entering into political power, the object being to conciliate the new dispensers of loaves and fishes. But the democracy will be hard to woo, for it is too obvious that the suitor is pleading for profit instead of love.

The second feature of interest was a discussion on Obscene Literature, which the parsons appeared to have enjoyed with all the gusto of men who had gone through a preliminary course of Bible study. The Rev. J. W. Horsley, chaplain of Clerkenwell Gaol, started the ball. He has evidently given great attention to the subject; in fact it seems to have occupied his waking thoughts and filled his dreams. He was able to furnish an exact computation of the amount of obscene literature sold every year, with a complete account of the various sources whence it emanates; and on the whole we imagine that he could furnish a useful appendix to the latest French catalogue of forbidden books. He may be called the English Comstock, and his proposed remedies resemble those of his American prototype. He wishes to see frequent prosecutions, and the Government empowered to open as many letters passing through the post-office as they may suspect. Mr. Horsley's methods are those of a prison official, and especially of a gaol chaplain; but they are foolish and futile in the open world. Legal repression does little good. Public education is the only real remedy, and that the Church has always resisted to the full extent of its power.

With all that delicate courtesy for which the clergy have been conspicuous, the Congress discussed Obscenity and "Infidelity" together. Dr. Macaulay, editor for the Religious Tract Society, spent much time in advertising his own publications, which he clearly considered a far better counteractant to "Infidel propagandism" than the "humble efforts of the Christian Evidence Society." The Rev. C. L. Engstrom, secretary of that august body, fol-

lowed with some remarks on "Infidel Literature"; but the brevity of newspaper reports conceals his reply to Dr. Macaulay's left-handed compliment. The Rev. E. Maclure, editor for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, followed in the strains of an advertising agent, and after some further remarks by smaller clerical fry the discussion ended. Result—*nil*.

By the way, how is it that the Church never troubled about obscene literature until it began to attack Free-thought? Simply, we believe, because it wishes to raise public prejudice against "Infidel Literature." This cry about obscenity is a mere *ruse de guerre*. If Free-thought could be suppressed, the clergy would wink at any amount of indecency, as the Catholic Church has always done; because sensuality is no danger to religion. And if they had a scintilla of honesty they would begin with their own "Blessed Book." The King of Holland once presided at a meeting of clerical and social dignitaries, who discussed the question of how to improve popular literature, and finally decided that all indecent books should be at once suppressed. Goethe was present as the king's guest, and he regarded the spectacle with an Olympian smile. Afterwards, when the king conversed with him on the subject, and dwelt on the wisdom of eliminating loose passages from classical works, Goethe said: "By all means, your highness; but hadn't we better begin with the Bible?" "Ah, my dear Goethe," replied the king, "true, true; but it won't do to say so."

The Congress, as usual, had a "Working Men's Meeting" in the evening, and according to report, the hall was well filled. We should like to know whether the audience were really working men or the best substitutes the parsons could find. Working men in most cities hold scornfully aloof from the Church, and we can scarcely imagine that they are more friendly to it in the city of Sir Wilfrid Lawson. The speeches were fearful and wonderful. One or two of the orators, overdoing their parts, and imagining that working men wanted something strong and coarse, descended to sheer buffoonery. The Archbishop of York was, of course, the principle speaker, and, as he is a fine rhetorician, he elicited much applause; but his analysis of a working man's income and expenditure was cheered only by the clericals on the platform. The audience were ominously silent. There was a grim and ghastly irony in a bishop, with ten thousand a year, lecturing on the virtues of economy to people who work hard for thirty shillings a week. Probably, as they listened with a stare and a frown, their silent verdict was—Humbug! And that is fast becoming the spoken verdict on the whole Church.

G. W. FOOTE.

MR. WHEELER has just published two bright pamphlets, "Letters from Hell" and "Gospel Lies." The latter traverses familiar ground, but the former works in a new vein, and will doubtless give pleasure to a wide circle of readers.

THE Irish peasants in Kerry believe that for three hundred years past the salmon have been prevented from passing a ford in the Blackwater through a solemn curse bestowed on them by a priest, whose horse, startled by the splash of a salmon, threw him headlong into the river. This year, however, a salmon has passed up the river "for the first time for three centuries" we are told. No one knows what the omen forebodes, the best suggestion being that it announces "the decay of priestly influence in these sceptical and ill-conditioned days."

AMONG the modern books now excluded by law from circulation in Russia, are the works of Huxley, Tyndall, Lubbock, Locky, Louis Blanc, Lewes, Lyell, Vogt, Mill, Adam Smith and Herbert Spencer.

STEPNIAK, writing on the Russian Press in Tuesday's *Times*, declares that since the beginning of the present reign eight high-class St. Petersburg journals have been suppressed by administrative order. Only two Liberal papers survive the persecution, and these expect every day will be their last.

OLD servants are a nuisance as a rule. During an annual meeting of some Dorsetshire clergymen, held at a vicar's house, a new servant asked an aged retainer what the parsons met for. "To swap sermons," replied that retainer; "but lookee, our maaster he do get cheated awful. I've been in his sarvice a matter o' thirty-five year, and he's never got a good one."

A BACKWOODS preacher, speaking on the subject of getting to heaven, said: "My brethren, it is as impossible for a sinner to get to heaven in his sins, as for the best horseman in this congregation to ride a streak of lightning through a crab-apple tree without getting scratched."

WHO WILL FIGHT FOR FREEDOM?

Who will fight for freedom through the howling of the storm,
When the din and crash of battle sounds afar?
Who will fight for freedom when the dawning of reform
Glimmers grey across the vanguard of the war?
Toiling brothers from the anvils where the glow of life is red—
From the swing and ring and clatter of the factory and the mine—
Follow where the martyr-patriots of the vanished years have led;
Fill the gaps along the dogma-broken line.

Who will fight for freedom through the blaze of burning noon,
When frail comrades halt and falter by the way?
Who will fight for freedom till the bugle's echoing tune
Sounds the muster-roll at closing of the fray?
Children of the mother earth that gave us freedom for a right,
There are noble fellows fighting in the front ranks of the host;
Come and help us through the darkness of the class-enshrouded
night,
That the laurel leaves at morn may be your boast.

Who will fight for freedom when the night of doubt is down,
When the clouds are looming darkly in the sky?
Who will fight for freedom when despairing eyebrows frown,
Buttressed only by the hope of by-and-bye?
Toilers, brothers, from the clatter of the workshop of the world,
Up and battle for the freedom that is yours by right of birth;
On the winds that greet the dawning be your banners all unfurled,
And send forth your songs to wake the slumbering earth.

JOHN ROWELL WALLER.

ACID DROPS.

IN the window of a house in Clerkenwell, whose proprietor has been committed for trial for keeping a disorderly house, may be seen a pious bill headed "Church Services for Children." No paper on this subject was read at the Church Congress, but it was better worth consideration than many topics discussed there.

FENIMORE CLAYTON, of the town of Middlefield, N.Y., has killed his only son, aged two years. He took the boy out into the yard and shot him through the head, saying, "He is now in heaven and better off."

THE Mormons must go—so say the Christians. On Sunday morning, August 10, a mob of thirty-five masked men broke up a Mormon meeting and shot five men and women. Without a doubt Christianity is responsible for this dreadful massacre. In fact, a Salt Lake newspaper produces strong evidence to show that the butchery was the outcome of the teachings of the Christian ministry in general and Rev. Talmage's shot-gun policy in particular.—*Pittsburgh Truth*.

"WHAT sense is there," says the Rev. T. J. Smith, "in a wife kneeling down and praying to the Lord to keep her husband from drinking, unless she knocks him sober with a poker and aids the Lord in fulfilling her prayer."—*Pittsburgh Truth*.

SAYS a daily paper: "A bright three-year-old was taken to hear Rev. Dr. McCrory preach a few Sundays ago. Mr. McCrory is a very positive man and a most earnest pulpit orator. He was putting his whole heart into his exhortation as usual, when the little child pulled her father by the beard and asked in a loud and anxious whisper: 'Papa, who said anything to him? What is he so mad about?'"

MR. KILNER, a missionary returned from Ceylon, recently stigmatised the religion of the people among whom he had been living as a "bloody and blasphemous Hinduism." This gentleman's "feelings" are protected by Mr. Justice North and the common law of England. Hindus, not being orthodox, are no doubt in the same case with Freethinkers, and have no feelings to hurt, or ought not to have any; but were Hindus to come to this country and charge Christianity with being "bloody and blasphemous," such a remark would at once qualify them for Holloway Gaol, however true it might be when applied either to the history or teaching of Christianity. Is Mr. Kilner aware that a firm doing a very extensive ready-money business in faith has recently registered the trade-mark "Blood and Fire" as descriptive of the essence of Christ's teaching? And with reason; for the mainspring of Christianity lies in the belief that we are all of us totally depraved, and that the blood of Jesus Christ alone can cleanse us from all sin. Listening recently to a street-preacher repeating once more the "grand and glorious" doctrine of total depravity, we found that "blood, blood, blood" was the most frequently recurring word in his discourse, and his correct appreciation of the Nazarene's teaching was proved by his ringing about a dozen changes on the word "blood" in the space of five minutes. Before Mr. Kilner again applies the words "bloody and blasphemous" to a superstition in which he does not believe, let him think for one moment whether an unprejudiced mind might not have good grounds for applying the same expression to the superstition in which he does believe.

SURGEON says that "Difficulties vanish and impossibilities do not exist when the Lord is enlisted on our side." But all true Christians want to convert the world to their own form of belief. Surely the Lord must have been on the side of some of these Christians. Why, then, have none of them succeeded?

THE *Christian Herald* has a story of a rich man who left all his property to the purchaser of the portrait of his deceased son, the will being attached to the back of this picture, so that the buyer would receive his title to the estate together with the picture. This speculative test of affection represents God's behavior to us, we are told. Such a whim on the part of a crazy, broken-hearted millionaire would indeed be more sensible than God's offer of heaven to all who believe in his son.

SURGEON says that "true faith is like Midas." Exactly. Midas was a rich man, who foolishly jumped at the gods' offer to convert everything he touched to gold. As his food turned to gold also, the starving wretch soon besought the gods to take back their deceptive gift. They acquiesced, but made him wear a pair of asses' ears ever after in remembrance of his folly. The Christian's "true faith" will have to do likewise. It converted all earthly circumstances into a useless material, whose value depended entirely on imagination, and left the mind to starve. Before long the only memorial of the long insanity of the past will be the elongated ears irrevocably associated with religion.

THE "Earlestown Church Scandal" has resulted in the formation of an independent congregation, who are about to erect an iron church of their own. These Episcopalians are practically turned out of the church for which they have to pay, and they now have to provide themselves with a place of worship out of their own pockets, while the State-paid parson, whose "arrogant exercise of ill-starred authority" turned organist, choir, curate, church officers and congregation into the street, now preaches to empty pews. Even the most orthodox Christians are beginning to perceive the injustice involved in an Established Church.

AT Diss Petty Sessions (Norfolk) it transpired that no jury-list for the parish of Fersfield had been prepared because the overseers and the two churchwardens of that enlightened district were unable to read. Such is the result of centuries of clerical domination. As one of the overseers, however, assured the Bench "that there was a man in the parish who could read," and that "a School Board had been formed," we may hope for brighter things in the future.

THE clerical journals at Rome are again raising a cry of persecution. The Cardinal Vicar wants to visit the hospital, but declines to conform to the quarantine rules. Consequently the municipal authorities decline to admit him. The poor prisoner of the Vatican has a fellow martyr. Dreadful, isn't it, the way in which these servants of the Lord are prevented from exercising their spiritual functions?

ACCORDING to the Bethshan faith-healing report, a little boy who had broken his arm was "instantly healed" by prayer. Why don't the surgeons adopt this short and easy method? Is prayer equally efficacious for mending broken machinery?

TALMAGE says that "everybody knows" that "some of the greatest scoundrels in the world have belonged to the Church." We fancy Talmage would never have owned to this damaging fact if "everybody" hadn't already known it. He makes a virtue of necessity, and claims credit for stemming the tide of religious swindling for which American bankers and trustees are at present rather notorious.

A BIG batch of Most Reverend Lordships of the Irish hierarchy have met in solemn conclave. By the resolutions carried, we see that their efforts were entirely directed to two objects. First, they want all the money they can squeeze out of the Government for Roman Catholicism in schools and convents; and second, they condemn the Protestant colleges in Dublin as "dangerous to faith and morals."

WHILE these dignitaries were thus looking after their own faith, we find that a meeting on sanitary science was dealing with the actual poverty and misery of the lower classes as a secular question. It will be science and Secularism, not priestcraft and credulity, that will solve our social difficulties.

A CHRISTIAN has just made a big discovery. It is this. He has found out that the Egyptian monuments prove the stories of the Bible. The only question is, *Which?* The story of Balaam and his ass requires no monumental testimony to demonstrate its truth; it is always the ass who has spiritual vision and who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, speaks.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* calls Positivism "a religion built on the soil of doubt, with a foundation of denials." In turn, Christianity may be described as a religion with a mystical foundation, built on the soil of ignorance, watered by the tears of fear, and sustained by the fiends Selfishness, Cruelty and Hypocrisy.

THE Rev. Edward White, speaking at the Baptist College, Bristol, said that the reason for the supernatural in Christianity was to remedy two preternatural evils which are destroying mankind—sin and death. If Christianity waits till the supernatural element in it destroys sin and death, it will wait a long while—probably till the last trump, or till Peter gives up the keys on hearing the doomsday morning cock-crow.

HENRY VARLEY is going to America during the present month. The Lord go with him! We hope the pair will never return.

A CORRESPONDENT to a Christian journal wants to know if the Christian saint goes to the church and the theatre, and the sinner goes likewise, how people are to know the saint from the sinner? Nothing easier. A long face, a sanctimonious leer, a horror at laughter, will characterise the saint the world over; the sinner will have written on his round, smiling countenance a "Well, this isn't a bad world after all; you see I am making the best of it—Hope you are enjoying yourself" sort of expression.

You can always tell the sinner. He asks you home to supper and doesn't take stock of how much you eat.

THE Rev. J. B. Riley, vicar of West Bayborough, Devon, has been fined the full penalty for poaching.

THE Rev. C. F. Gray, rector of Gladestry, has been arrested at Croydon, and charged with indecently assaulting two boys named Richardson and Bryant, of Chelsea. The boys being over thirteen years of age, he was discharged. He was hooted out of the town by a large crowd.

THE ritualistic sky-pilot at Colyton, not liking to be cut out by the Salvation Army spears, has gone in for a counter attraction in the shape of a harvest thanksgiving, commencing at 7.30 a.m., in the church, and terminating with dancing in the Colcombe Castle Hotel until two o'clock in the morning.

THE committee of the Manchester Free Libraries appear determined to prove that the city's Radical reputation is all a mistake. They decisively refuse to place *Progress* and *Our Corner* on their tables on the ground that they contain objectionable matter—a fault that they may be charged against any publication advocating any kind of principles; for neither uniformity of opinion nor infallibility of judgment exists outside the Free Libraries' committee. The curious thing is that the *National Reformer* is allowed to lie on the tables, and, from a merely orthodox point of view, it contains more "objectionable matter" than either of the magazines. All this and much more has been admirably pointed out by Mr. George Payne in a telling letter, which has been inserted by all the Manchester daily papers, including the *Tory Courier*. We hope the Manchester Freethinkers will agitate this question at the next municipal elections. It is high time that the bigots should be prevented from burking our literature, or else made to bear publicly the odium of their conduct.

In regard to the conversion of Jews and Mahometans in Palestine, Mr. Courtney the other day gave the following statistics in the *Times*: "The Church Missionary Society has carried on missions to the latter, ostensibly at least, for the last thirty-three years, have expended upwards of £120,000 upon them in the aggregate, and have never made a convert, as can be proved from their own papers. The London Jews Society, during the six years subsequent to 1876, notwithstanding an average expenditure of £5,000 upon the Jewish mission, failed to convert a single Jew. In their report for 1883-4, they say they baptised four persons; but I share your incredulity about their respectability, and cannot forget that, according to their own published reports, they collected in England in 1882 and 1883 upwards of £5,000 for feeding and clothing, in Jerusalem, starving Jewish refugees from Russia and elsewhere."

THE *Freeman* has a sermon with the title, "A Wider Knowledge of the Bible: an Urgent Need of the Age." It especially inculcates Bible reading on the young, without recommending an expurgation of the obscene passages. Our opinion is that the more the Bible is known the less it will be trusted.

A PIOUS gentleman writes to the *Pall Mall Gazette* to complain that although the old Puritan motto "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry," is often quoted, attention seems to be confined exclusively to the latter half of it. The powder is looked after, but trust in God is nowhere. In other words, the human absorbs all thought and effort, the Divine is ignored. This is as it should be. As fast as this is done the world progresses. By "leaving God out" we have time to study common sense and true morality.

THE tendency to aggressive warfare is one of our greatest dangers, and the *Christian Commonwealth* owns that there is not much hope of improvement "while 'Christian' journals are among the foremost advocates of aggression, and 'Christian' ministers approve wars which are made by the political party to which they belong." It is the Freethought party which advocates peace and justice, while the Christian press and Christian dig-

nitaries cry aloud for war and bless the slaughter in the name of God.

A WRITER in the *Rock* greatly admires the way in which that "simple-hearted Christian man" General Gordon is putting "terror into his foes" and teaching "a grand lesson of dependence upon God." The lamentable and utterly unjustifiable massacre of brave Soudanese by their oppressors appears to fill Christian hearts with gratitude and admiration. But it is the bullet-proof steamers, the Gatling guns, the shells, the mines and the land-torpedoes, that they trust to and delight in, in the name of God, rather than in any moral being worthy human worship.

MR. ANDREW JUKES has written a book on "The Mystery of the Kingdom," in which he seeks to show that the historical books of the Old Testament have a mystical import. This kind of interpretation is always resorted to when the absurdity of believing in the literal accuracy of Bible stories is discovered. The witch of Endor and the king who was two years older than his father have a sublime mystical significance, and David dancing before the ark with all his might is a beautiful symbol of the capers cut by Lord Randolph Churchill.

THE *War Cry*, in thanking brethren at Grimsby for two boxes of fish, "which have come very acceptable in these hard times," says: "We would remind our fishing comrades that if they wish to prosper in their work the Lord will not be forgetful if they remember to give him a thank-offering." The Lord, we presume, acquired a partiality for fish when cruising about the Lake of Galilee. Old Jahveh always went in for roast meat and pigeons, with plenty of wine for a thank-offering.

ST. GILES', Bloomsbury, London, is proverbial for its poverty, yet the sum of 52l. 8s. 5d. has been taken out of the poor-rate to defray the cost of repairing the churchyard walls. The cost has been incurred by the minister, the Rev. J. M. Nisbet, without the knowledge or consent of the vestry. It is to be hoped this scandal will cause steps to be taken to convert the disused burial ground behind St. Giles' Church into a recreation ground for the poor children of Bloomsbury.

SIR H. TYLER, the pious gambling guinea-pig, whose zeal for Jahveh is second only to his grasp on the money-bag, has written to Earl Granville, urging that we ought to go to war with Chili on behalf of the Peruvian bondholders. His plea is backed up by what the financial paper *Money* calls "Tylerianisms," for which there is doubtless a shorter term.

THE Bishop of Rochester has been preaching temperance in Salt Lake City. We wonder whether he included polygamy in the list of intemperance, and how he managed to dispute its righteousness before people who justify it from his own Bible?

MR. BLOOMFIELD STEVENS writes us that the disgraceful treatment of Mr. Ramsey at Tottenham has been followed by an assault upon a Freethought advocate at the Midland Railway Arches—an assault directly instigated by the Rev. Z. B. Woffendale. It appears that this person challenged Secularists to debate. Not content with taking extra time, this worthy Christian advocate grossly slandered and misrepresented his opponents. Upon being called to order, he asked the meek and lowly Christians around to protect him. This they did by rushing upon the Secularist, and he was kicked, cuffed and hustled so as to effectually prevent him from urging his right to the settlement of a point of order.

THE Rev. Mr. Duffield, chaplain of Newgate, officiated at two stranglings last Monday in Newgate, where we once had occasion to listen to him ourselves. He read the Church of England Burial Service over Orrock and Harris, who stood up and heard it before giving up the ghost. It must have sounded curious to be referred to as "our dear brother now departed;" and it appears to us a piece of blasphemous mendacity on Mr. Duffield's part to dismiss them in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. Otherwise the surest method of reaching heaven would be to commit a murder, to have a parson pretty nearly all to yourself for three weeks, and then to be swung from the gallows clean into the kingdom of heaven.

THERE was once an old Puritan divine who boasted that he had written a hundred and nineteen sermons on the 119th psalm. Nobody, however, reads them now. Probably the same will be said twenty years hence of the eighteen hundred sermons which Mr. Spurgeon boasts of having published, and the circulation of which he thinks "flourishes by the grace of God." The grace of God never kept any book alive yet, and as Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, at any rate in the printed form, contain very little else, it does not take a great prophet to predict their fate. We doubt, indeed, whether any man ever published so many pages of perfectly useless writing, except one or two of those old seventeenth century Puritans, who were such a strange compound of industry, dulness, and elephantine facetiousness.

It was a bald-headed clergyman who took for his text, "The hairs of our heads are all numbered."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

- Sunday*, Oct. 12, Odd Fellows' Hall, Halifax:—11, "Bible Blasphemy;" 3, "Will Christ Save Us?" 6.30, "Twelve Months in a Christian Gaol."
- Tuesday*, Oct. 14, Freethought Institute, York Street, Walworth, 8.30.
- Wednesday*, Oct. 15, Westminster Branch N. S. S., 14 Marsham Street, Westminster, at 8.
- Thursday*, Oct. 16, Hall of Science, Old Street, London, at 8.30, "The Roots of Christianity.—III. Christ."
- October 18, Failsworth; 19, Manchester; 23, Hall of Science; 26, Plymouth.
- November 2, Burnley; 3, Atterton; 9, Birmingham; 16, Nottingham; 23, Hall of Science, London; 25, Claremont Hall, London; 30, Hall of Science.
- December 2, Claremont Hall; 6, Cramlington; 7, South Shields; 8, Claremont Hall, London; 14, Oldham; 16, Claremont Hall, London; 21, Hall of Science, London; 28, Milton Hall, London.
- January 4, Rochdale; 11, Fuddersfield; 18 and 25, Milton Hall.
- February 1, Claremont Hall, London; 22, Liverpool.

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. 7½d.
- 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. H. Softhouse, Ship Steward, Tim Bobbin, J. C. Silies, G. H. Godfrey.
- H. WILLIAMS.—Has been out of print for years.
- C. TUCK.—Read Mr. Bradlaugh's "Is there a God?"
- W. B. asks if there is anything in the Bible or Prayer-Book against a man marrying his widow's niece. Old birds are not caught by such chaff.
- C. GOLLER.—If the sun is personified it of course becomes masculine. We are perfectly aware of this elementary rule. But there is no obligation to personify it, nor is it reasonable to do so in describing its purely physical operation.
- T. E. C.—Will appear in due course. We are overset at present.
- W. E.—The verses you send as your own appeared in the *Oracle of Reason* in 1842, and it was displayed in Richard Carlile's shop window many years before that.
- FREETHINKER.—Good, but hardly up to the mark.
- C. CULLIMORE, Secretary of the Westminster Branch of the N. S. S., desires to draw attention to the fact that Mr. Foote will deliver their first special lecture on Wednesday, Oct. 15, in their new hall, 14 Marsham Street, about three minutes walk from the Westminster Palace Hotel. It is hoped that Freethinkers in the district will make a strong muster on that occasion, and that many new members will join the branch.
- W. DODD.—We are always pleased to hear from fresh converts. Such letters as yours justify and console us. The verse shall appear.
- D. V.—We really cannot be severe on the poaching parson. Being fined £2 and costs, he paid dearly enough for a partridge and a hare. It is a curious fact, however, that poor poachers always get the heaviest sentence when there is a sky-pilot on the bench.
- INFLEXIBLE FREETHINKER.—We really know nothing of the author of "The Elements of Social Science," and if he likes his work to appear anonymously he has a perfect right to do so. Anyhow, it is no concern of ours. Thanks for the address.
- W. V.—You ask us "what an angel is." Well, we don't exactly know. There is the "Angel" at Islington, and there was once a gold coin called by the same name. We have also heard the appellation applied by many young fellows to their sweethearts, and by some husbands to their wives. We have also heard of a celestial fowl of that name, but having never seen one, our natural modesty prevents us from describing it. Hadn't you better postpone the question till you get to heaven, or put it to some pious editor well up in heavenly ornithology? The *New York Truthseeker* is edited by Eugene Macdonald. Thanks for the suggestion and all your good wishes.
- A FREETHINKER.—We never said that "there is no God." Logic forbids us to affirm a universal negative. We only attack harmful and degrading conceptions of deity, such as all revelations contain, and especially the Bible. Abstract Theism is scarcely worth our time and trouble to discuss. It may do for people with plenty of leisure and a taste for puzzles, but busy men have more practical ways of spending their time.
- H. A. M. (Dundee).—Cuttings are always welcome.
- G. J. BRUNTON.—Glad to hear that our Comic Sketches have in Sheffield "transformed long faces to broad ones and supplanted superstition with good honest laughter." We are preparing a choice selection of our Sketches for publication in a little volume, and we hope to have it roady in a few weeks.
- F. HOLT.—It is pleasant to know that the *Freethinker* is pushing its way in Leicester as well as elsewhere. Thanks for cuttings.
- M. FLACKETT AND H. PARKER.—Received too late for acknowledgment last week.
- J. B. SMITH writes that Mr. W. W. Collins recently opened the Basford Branch of the N. S. S. with a most successful lecture. All Freethinkers in the neighborhood are earnestly invited to help. Mr. Smith's address is—30 Percy Street, Old Basford, Nottingham.
- R. V. L. informs us that he has commenced subscribing to the *Freethinker* through picking up a copy in a carriage on the Metropolitan Railway. We advise a beginner to read F. W. Newman's "Phases of Faith," price 3s. 6d. If you still believe in the Bible, try what you make of the "Bible Romances" by Mr. Foote.

- W. BEATTIE (Gravesend).—The cadging for fruit and provisions for thanksgiving services is common throughout the country.
- LEYTONSTONE.—Mrs. Goulding, the mother of "The Atheist Blacksmith," will be buried at Manor Park Cemetery on Sunday at 3 o'clock. The Secular Burial Service will be read.
- J. M. WHEELER wishes to obtain particulars of the Rev. W. J. Jenkins, M.A., of Baliol, Oxford, formerly rector of Fillingham, Lincolnshire. Replies will be considered confidential.
- W. T. LEEKEY.—Thanks. The statements of insignificant Christian Evidence Society men are scarcely worth attention.
- A PUZZLED ATHEIST says he noticed in Brussels lately that in some pictures Christ was pierced in the right side and in others in the left. He asks which is right. We can only answer that we were not present on the occasion.
- E. HAMILTON.—The joke is not new. Any number of variations have already been played on the theme of Peter and the cock. Thanks for the cutting.
- J. McNALLY.—Has already appeared. You will find a capital racy version of the same story in the new volume just published at our office, "Satires and Profanities," by the late James Thomson (B.V.)
- IGNORAMUS.—You should refer to Franklin's own writings. Second-hand stories in Christian papers are not worth much.
- H. JOHNSON.—We know nothing about the matter, and if we did we should not answer your question. You should have written to the gentleman whose name you mention if the thing was worth troubling about at all.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Sydney Bulletin—Boston Investigator—Ashton Standard—Health—Manchester Examiner—Evening Telegraph—To-Day—Warrington Examiner—Sporting Chronicle—Western Times—Liverpool Mercury—Liberal—Women's Suffrage Journal—Sydney Liberal, Nos. 19 and 20—War Cry—Shields Gazette—Dundee Evening Telegraph—Liberty—N. Y. Truthseeker—Lucifer—Liberator—Salisbury Times—Perts Advertiser—Dalton News—Sydney Evening News—Hastings Times—Radical Review (Chicago

SUGAR PLUMS.

A VERY numerous audience assembled at the London Hall of Science on Thursday evening, Oct. 2, to hear the first of Mr. Foote's course of lectures on "The Roots of Christianity." The Rev. J. B. Heard spoke for twenty minutes in opposition; but, being a remarkably broad Christian, his agreement with the lecture was far more pronounced than his dissent. He declined to speak a second time on the ground that he approved too heartily of so much Mr. Foote had said in reply. The audience seemed half pleased and half puzzled; but the former feeling apparently predominated, for a remarkable burst of applause made the hall ring again as the lecturer and his opponent shook hands cordially before leaving the platform.

By the way, the course tickets for Mr. Foote's lectures are wrongly dated. The last lecture will be delivered on October 23rd instead of the 30th. Ticket holders are requested to note the fact.

AN esteemed correspondent writes to our editor:—"My brother (a doubter) heard you with admiration last week in Aberdeen. My father died in Aberdeen two months ago. He was an intellectual man and a thorough Secularist. He died as he lived. Clergymen called during his long illness: he declined to see them. The night before he died he asked my sister to read the *Freethinker*, *National Reformer* and *Secular Review*. He then fell asleep and woke no more. So much for infidel deathbeds."

THE Liverpool Branch had a terrible crush in their hall last Sunday night. Every inch of standing room was occupied, about four square feet being allowed for the lecturer, and many were unable to obtain admittance. Mr. Foote was listened to with rapt attention for over an hour in an atmosphere and a temperature such as Ingersoll must have been in when he saw a man who was "going to hell to cool off." One prosy opponent would have his say, however; and the audience put up with him as long as they could stand it. He talked and talked about the wonderful righteousness and purity that a man is filled with when he finds Christ; but some of the audience, who knew him, were surprised at the intelligence. They would never have believed it if he hadn't said so.

THE Dundee *Evening Telegraph* reprints the whole of Mr. W. W. Collins's article on Water in the current number of *Progress*. Mr. Collins lectures this evening (Oct. 12) at Milton Hall, London, when we trust he will meet with a hearty reception.

TWO pronounced Freethinkers—Mr. Robert Stout, formerly Attorney-General, and Mr. John Ballance, editor of the *Freethought Review*—have been returned to the New Zealand Parliament. One is President of the Freethought Federal Union and the other is Vice-President. Mr. Stout defeated his clerical opponent by 755 votes against 515—majority for the Freethinker, 240. The religious question was prominently and persistently brought forward at each of these elections, but in spite of the furious attacks of the bigots, Dunedin and Wanganui voted true. Mr. Robert Stout, moreover, now occupies the proud position of Premier of New Zealand and Mr. Ballance is also in the Cabinet. Freethinkers may well rejoice that the old persecuting cries are losing their force.

THE Finsbury Branch of the N. S. S. still carries on the Sunday lectures at Claremont Hall, thanks to the enterprise of its leading members who, when the premises fell into the market, formed a Limited Liability Company and secured possession of them. A Club is also being established there, and it is believed that the shareholders will find their investment a good one. Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Footé have taken up shares, and no doubt their example will encourage the North London Freethinkers to give the Company their hearty support. Prospectuses and all particulars can be obtained of Mr. A. Hilditch at Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville. We may add that, as the shares are only ten shillings each, they are practically within the reach of all.

THE local papers report the presentation to David Woffenden, the celebrated Lockwood newsagent and veteran Freethinker and Radical, of an oil portrait and a purse of gold. The presentation was made in the Secular Institute, Huddersfield, by Mr. Charles Glendinning, before a numerous company. "Old David" acknowledged it in a brief characteristic speech, advising them all to live as long as they could, and stating that he meant to do the same himself; but "if ever he should depart this life" he trusted that, instead of praying for him, they would give a good entertainment and tea-party. Brave old David! May the tea-party be postponed for many a year.

THE Conference of the South London Branches of the N. S. S. held last week was attended by delegates from Bermcndsey, Rotherhithe, South Lambeth, Camberwell, Battersea, Peckham, Crystal Palace, Croydon and Woolwich. A federation has been formed for the wider dissemination of Freethought principles by outdoor propaganda and Secular Sunday-schools, and by the formation of new branches.

WE see by the *Sporting Chronicle* that "Sceptic" beat all his opponents hollow at the Nottingham races. There is nothing new in this, though. It is always ten to one on Sceptic.

RELIGION intrudes itself everywhere, but occasionally it gets snubbed and kept in its rightful position. The *Christian Herald* can hardly believe its own eyes when it sees the "astounding statement" that the sale of the Scriptures was prohibited at the Healtheries. It claims that the Bible is a "great Book of Health." We hope the editor has recovered from the demoralising effects of this "appalling" blow, and that he may receive many more of them to recover from.

It is said that the Princess Royal of England and Crown Princess of Germany is a Freethinker, as was also her sister the Princess Alice during the best years of her amiable if not remarkable life.

THE Progressive Publishing Company has just issued an extraordinary brochure, entitled, "The Strange History of Joshua Josephson." It contains eighteen very racy illustrations depicting events in the life of some ancient hero or deity, and there are many points of resemblance to the stories of several Saviors of the world, from Hercules to Jesus Christ, especially to that of the latter. The introduction is a curious piece of writing, and we hardly know whether to regard it as serious or satirical. The original documents are stated to have been discovered by an Armenian archæologist, who hawked them about to all the leading theological scholars of Europe, each of whom found that the pictures represented the career of a different mythological personage; and in one country the poor discoverer was charged with Blasphemy and narrowly escaped with his life. We scarcely know what to think, but we venture to predict that there will be few Freethinkers without a copy of "Joshua Josephson" a month hence. It has only to be seen to commend itself to such inquisitive spirits.

THE Sydney deputationists who wanted the Premier out there to suppress the Sunday meetings of the Freethinkers did not succeed in their attempt to reintroduce the Dark Ages. The *Bulletin* says that "in the main the trouble was one of competing professionals. The lecturers had succeeded in drawing larger congregations than attend, habitually, any church in this city. And they had had this success, despite the fact that people had to pay to hear them. The deputationists well knew that it was open to them to charge for admission to lectures at the theatres also; but experience had taught them that even when they held free services, they failed to attract 'a house.' Mr. Picton, one of the deputation, . . . had suffered the mortification of having been utterly distanced. Having failed to beat them on anything like even terms, he now desires the assistance of the civil power to silence and persecute them." We congratulate Sydney on the success of the Freethinkers and on the possession of so smart and truly liberal a paper as the *Bulletin*.

Is the *Saturday Review* also among the prophets? The following appeared in the issue of September 20:—"Well-meaning people who write books of good advice for boys and girls contrive at times to set before them a curiously vulgar and even immoral ideal. The Rev. F. Langbridge, M.A., author of the 'Top of the Ladder' (Cassell and Co.), has not been able to do

much better things than others. From first to last the moral of his preaching seems to be that a carriage-and-pair is the reward of piety. He seems to be continually saying to ingenuous youth, 'Follow your Captain Christ' (a very favorite phrase of his), 'and he will lead you to—a large business and a big balance at your banker's. The Kingdom of Heaven will come afterwards. So, my dear children, you see that the beauty of Evangelical Holiness is this—it makes the best of both worlds.' Writers of this class perhaps know their public, and know also that it particularly admires the kind of piety that pays."

A FREETHOUGHT drama, written by Miss Ella Gibson, is to be played on the stage at Liberal, the Freethought town in Missouri which boasts of being "the only town of its size in the United States without a priest or preacher, church, saloon, God, Jesus, or hell."

ACCORDING to the *Boston Investigator* there is another and larger "Agnostic town," called New Ulm, in Minnesota, which boasts an entire immunity from crime or even street brawling.

HOW THEY RAISE THE WIND.

"And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment."

"And they spoiled the Egyptians."

THE gentle reader will perhaps pardon me if I at once point out that the "They," in the above heading refers directly to the Christians of the present age, and that "The Wind" is simply a metaphorical expression typifying that filthy lucre, £ s. d.; a trinity more real, more potent, among Christians, and receiving at their hands and from their hearts a far greater amount of homage, than is vouchsafed to the other more shady one. That the Christians have thoroughly digested the text above quoted is abundantly evident. No scripture passage has been more taken to heart and certainly none have been more naïvely acted upon.

Christianity was always a bundle of paradoxes, but nowhere does the materiality of this so-called spiritual edifice more plainly manifest itself, than in its inability to support itself on spiritual food, or to retain any measure of vitality without the extremely material commodity, cash. True, the Christian hierarchy looks askance, and is never tired of taunting the poorer Secular body with its poverty and lowliness; but in this it is like the gaudily-attired harlot who, from her position of ill-gotten affluence, looks with conceited disdain upon her poor and virtuous sister, struggling with womanly dignity amidst poverty and distress.

We are constantly being reminded of the old Quaker's advice to his son—"Get money, my son, honestly if thou canst, but get money;" and the very questionable morality which underlies this advice seems to have found an abiding place in Christian ethics and actions of all ages. The god gold has ever played a more dominant part than any other deity. Indeed, the cash system has from time immemorial formed the basic principle of salvation, and credit has in every sense of the word been at a discount.

We are forcibly reminded of this fact just now, for on every bill-posting station we see, side by side with the theatrical and the concert-hall announcements, huge bills calling attention to the bazaar in aid of the funds of St. Jack's Church or St. Jill's Chapel.

Without doubt the churches and the chapels are at present in a bad way, and are likely to continue so. No longer can they rely on a name which even with the free-thinking Secularist is too venerable to be associated with the mean, contemptible trickery, and venerated dishonesty which form the stock-in-trade of the church-bazaar business. Verily it would take something more than a scourge of small cords to clear the present-day church of its money-mongering, usurious immorality and hypocrisy.

In olden times, when the Church was a Church, and possessed something like spiritual influence, the wind could be raised by the sale of spiritual blessings, pardons and indulgencies, but in these days of the Church's degeneracy—the all too gauzy cover with which it attempted to hide its priestly pretensions and its impudently immoral dealings having been for ever torn aside by the bold hand of scepticism—other methods have to be resorted to.

In the Secular world vast strides have taken place, making it impossible for the true Secularist to benefit himself or his community by means declared by law and by healthy public opinion to be at once illegal and immoral. To such practices, however, the Church spiritual still lends itself, for with it no means are too contemptible, no trick

too paltry if only funds can be obtained for the glory of God, and the profit of his agents.

These comments may be thought harsh and severe, but certainly not by those who have any personal knowledge of the Church's particular and favorite method of "raising the wind." It is high time that the body should be exposed that has for all too long brazenly traded on its counterfeit patent rights.

A more despicable method of "raising the wind" than by bazaars and fancy fairs can scarcely be conceived. These, while legitimate enough in their place, and if properly carried on, are most assuredly out of accord with the ostensible purport of the Church spiritual. That from a financial point of view they are a success may be quite true, but why their necessity? Has the Lord stopped inspiring men to devote their wealth to his cause? and is the eternal fire insurance business falling flat?

The church and chapel bazaar is simply the rendezvous of the cad, the fop and the flirt. The young spark with more money than brains is willing to pay for a day's flirtation with the young ladies, who would on other occasions be as far from his reach as is heaven itself. But what matter if modesty be laid on one side, if flirtation be sold, if unscrupulous methods are adopted, so that the Church benefits. By wily means the cash is obtained; the end justifies the means; it is "all for the glory of God." The fancy fair is undoubtedly a break in the monotony of do-nothing existence; it is a very pleasant and popular way of getting credit for extreme piety. Beside, how could such an opportunity for promenade and display be dispensed with? What matters it that it panders to the most frivolous tastes of the most frivolous of people? It is all for "Jesus' sake."

The theatrical performance, too, which always forms so important an item in gospel-shop wind-raising business, is, perhaps, of all items, the most outrageous. That it should be necessary to keep up men's reverence for the maker of the universe by the sale of dolls' clothes, cigar-cases, and the balloting of five-pound notes may be perfectly consistent, but that the kingdom of heaven should receive even indirect support from a performance of "Beautiful Belinda; or, the Vicious Viscount, the Youthful Yeoman, and Little Topsy Wopsy" seems more than questionable. It may be perfectly legitimate to skilfully throw at Aunt Sally for Christ's sake, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; but to the benighted Secularist it passeth all understanding.

There is a fitness, however, in all this. The ludicrous means are justified by the ludicrous ends to which they are applied. The contemptible method is equalled only by the contemptible sham it is designed to support. The most gigantic of frauds should be supported by the most gigantic swindles. By the fruit we judge the tree, for "an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit." W. W. COLLINS.

CHRISTIAN IDEAS OF LIBERTY.

WHEN dealing with Freethinkers, Christians are apt to put forth most astonishing theories of liberty. They assure us that "we live in an age of civil and religious liberty," and in proof of their assertion they exclude Mr. Bradlaugh from Parliament, deprive Mrs. Besant of her child and imprison Mr. Foote. They impose religious taxes; they use the power and resources of the State to foster religion in churches and schools; they penalise heresy and persecute Freethought. All this is included in their idea of liberty. The higher-minded Christians are not able to convert the majority of the pious from a narrow bigotry which maintains Christian supremacy and calls it religious equality.

An incident which has occurred in Australia illustrates the peculiar ideas of liberty which Christians do not hesitate to put forward when occasion arises. From a long account in the *Sydney Tribune* we find that the Secularists there held a public meeting for the purpose of considering the reply of the Minister of Public Instruction to their deputations on the subject of religious teaching in the public schools. Mr. W. Richardson, a Christian, who spoke in opposition, created great disturbance amongst the audience by saying in the course of his speech that Secularists "had no morals," and publicly taught that "Murder is right, incest is right, and robbery is right." (Hisses and uproar.) The account proceeds thus:—

Mr. Richardson: You Freethinkers should set an example in what you say you believe—free-thinking and free-speaking. I

will give you the test before I finish, perhaps. I was about to say I attended some of your Gospel services, or modern secular theological lectures, and have heard this referred to: You can do no wrong; whatever is, is right. Murder is right, incest is right, and robbery is right. (Great disturbance.)

The Chairman, amidst considerable uproar, was understood to tell Mr. Richardson that he was deviating from the subject before the meeting.

Mr. Richardson: Your chairman says you cannot stand too much of Freethought.

The Chairman: No, I did not. Speak to the question.

Mr. Richardson: I am going to argue why you should not teach what you believe to our children.

Mr. Summerfield: This gentleman is under a mistake. We want to teach our code of morals to our own children.

Mr. Richardson: I am going to argue that the State should not give facilities to teach such a code of morals to any children, even your own, in the public schools. When Roman Catholics, Mahomedans, or Protestants teach religion, there is morality in it, but when the Secularist teaches religion there is nothing but immorality in it. (Disturbance.)

The Chairman: Ladies and gentlemen,—I think you one and all will agree with me that this gentleman is out of order. (Applause.) As this is a free public meeting, I will thank some gentleman from the body of the hall to move a resolution whether he is or is not in order, and I will put it to the meeting.

Mr. Richardson: Is that freethought and free action? Is that free speech?

Mr. Flower then moved that as Mr. Richardson was insulting every person in the hall, he be no longer heard. The Christians present moved as an amendment—"That, if you are freethinkers, Mr. Richardson has a right to express his free mind in this hall." After being voted out of order by the meeting, Mr. Richardson persisted in speaking, and had to be forcibly removed from the platform.

By purposely confounding the rational freedom advocated by Freethinkers with the criminal licentiousness attributed to them by unscrupulous enemies, Christians can be found who claim the privilege of this supposed licentiousness to insult their opponents with the grossest calumnies. And they make this outrageous demand of Freethinkers—and of Freethinkers alone—in the name of "free speech." Why not claim similar "free action" also, as Mr. Richardson's use of the actual expression leads us to suppose he would if he could only make Christians in general as bigoted as himself? Why not claim that if Christians, not content with vomiting forth abuse and slander, should choose to brain a Freethinker with axes, we must leave them at perfect "liberty" to do so?

Mr. Richardson is far from being alone in his theories. What strikes us with some surprise is that the *Tribune*, the large and apparently influential paper from which we have derived our information, takes up the same line of argument and taunts Secularists with the "refusal of the 'free' thought exponents to give him the requisite freedom to expound his thoughts." By "gagging the speaker," the Secularists, it says, have proved their "sincerity a delusion," and "their platform of freedom of opinion a hollow snare." The meeting, so the article concludes, "has taught wavering men how paltry and petty are Freethinkers' motives, and how bigoted is their conception of what is pure and unadulterated liberty."

"Pure and unadulterated liberty" thus, according to these Christians, includes the right to be impertinent to a chairman and to force infamous insults upon an audience of respectable men and women—insults and accusations so gross and so sweeping that they would be false if addressed even to a meeting of the lowest of the low. Freethinkers are to be silent while Christian liars fling the vilest charges at them. The reward would be that their silence would be referred to as proof of guilt, and the accusations would be redoubled in malignity and vileness till no human endurance could be possible.

Happily there is a large and increasing number of Christians on their road to Secularism, who do not think that the alleged "liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free" includes this monstrous license, and who condemn such abuse of the idea of liberty as strongly as we do. We call upon such Christians, both at home and abroad, to restrain their fouler-minded brethren for the credit of their common religion, or if that is impossible, to at least repudiate and condemn and vigorously oppose the abuse of power and privilege and "liberty" of which Christians as a body and as individuals are so often guilty. W. P. BALL.

THE LORDS' PRAYER.—Give us this day our Redistribution Bill.

SALVATION BLASPHEMY.

It is very evident that the Salvation Army is a-getting on. . . A procession commencing with "war chariots," *alias* costermonger's carts, and followed up by soldiers dressed in quaint costumes to represent Scriptural characters, paraded the principal streets of the town [Stockport] on Monday night to the great disturbance of the local traffic, to the profound disgust of all truly religious people, but also to the substantial glorification of "General" Booth. For caricaturing religious subjects one man recently underwent a long term of imprisonment in this country. When will the same "justice" be meted out to the head of the Salvation Army? Mr. Foote, the "blasphemer," confined his caricatures to a paper which he published, and which no one was obliged to look at. On the contrary, those who wanted to see it had to pay for it. But General Booth's grotesque caricatures of characters held sacred by many people are paraded through the streets, where all who pass by *must* see them. How profound, for instance, must be the disgust of a reverentially-disposed person on seeing a red-nosed, knock-kneed, spavin-shanked, carrot-haired, "repentant booser," made up to represent—say Moses or David, or Jeremiah, or perhaps even Jesus Christ! And this caricature is thrust upon the notice of believers and unbelievers, of worshippers and scoffers, indiscriminately, whilst Mr. Foote's "blasphemy" was witnessed only by those who sought and paid to see it. Truly, if prosecutions for blasphemy are to be carried on in this nineteenth century of ours, Mr. Booth should have an uncommonly good chance of attaining the distinction which he seems to covet.—*Sporting Chronicle.*

PROFANE JOKES.

SERVED HIM RIGHT.—Mary was a buxom country lass, and her father was an upright deacon in the Methodist Church of a Connecticut village. Mary's plan of joining the boys and girls in a nutting party was frustrated by the unexpected arrival of a number of the "brethren" on their way to the Conference, and Mary had to stay at home and get dinner for the clerical guests of her father. Her already ruffled temper was increased by the reverend visitors themselves, who sat about the stove and in the way. One of the good ministers noticed her wrathful impatience, and desiring to rebuke the sinful manifestations, said sternly, "Mary what do you really think will be your occupation in hell?" "Pretty much the same as it is on this earth," she replied—"cooking for Methodist ministers!"

A SICK man, slightly convalescent, was asked by a pious friend who his physician was. He replied, "Doctor Jones brought me through." "No, no," said his friend; "God brought you out of your illness, not the doctor." "Well, maybe he did; but you may be pretty sure the doctor will charge for it."

A QUAKER, having bought a horse, which proved unsound, of a gentleman named Bacon, he wrote to inform him of it, but received no answer. Shortly after, meeting the seller, he requested him to take back the horse, which the other positively refused to do. Finding his remonstrances of no avail, the Quaker calmly said, "Friend, thou hast doubtless heard of the Devil entering the herd of swine, and I find he still sticks fast in the Bacon! Good morning to thee, friend."

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