

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 91.



JAHVEH'S SHAVING SALOON.

"In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired."—ISAIAH vii., 20.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.

SOCIALISM is "in the air." In some form or other it confronts us at every turn. Its principles are advocated intelligently by a very few, and they are opposed intelligently by a very few. They are also favored unconsciously by many who openly denounce them, and on the other hand they are flagrantly violated by many of their professed friends. These terms, *few* and *many*, are, however, purely relative. The active interest in Socialism, whether for or against it, is confined to a very limited circle. The great masses of the people are completely indifferent to it, and if we may judge by the circulation of Socialistic organs, its devotees are perhaps the smallest sect in the country. Yet it cannot be denied that Socialism is, not as an end, but as a tendency, permeating the platform and the press. But what there is of value in this influence is not new, the mere aspiration for social improvement being common to all reformers of every age and clime.

It may be doubted whether English Socialism, if we except what it owes to the school of Robert Owen, is anything but an echo of continental Socialism; and it is curious to note how many Jewish and foreign names figure in the list of its London advocates. The Socialism of Germany, and still more of Russia, is obviously a reaction against military despotism, and in that respect at least it merits our sympathy, whatever we may think of its methods. We might in fact say that European Socialism is a vague revolt against the priestcraft and

privilege of the old régime. Nearly all its champions have been Atheists, and the vast majority of the rank and file are as bitterly opposed to the Christian Church as to the monarchical State. Seeing this, Prince Bismarck astutely tried to turn the popular disaffection into an orthodox channel, by which it could of course be drained safely away or otherwise rendered innocuous. For this fine purpose the pulpit was "tuned" and the court chaplain led the movement. But like all too cunning schemes this dodge signally failed, and we hear nothing now of Christian Socialism in Germany.

Either it or its ghost is, however, to be seen in England: Within the Established Church itself there is a small company of Christian Socialists, including such men as the Rev. S. D. Headlam, Canon Shuttleworth and the Rev. E. M. Geldart. They are mainly disciples of Maurice and Kingsley. Their characters are amiable and transparent, but they are not remarkable for economic profundity. At the late Church Congress a paper was read on Christian Socialism, and it formed the topic of a long discussion at the Conference of the Congregational Union. Henry George and Michael Davitt likewise profess to be Christians, but they should properly be excluded from the Socialistic list; for neither of them denounces "capital," and the nationalisation of the land is far from being a Socialistic scheme. On the contrary, it is, as Mr. Herbert Spencer pointed out long before Mr. George was thought of, the logical conclusion of the principle of Individuality, which allows all men equal access to the primary gifts of nature.

Now let us see the real meaning of Christian Socialism.

If it implies more than the economic opinions of people who happen to call themselves Christians, its import can only be found by an appeal to the New Testament. Early Christian Socialism, according to the Acts, was pure Communism, supported by enthusiastic credulity and regulated by a despotic executive that appealed to supernatural terrors when its mandates were disobeyed. Jesus Christ was himself a Communist, and undoubtedly borrowed his doctrine from the Essenes, who practised it with remarkable thoroughness. They had everything in common, and as their wants were bounded by an extreme asceticism and a propitious climate, they were able to maintain their community without much exertion. Jesus himself, as Professor Newman observes, never inculcates industry as a duty. He rather praises idleness and trust in God. "Sell all that thou hast and give unto the poor" was his crowning advice to the young lawyer. "Sell that ye have and give alms" he commanded his disciples. "Give to every one that asketh" was his doctrine in the Sermon on the Mount. Christ's Socialism therefore comes to this—that the rich are to unload for the benefit of the poor who are to depend on such offerings for a living. Could there be a surer and swifter plan for pauperising the world? The only true charity is that which enables a man to help himself. Whether Communism is possible or not on a large scale in any stage of intellectual and moral culture, it is certain that no form of civilised society is compatible with the mawkish sentiment, wild imprudence and systematic laziness which Jesus encouraged. If Christian Socialism then means the Socialism of Jesus Christ, the less we have of it the better. All civilisation is a practical protest against it. Industry and foresight are the two great qualities that distinguish the civilised man from the savage. Jesus may have meant well, but his ideas were all astray. He showed complete ignorance of the world, and he did not look far enough ahead to inquire how the general fund was to be supported when the existing rich had all become poor.

Christian Socialism is in England fast becoming a canting dodge. When the traditional enemies of liberty and progress patronise the people we are bound to ask what is their motive. In this case it is clear they see that all forms of privilege are threatened by the democracy, and they wish to make themselves agreeable to the masters of the future. If they are not like rats deserting a sinking ship, they are at least like parasitic courtiers who desert the dying king and cultivate the favor of the heir to the throne.

Let the working classes beware of being humbugged. The great evils of a complex civilisation are not to be cured by mere doses of sentiment. Hard thinking is necessary. However grand and attractive social schemes may appear, they must all be brought by reason to the test of utility. And let Freethinkers also be cautious. We have no objection to the fullest and frankest discussion of Socialism, but we object to coquetting with it. Flirting with so ambitious and far-reaching a theory is playing with fire. If Socialism be true, let us accept it; but let us do it with our eyes open and not be carried away by cheap sentiment and plausible catchwords.

G. W. FOOTE.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

THE BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY.—Assuredly, if any demonstration be needed of the necessary unsoundness of a system which rests upon history, it is to be found in the present condition of Christianity. Declining to entrust its doctrine to reason, the Church has taken its stand upon historical evidence, only to find this give way under it; and it is now without any basis save that of custom. The time has come in which Christians are Christians only because they are accustomed to be Christians. Habit has superseded conviction.—*Dr. Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland*, "The Perfect Way to the Finding of Christ," § 50, p. 80; 1882.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.—Early Christian writers often wrote in the name of others with good motives. To brand them as forgers is to do them injustice. It was not a profane and daring imposture for one to personate an apostle and compose a letter in his name. Far from it. To do so was considered right and proper. The thing was common; so that contemporaries could not brand as impious what they approved of.—*Dr. Samuel Davidson*, "Introduction to New Testament," vol. ii., p. 497; 1868.

THE BIBLE CREATOR.—One of two charges he cannot escape. Either he knew when he created Adam and Eve that their nature

was such that they would disobey, or he did not. In the first place, he knowingly formed them liable to fall, knowingly placed them amid conditions which rendered their fall inevitable, and then punished them for the catastrophe he had all along foreseen as the necessary result of the character he had bestowed upon them. In the second case, he was ignorant and short-sighted, being unable to guess what would be the nature of his own handiwork; and should not have meddled with tasks which were obviously beyond the scope of his faculties.—*Viscount Amberley*, "Analysis of Religious Belief," vol. ii., p. 304; 1876.

SUPERSTITION OF JEWS—As might be expected from the universality of the belief in demons and their influence over the human race, the Jews occupied themselves much with the means of conjuring them. "There was hardly any people in the whole world," we have already heard from a great Hebrew scholar (Lightfoot), "that more used or were more fond of amulets, charms, mutterings, exorcisms and all kinds of enchantments." All competent scholars are agreed upon this point, and the Talmud and Rabbinical writings are full of it. The exceeding prevalence of such acts alone proves the existence of present ignorance and superstition.—"Supernatural Religion," vol. i., p. 115; 1875.

ZACHARIAS AND THE ASS.

ONE of the many proofs of the unhistorical character of the gospels is to be found in Matthew xxiii, 35, where Jesus is made to say that upon the Jews shall come "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Baruch, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." Now Josephus informs us that Zacharias, son of Baruch or Barachias, was slain in the temple by the zealots shortly before the siege of Jerusalem, A.D. 70 ("Wars of the Jews," iv., 5, § 4). The Zechariah who was stoned in the temple (2 Chron xxiv., 20-22) was the son of Jehoiada.

Epiphanius, the Christian father, relates a legend concerning the death of this Zacharias. He says that Zacharias, having seen a vision in the temple, and being through surprise about to disclose it, was suddenly and mysteriously deprived of the power of speech. He had seen at the time of offering incense, after the evening sacrifice, a figure in the form of an ass standing by the altar. (It is necessary to observe that there were no mirrors there.) Going out to the people he exclaimed—"Woe unto you! Whom do ye worship?" when, before he could communicate the great secret, immediately "he who had appeared to him in the temple struck him with dumbness"—a counter miracle to that executed on the ass of Balaam. Afterwards, however, Zacharias recovered speech and related his vision, in consequence of which indiscretion the priests slew him—their customary method with those who reveal their mysteries.

"The Devil is an Ass" is an old saying, upon which rare Ben Jonson wrote an excellent play. It seems, however, there is something to be said for the proposition that his Jewish antagonist was of the same species. Tacitus, the most learned and careful of all ancient historians, in his account of the Jews (History, bk. v.) relates that the Jews, in wandering through the desert, were led to water by wild asses, and that in consequence they placed the image of that animal in their holy place. Josephus, in his second book against Apion (chap. viii.), tells how his opponent had the impudence to affirm that the Jews placed an ass's head in their holy place, which was discovered when Antiochus spoiled the temple. Being in opposition to God's holy word, these were of course malignant slanders. It is strange they should receive any confirmation from a Christian father.

FOLLOW REASON.

FOLLOW Reason, oh, my brother! night and morning;

Seek her paths along the wide highway of life.

In the eastland where the dawn is all adorning,

Thou wilt find her with the dogma-clouds at strife.

Though the superstition-ridden world may chide thee,

And the hideous scowls of Creed thy heart affright,

From the tangles and the snares at last she'll guide thee;

Follow Reason, and she'll lead thee to the light.

Follow Reason, laughing in the face of slander;

Living down the ostracism of a clique,

And thy heart and nature growing greater, grander,

Will but cut the vulture talons to the quick;

Through the brambles and the thorns that may surround thee,

Ever onward, ever upward, struggle still,

Throwing off the thongs that early may have bound thee;

And thy motto through each triumph be, "I will!"

Follow Reason, ever judging thinking, weighing,

Never balanced, never biased by a care;

Leave the children by their fetish vainly praying;

Manly effort be thy true and earnest prayer.

"Be a Man!" thus spake a true and earnest poet;

Be not laggard, Progress needs thee in the van;

Be thou master of thyself, and live it, show it,

Follow Reason night and morn, and be a man.

JOHN ROWELL WALLER.

ACID DROPS.

A CLERGYMAN wants to sue a rival preacher for 1,000*l.* damages. Injury to character is the assigned cause. Fancy a parson having a character worth 1,000*l.*!

THE Heathen are not helped by being Christianised. The *N. Y. Tribune* remarks: "A returned missionary says that the Zulus in their native state are one of the finest races in the world. All the men are honest and all the women chaste. But as soon as they are converted to Christianity and begin to wear clothes, they generally become vicious and dissolute."

"My friends," said a returned missionary, who had been improved by a sojourn among the Hindoos, and who thought it high time to civilize Christians at home as well as pagans abroad, "let us avoid sectarian bitterness. The inhabitants of Hindustan, where I have been laboring for many years, have a proverb that 'though you bathe a dog's tail in oil and bind it in splints, yet you cannot get the crook out of it.' Now, a man's sectarian bias is simply the crook in the dog's tail, which cannot be eradicated; and I hold that every one should be allowed to wag his own peculiarity in peace." We wish Christians would take this advice, but when we wag our peculiarity they call it blasphemy and outrage. They then proceed in return to wag their teeth at us and into us, and act generally as if they were attacked with the severest form of hydrophobia—*rabies religiosa*.

THE Salvation Army care so little for the annoyance they cause by their processions and noises that few sensible people will be sorry to hear that at Litcham a gentleman whose wife was dangerously affected with heart disease has horse-whipped some of them into a better knowledge of what is due to invalids. Mr. Massingham's house stood at the end of a street, and there was no other house past his. Notwithstanding his request to the "captain" to keep away, the Salvationists "came howling round his house." He begged them to go away, but they only snapped their fingers at him. He then got a horse-whip and "whipped the lot, except one man, who got behind an old woman and dodged out of his way." The same evening the Army again made a great disturbance near his residence. Four of the horse-whipped saints summoned the wicked man who dared to imitate the action of Jesus in the Temple for a much better purpose. Of course they professed entire ignorance of the illness of the defendant's wife. As Mr. Massingham had pleaded guilty, the magistrates fined him one shilling, but left the Salvationists to pay their own costs, warning them, moreover, that in future they would be held responsible for any similar occurrence.

THE *War Cry* says that a woman who was going to commit suicide was stayed by hearing the sound of a Salvation band. We know some who, when they hear it are tempted the other way. This shows the striking different effect of noise on different constitutions.

At Hamburg, Ala., U.S., two girls named Didlake were struck by lightning while praying, and they remain in a critical condition. The *Pittsburg Times* heads its account—"Paralysed while Praying." Christian papers should not forget to add this to their list of miracles.

A REVIVAL led by the Rev. S. P. Jones, at Newman, Ga., U.S., affected the grand jury, who took to religious shouting and adjourned for prayer, Judge Harris leading. This must have been almost as comic as Gilbert and Sullivan's "Trial by Jury."

A ROMAN CATHOLIC having refused to swear on the Protestant Bible, the usher overcame the difficulty by gumming two strips of paper on the book in the shape of a cross. The case then proceeded.

ANENT various forms of Christian swearing, *Pump Court* tells a very good story of an old clerk at Judges' Chambers, who, in order to guard against the fraud of those solicitors' clerks who were in the habit of taking advantage of his purblindness to "plant" bad shillings on him to pay for the stamps on their affidavits, used to administer the oath in this way: "Take the book in your right hand. You swear that this is your name and handwriting, that the contents of this your affidavit are true, and that this shilling is a good one, so help you God."

THE U. P. Church, Wellington Street, Glasgow, boasts of having received at its opening 2,500*l.*, the largest collection ever made in any church in Scotland. Godly Glasgow may boast of having more churches and viler slums than any other city of its size.

THE Rev. Patrick Phelan was convicted of assaulting Mary Moore by giving her a kick in St. James's Church, Glasgow, on Sunday, Oct. 5. He was fined one guinea, with the alternative of seven days' imprisonment.

THE Rev. H. P. Cameron, of Milton Parish, Glasgow, is in the custody of the Buteshire police on a charge of wife assault.

THE Warwick County Court reserves its judgment upon the legality of a bill for 200*l.* which a man received of his aunt, since deceased, as the price of his conversion to Roman Catholicism. The Judge cannot quite make up his mind whether the change of religion was a valuable consideration or not.

PROPHETIC hints of considerably more value than those in the old Jew books are sometimes found in the pages of the daily press. For instance, in the advertisement columns of a contemporary, after a list of books on theology comes an announcement that "the best price for waste paper is to be obtained of" so-and-so.

A NOVELTY in Church entertainments is reported in a Georgia paper, the *Darien Gazette*. According to that journal, a "poster" widely distributed in Darien, gave notice of an excursion, connected with a Methodist Episcopal Church, to see the hanging of a colored man, "Rube" Peyton—an event which had not occurred in the country before for twenty years. The advertisement states that the Rev. J. G. Kitchen would accompany the excursion. Doubtless to improve the occasion?

IN Hornsey Churchyard is to be seen a gravestone with the solitary inscription—J A H. Our informant asks if this can be the original of that name, who though often spoken about has not been seen on earth for a very considerable period? We incline to the theory advanced by James Thomson in his "Satires and Profanities," that the firm of Jah and Co., like that of Rothschild, represents a series of individuals. The original irascible Old Jah has long since retired in favor of his son and the ghost, and is supposed to be in a similar state of hibernation to that in which he existed before making everything out of nothing. Perhaps he is dead, or as Elijah said of Baal, "Peradventure he sleepeth."

FOR eighteen hundred years Christians have been announcing Christ's immediate return. No amount of disappointment teaches them common sense. A "Solemn Testimony" that Christ's Second Coming is "at hand" in "these last days," and that the "great judgments of Almighty God" are about to fall, is to be "delivered" in the Foresters' Hall, Clerkenwell, every Thursday, "under the Lord's restored Apostleship." Tomfoolery rampant and so much real work urgently requiring to be done! Such is the natural effect of gospel teaching.

DOGMATISM, we have been told, is only puppyism grown up. Hence Lord Randolph Churchill—puppy Churchill we should call him, only that the puppy has done nothing to deserve such dishonor—naturally patronised the Bible strongly at Birmingham on the day after the fraudulent "public" meeting at Aston from which the invited Liberals were expelled and excluded until they took the law into their own hands. Speaking in safety at the opening of a religious bazaar, this specimen of the aristocracy said that the party of whom Mr. Bright was one of the most prominent members, sought to exclude from education all moral training, and even the Bible, from the State schools of England. Then the canting young liar proceeded to preach about the love of honesty and fair dealing and truth and charity which should result from the study of the word of God. The ranting hypocrite who talks like this after calling good old Gladstone "a man worse than a murderer" and "the Moloch of Midlothian," shows well the kind of charity and truth and fair dealing that people are likely to draw from the inspired pages.

THE Rev. A. F. Forrest says belief in God is the foundation of all religion. But the religion of vast multitudes has been belief in a large number of supernatural beings without any belief in a supreme Deity. The Chinese worship heaven and earth and their own ancestors, but not God. There are even Devil-worshippers, whose religion, however, is after all not far removed from the religion of those Christians who worship an Almighty Fiend, maker of hell and of infinite torment. Of course, such Christian Devil-worshippers compliment their own particular Moloch with the most fulsome flattery, and he is the "ideal of virtue and righteousness" to them. They can see the "baneful effects of Atheism," but are blind to the atrocious horrors of their own religion. When such distorted minds blame us, we feel satisfied we must be in the right path.

PARAGRAPHS about the death of Lottie Wilmot are still circulating among the Christian press, and will continue to do so, we suppose, for a hundred years hence. A woman who lectured on "risky social topics," who lectured at least occasionally on the side of orthodoxy against Freethought, who told her daughter to have nothing to do with Freethinkers, and who "presented her prayers through the one Mediator," is put down as a Freethought lecturer for whose poverty Freethinkers are responsible. If she prayed to Christ, as Christians boast, she must have been a Christian who merely coquetted with Freethought in the hope of getting a lecturing engagement and paying off her hotel-bill to avoid the expulsion which she twice experienced. How many thousands of Christians die "in circumstances of destitution," and to what extent do Christians assume the responsibility?

TALMAGE says "God thought so much of the Chinamen that he created 300,000,000 of them." By the same mode of reckon-

ng we can infer that he thought so little of Talmage that he only created one of him.

AN ex-Jesuit states, in the *New York Sun*, that the members of the Society of Jesus throughout the world number only about 12,000. We think the vermin sufficiently numerous to be noxious considering how they unite the stealthy subtlety of the serpent with the sleekness of the dove.

JESUS said to his followers "be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." They have generally contrived to add the harmlessness of the serpent to the wisdom of the dove.

It was a bad young man, and he died suddenly and went to the naughty place, who said that the authors who attended the banquet at the Mansion House last Saturday did so to meet each other and eat a good dinner, and not out of respect for that pious upholder of the liberty of the press, Lord Mayor Fowler.

SOME one has figured it out that over four millions of sermons are annually preached in Britain. Of these about 400 are considered worth printing, and perhaps four are remembered the following year. What a waste of time if not of talent!

WHAT are we coming to? In response to an invitation of the Rev. G. Akers, about 500 persons went, on St. Edward's day, to Westminster Abbey and engaged in prayer around the tomb of King Edward the Confessor, whose bones mouldered into dust about a thousand years ago.

REV. DR. RANKIN, of the Congregational Church at Washington, permitted a colored Sunday-school class to meet in the basement of his church. This action raised a storm of wrath among the church officials, and the doctor was compelled to resign.—*N. Y. Truthseeker.*

A CHINESE pamphlet recently circulated in Hong Kong against the Christian mission work, affirms that Europeans do not belong to the human race, but are descended from monkeys. "This race of wild beings," it alleges, "worship neither the heavens nor the earth; they do not honor their parents nor have respect for their forefathers. They come into China under the pretence of preaching a religion, but really come to take the eyes and the brains of dying people, and the blood of children. With these they make medical pills, which they sell in their country, and in this manner secure shrewdness." If the Chinese are superstitious enough to believe these remarkable statements, they have but a slight transition to undergo in order to become Christians.—*N. Y. Truthseeker.*

BISHOP WARREN is continuing his scientific essays. In his latest effulgence he avers that "the heavens about him are shining stairs up which his soul may climb, and hang his mental trapeze between Arcturus and the Polar Star, and swing himself clear out of this system of suns, to where gravitation stops and turns the other way." Joseph Cook should take Bishop Warren in hand, and either teach him what he knows of physical science, or else insist that the next time the Bishop finds himself suspended between Arcturus and the Polar Star, he should take a fresh grip on the mental trapeze and stay there.—*N. Y. Truthseeker.*

THE members of the Baptist Church, South Bank, have been engaged in the evangelical occupation of squabbling. At a meeting "to devise the best means for promoting the interests and cause of Christ," the Rev. H. Atkinson, pastor of the church, refused to proceed until a deacon and some other members, who he said had not the best interests of the church at heart, retired. Upon their refusing he sent for the police, and one of his satellites threatened to "wring the necks" of the deacon and his supporters. How they love one another!

RICHARD GASTON, who hails from Stamford Hill, writes to the *Weekly Dispatch* censuring what he calls "the waste of time" that goes on in London every Sunday. He thinks that all the Freethought lecturers should entirely neglect Christian doctrines, and confine themselves to telling the working classes how to better their lot. But that is precisely what they are doing, although Mr. Gaston does not see it. Every superstition destroyed opens the way for truth. Every blow at the supernatural strengthens the natural. Every attack on the Kingdom of Heaven brings nearer the Republic of Man. And every man or woman converted to Freethought is a fresh recruit to the army of political and social progress. Besides, it is rather a bad joke to ask Freethinkers to ignore a creed which is able to imprison them for expressing their honest dissent from it. Christianity will not leave us alone if we leave it alone. It is naturally an aggressive despotism, and if we do not conquer it it will destroy us. Mr. Gaston does not understand the influence of principles. He fancies that there is no connection between ideas and bread-and-butter. But there is, and a very close connection too.

A CORRESPONDENT informs us that Dr. Aveling has recanted, unless the Rev. Z. B. Woffendale tells an untruth. Well, we

can assure him that Dr. Aveling has *not* recanted, and he can fill out the rest for himself.

THE Rev. W. E. Hurndall stated at the recent Congregational Union Conference that "so far as his experience went he was convinced that their great want was money." That is the conclusion to which the sky-pilots always come at last.

THERE is a cool, quiet cheek about Christians that cannot be paralleled or approached. A Boston correspondent of a pious contemporary, after describing Principal Fairbairn's strictures on Spencer, Huxley, Hartmann and Schopenhauer, adds that "it seemed strange that any one of respectable thinking power should even incline to adopt such views of life and man." Strange, that is, that anyone outside an asylum should think there was any value in the ideas of four of the greatest minds of England and Germany after an eminent Christian had pronounced himself against them. Such are the fruits of the gospel of humility.

THE Rev. Mr. Jasper, the colored preacher who attained celebrity by declaring "the sun do move," has long been esteemed the champion baptizer in America. It has been the boast of his admirers that he could immerse more candidates for baptism in a given length of time than any other preacher in the country. It has, however, transpired that the Rev. J. H. Brooks (colored), of Washington, has, after a successful revival, immersed fifty-six people in one hour and sixteen minutes, thus beating the Rev. Jasper's best record. The Jasper people, however, declare that all has not been fair. They say that some of Brother Brooks's candidates practised in the water in order to help Brother Brooks beat the Rev. Jasper's time, and that Brother Brooks did not observe the regular formula in every case; that it was only to the first candidate he said "I baptize you in the name of the Father," etc., and to the others only added as they came up, "Same to you," and gave them the plunge.

PROFESSOR MOSELEY has discovered a mollusk with 11,000 eyes. It must be related to the cherubim of Ezekiel and the beasts of the Apocalypse.

A PAMPHLET issued by the New York Sabbath Committee estimates that no less than 250,000 persons are required to violate the Sabbath in connection with the running of the railways of the country on Sunday, and that one-half of this number are professed Christians and church-members, who thus from fear of losing their places, violate their consciences and the laws of the church to which they profess allegiance.

THE *Welsh Western Mail* continues its abuse of Mr. Foote, but there are some people whose censure is the highest praise. We quoted some amiable remarks on Mr. Foote's personal appearance from the same paper a few weeks ago in an account of his lecture at Claremont Hall on the Devil. Since then the *Mail's* correspondent has visited the Hall of Science and heard Mrs. Besant's lecture on "Can we trust our Senses?" He bestows upon her a high eulogy, with every word of which we have the honor to agree; but he cannot refrain from another sneer at the "lower and meaner nature of Mr. G. W. Foote" and his "abusive tirades" against Christianity. Mrs. Besant's lecture being mainly scientific, there was not much room for "abusive tirades," but she has spoken and printed some pretty strong things in that line, and she would be the first to laugh at this correspondent's blunder. Mr. Foote happens to be editor of the extremest and most widely circulated Freethought journal in England. These two facts show the Freethought party's opinion of him and his policy, and they quite account for the opposite opinion of orthodox scribes.

THE members of the South-West London Protestant Institute have unanimously passed a resolution which "condemns in the strongest manner the prohibition of the sale of the Bible at the Health Exhibition." Steps are to be taken, if possible, to prevent any attempted repetition of this "indignity to the word of God and affront to the national conscience." Hadn't the S. W. L. P. I. better prosecute the managers of the Healtheries for constructive blasphemy? Twelve months' in gaol might thoroughly prove to them the advisability of mixing up Bible with everything.

A MINISTER of the Established Church received a call from a congregation to become their minister, which he accepted. At the induction he promised them that he would not leave them till death parted them. Later on he received another call to go to Glamis for a hundred pounds more stipend. He accepted this one. Having occasion to visit one family of his flock, he asked one of the family, a little boy, the question, "What is effectual calling?" The little fellow replied, "A hundred pound mair stipend." "What!" exclaimed the minister—"you know where all liars go?" "To Glamis, sir."

THE fact is, while the new Bible will suit the ordinary emergencies of life, it will never do for an editor who has to read letters from politicians, spring poetry, and demands for corrections in the next issue. He's got to have something that's got h—ll in it, and a plentiful supply at that.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Oct. 26, St. James's Hall, Plymouth:—11, "Judas Iscariot," 3, "Sky Pilots," 7, "Will Christ Save Us?"

November 2, Burnley; 9, Birmingham; 16, Nottingham; 18, Walworth; 23, Hall of Science, London; 25, Claremont Hall, London; 30, Hall of Science.

December 2, Claremont Hall; 6, Cramlington; 7, South Shields; 9, Claremont Hall, London; 14, Oldham; 16, Claremont Hall, London; 21, Hall of Science, London; 28, Milton Hall, London.

January 4, Rochdale; 11, Huddersfield; 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.—H. Mogford, E. Chapman, F. Wilcockson, D. V., Abe, H. Wootton.

H. C. BARRETT.—We have not yet discovered any God worthy our credence.

G. T.—The "dancing free" at Conservative demonstrations is a set-off to the large contingent of "hoppers" at the Hyde Park meeting.

B. SIDE says our artist, to convey the fact that Rehoboam slept with his daddies, has drawn a pile of mummies. B. Side is reproved for frivolity on sacred matters.

A. HUNT.—Calvin, in his Institutes (book iv., chap. iv., § 10), says that infants bring along with them their own damnation from their mother's womb.

H. W. KITCHENER.—Mr. Clodd's remarks had been dealt with before receiving your paper.

H. BOXALL.—Read M. S. Besant on "Free Trade and Fair Trade" and Mongredin's little book published by Cassell.

A YOUNGSTER.—The antiquities of Egypt are certainly incompatible with the stories of the Creation and Noachian deluge.

WM. COSGROVE tells us how a Church Army captain not only boasted of silencing infidels, but showed how it was done, for on Mr. C. asking a question he was met by the words "Chorus, friends," and then commenced a violent thumping on the big drum and a chorus to the tune of "The boat is going over." He was silenced.

E. HAMILTON.—Thanks for cuttings and good wishes.

P. DAWSON.—No ancient MSS. are kept in the Tower of London. The British Museum has one of the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament, called the Alexandrian. It contains the epistles of Clement in addition to the books of the New Testament. Its date is about the fifth century.

JACOB EDMUNDS.—We have forwarded the note to Mr. Collins.

E. T. THOMLINSON asks us to note the smoking concerts on Sunday evenings at the Ball's Pond Club after the lecture.

ALBERT SMITH.—Thanks for the cuttings and the other enclosures.

D. EARLY.—We know nothing of the Rev. Dr. Thornton who lectured at Norwood, but if he wants a discussion on Bible difficulties we shall be happy to accommodate him. The treatment of Mr. Price by the Christian meeting is only what might have been expected.

E. C.—We have shown your remarks to the gentleman.

R. YOUNG wishes to know if the Baptist Tract Society are not wrong in stating that they are circulating the Bible to counteract immorality. He suggests *encourage*.

G. COCKMAN.—We have no room for guide notices, and can only announce special events.

W. C. SCRIVENER writes that he brought his cousin to hear Mr. Foote last Thursday. It was the first Freethought lecture he ever heard, and he liked it much better than going to church.

H. CHECKLY.—Scarcely up to the mark.

ANTI CANT.—Your ideas are good, but you need more practice in composition.

W. T. LEEKEY complains that no one has been at the Midland Arches the last two Sundays to sell Freethought literature, although there was a large demand. Perhaps some local newsagent will take the hint. Mr. Leekey says that there is a great run in North London on "Joshua Josephson."

W. GRAYSON.—Thanks. Mr. Foote will be glad to pay Hull a visit.

D. H.—Good, but scarcely up to the mark.

J. W. B.—We are glad the four evangelists will be well armed with tracts. You can obtain the book by calling at Stonecutter Street.

MR. JOHN GRAHAM, 25 Wigan Road, Hindley, supplies all Freethought literature.

J. PALMER.—Mr. Foote did not have the use of writing materials in prison. For full information read the Trials and *Progress*.

J. BLACKLEY.—A life of R. Carlile will shortly appear in *Progress*.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Western Daily Press—Staffordshire Sentinel—Manchester Examiner—Sporting Chronicle—Midland Free Press—Liberty—Swindon Advertiser—Liberal (U.S.)—Literary World—Eastern Province Herald—Morby Observer—The Belton Evening News—Clonmel Chronicle—Ayrshire Post—Junior Democrat—Protestant Standard—National Reformer—Choice Chips—Western Mail—Halifax Courier—Academy—Leeds Express—Aberdeen Journal—Paris Morning News—Chicago Radical Review—N. Y. Truthseeker—Boston Investigator—Agnostic Annual—Clarence Examiner—War Cry—South Bank Advertiser—Liberator (Nos. 13 and 14)—Sheffield Independent—Western Press—West Briton.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Progress for November will be an interesting number. It opens with a pungent paper by S. Britton on "Morley's Moral Miscellany"; Mr. Collins contributes a paper on "Progress"; Mr. Foote continues his "Prisoner for Blasphemy"; J. H. concludes "98 in Wexford" and Mr. Holt his "Dwellings for Work-folk"; Mr. Wheeler reviews and gives notable extracts from Professor Newman's new book, "Christianity in its Cradle"; Mr. Ball contributes an able paper on "Evolutional Malthusianism" and Mr. Wells concludes his advocacy of the Exclusion of Place-men from Parliament. The great feature of the magazine, however, will be an hitherto unpublished and now unforgettable poem by the late James Thomson, entitled "A Vision of Sin."

THERE were very large audiences at Mr. Foote's Manchester lectures last Sunday, the hall being densely packed in the evening, and all the approaches blocked by the crowd. A collection was made for a young Freethinker who had met with an accident and, having had a leg amputated, was in need of a mechanical substitute. There was a ready and generous response by the audience to the chairman's appeal, and the sum required (12l. 10s.) was fully made up. We are pleased to see that the Manchester Freethinkers are making headway, and we congratulate them on their prospect of having by-and-bye suitable premises of their own. The prospectus of their new hall company is already in circulation, and we hope that all friends of Freethought in the district will rally round the promoters and help them to achieve a speedy success.

MR. GEORGE PAYNE, President of the Manchester branch of the N. S. S., and a tower of strength to our party there, is keeping alive the agitation against the Free Libraries' Committee for excluding *Progress* and *Our Corner*. This conduct is being freely censured in the *Examiner*, and it will be made a test question at the November elections. Four out of nine candidates who have been interviewed have already promised to vote for the admission of our literature.

A SECOND edition of that blasphemous work "The Evolution of Christianity" is published, with additions in answer to criticisms. The name of the author, Charles Gill, is now given.

MR. W. J. RAMSEY will lecture three times at Maidstone today (Oct. 26).

THE Japanese Government have had the good sense to disestablish religion in their country, and now Shintoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity are on an equal footing. The Japanese look on the Christian missionaries as harmless curiosities, and blandly smile at their absurdities.

MR. RUSKIN has no very high opinion of missionary work. In his recent Oxford lecture he said that "the missionary office of England in Africa and America has chiefly consisted in stealing lands and exterminating their inhabitants. Our introduction of Christianity into India has only taught the natives to wear Paisley shawls instead of cashmere; and in Australia the Christian aid that we have rendered has been principally to help pious farmers to convict labor."

THE *Christian World* complains of the poor speaking at the Congregational Conference this year, "neither eloquence nor oratory being more than once or twice even approximately achieved." But what does the *C. W.* expect? There is a general decline in the mental calibre of the black army, because young men of first-rate energy and ability prefer some more honest and sensible profession.

SPURGEON complains of preachers who are too slow, preaching at the rate of two and a half miles an hour. We assure him that he has greatly exaggerated their speed. Thousands of them preach at the rate of a mile in two hours and a half.

THE Paine Memorial Hall Co., Canning Town, E., have begun work in earnest. They have just signed an agreement to purchase a large Baptist chapel in the Barking Road, which will seat about 800, and to which is attached ample ground, affording facility for enlargement if required. The Baptists have notice to quit on Dec. 25th, and it is hoped that Secular proceedings will commence on the following day. Mr. F. Millar, 130 Abbots Road, Bromley, will be pleased to hear from all in the district who are willing to help in the work.

A CONTEMPORARY, dealing with biblical characters in a humorous way, considers that both Eve and her daughters are subjects totally unsafe to argue about. Jonah, it thinks, was by no means an idiot when he got forty days' lodging and luxury free gratis for nothing out of the frightened Ninnies who inhabited Nineveh. Shadrach, it says, was undoubtedly a brave man of the fire-resisting class, and had he lived in later years might have sold himself for a fabulous amount to the firm of Milner's, who would most certainly have chopped him up into safes.

In continuing his valuable papers on "Dreams: Their Place in the Growth of Primitive Belief," in the pages of *Knowledge*, Mr. Clodd has some useful remarks on the origin of hell. He says, "The sinking of the sun below the horizon obviously led to the belief in an underworld whither the ghosts went." He points out that the Hebrew Sheol and the Greek Hades were places for the shades of good and bad alike—that as ideas of justice grew, its manifestations afterwards were looked for and the mystery of iniquity, the wicked flourishing like a green bay tree, led to the conception of a future state in which Lazarus and Dives would change places.

MR. CLODD continues: "And, as the belief travelled westward, it fell into congenial soil. The sulphurous stench about Lacus Avernus, the smoke of Vesuvius, Stromboli and Etna wreathed themselves round the hell of Christianity, and the underworld of barbaric myth, and from Talmudic writer to classic poet, to Dante and to Milton, the imagination exhausted the material of the horrible to describe the several tortures of the damned. The hell of our northern forefathers remained below the flat earth, but the cold, misty Niflheim melted away before the fiery perdition of Christian dogmas." Theology is excluded from the pages of *Knowledge*, or we don't know how much further Mr. Clodd might explain away "the Christian's consolation."

THE municipal elections in Belgium last Sunday resulted in severe defeat to the Clericals almost everywhere. In Brussels out of 10,000 electors there was a majority of over 3,000 Liberal voters. This means that in the capital of the country the Liberals are more than twice as numerous as their opponents the Clericals. The Liberals have been equally victorious in Ghent and Antwerp.

We have received from Melbourne a Secular song-book, edited by D. A. Andrade. It is preceded by a Secular catechism for the young, and, in addition to many familiar pieces, contains some verses by Australian authors, including the editor. The publication is likely to be useful.

WHO GO TO HELL?

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—MATT. vii., 13, 14.

SINCE, in addition to the above texts, we have the evangelical assurance that "many be called, but few chosen" (Matt. xx., 16); that "he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi., 16); and that "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men [than that of Jesus], whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv., 12); it is not difficult to estimate the proportion of the damned.

Taking the population of the world roughly at say one thousand three hundred and fifty millions, about three-fourths of these, as unbelievers in Christianity, must be hell-bound.

	ABOUT
Buddhists	400,000,000
Confucians	200,000,000
Hindus	175,000,000
Mahomedans	150,000,000
Savage Idolaters	35,000,000
Taoists, Jains, Parsis, etc.	15,000,000
Jews	8,000,000
Freethinkers (headlong)	7,000,000*
	1,000,000,000

This leaves the number of professing Christians of some kind or other at about 350 millions.

Of these however some 185 million Romanists and 75 millions of the Greek Church will be set down by every orthodox Protestant as rank idolaters, as bad as the Pagans, and consequently outside the pale of salvation. This leaves us the Protestant Churches with about 90,000,000 candidates for glory. But from these must be deducted such rank heretics as the Mormons, Unitarians, Universalists, Shakers, and Swedenborgians. No less than 187 sects are given in Whitaker as having conventicles in England and Wales, and of these it is feared a great number cannot be sound in the faith. We must then further deduct from those who are likely to be saved all who simply profess orthodoxy from motives of policy, all who

* In "Whitaker's Almanac" English-speaking Freethinkers are computed at one million. Considering the prevalence of Freethought among the French, Germans, Italians and Hindus, seven millions seems a moderate estimate.

only believe that they believe, and all the believers who do not consistently act up to their belief. By the time this has been done one will come to see there was much reason in the old Scotchwoman who declared she knew of no one who was likely to go to heaven except Sandy, her husband, and herself, and who, upon reflection, added, "I'm na sae sure o' Sandy."

Among the damned must of course be numbered all the countless generations of men who preceded the immaculate birth of the Savior of mankind, as well as the great majority of those who have lived since that wonderful event. When St. Theresa visited hell in the sixteenth century she found it inconveniently crowded, and it must of course be vastly worse by this time. If, as we are assured by Father Farniss, hell is situated only some 4,000 miles away in the centre of the earth, we must admire the ingenuity of Satan in finding accommodation for the numbers who visit his territory.

I am quite aware that, thanks to Freethought exposure of the merciless nature of the Christian creed, Christians have become ashamed of the wholesale damnation of those who differ from themselves. Many among the orthodox, when brought to face the question, will no doubt indignantly deny that they believe the majority of mankind will be doomed to eternal torments, or that any honest person will be so punished. But the logical necessities of their unrepudiated Bible and creeds do thus doom them.

The thirteenth article of the Church of England declares that "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, but they have the nature of sin." And the eighteenth article emphatically declares "They also are to be had accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved." Every clergyman has to subscribe his faith to these articles when ordained, though many preach a different doctrine in their pulpits, and thereby prove their perjury.

The standards of the Presbyterians are no less explicit. The Westminster Confession sets forth that the light of nature while amply sufficient for damnation is of no worth for salvation, that, indeed, only those who are elect and foreordained of God to Christ will be saved. While repudiating this, the Methodists are no less earnest in damning all unbelievers, and even believers who have not undergone the mysterious process of conversion. Not a note, sermon, or hymn of Wesley's can be quoted in favor of a more liberal view. The Baptists require immersion in water in addition, while the Salvationists escape damnation through "blood and fire."

Many ministers are leaving the hell-fire doctrines to the Salvationists simply because educated congregations refuse to listen to them. They see the brimstone business is nearly played out. But will they assert that a man is safe without any belief in the Trinity, in the inspiration of the Bible, or in the atoning blood of Jesus? If so, what need of those irrational beliefs? They ought either to consistently stand by their theory of a dogmatic salvation, or else manfully to abandon it. They have no right to the illicit advantage of holding several contradictory views at once; subscribing to creeds which damn all outsiders, preaching from their pulpits the salvation of all believers, and professing an even wider toleration when they step on a Freethought platform or converse with a Freethinker.

J. M. WHEELER.

IMPROVING THE LORD'S PRAYER.—Sam Kalleton, a member of the Arkansas Legislature, was very fond of offering amendments to bills introduced. That was the limit of his legislative capacity. One morning, after a night's hilarity, he entered the Legislative Hall just as the chaplain was asking divine aid. The old man took a chew of tobacco and listened attentively until the chaplain closed his petition with an effective recitation of the Lord's Prayer. "Mr. Speaker," said the old man, arising, "I move to strike out the words 'daily bread,' and insert 'as much bread as may be found necessary for twenty days.' We have already done enough for the flood sufferers."

PARSON MILTON, of Newburyport, was seen by a neighbor trudging home one Monday morning with a stout cod he had just bought, and was accosted with—"Mr. Milton, did you know that fish was caught on Sunday?" The minister, in his characteristic bluntness, replied, "The fish ain't to blame for that!"

A PARSON'S IDEA OF MORAL TRAINING.

At a meeting of Church school managers, teachers and parsons, at Chichester, the subject of "Moral Teaching in Church Schools" was discussed. It appears that there can be no real moral training without a religious foundation, but as there is great difficulty in securing this sound religious foundation, managers and teachers must be chosen for "religious qualification." Church parsons, as we all know, need not be chosen for religious qualification. They are put into livings by rich relatives and patrons. But as they are unable to convert the people, it is necessary that the schoolmaster should do their work for them. Hence teachers of reading, writing and arithmetic must be chosen for their religion—i.e., for sanctimonious bigotry and narrow-minded zeal for the Establishment. The teacher, too, we find, is to see that the children practise private praying, and "by the constant use of ejaculatory prayers all through his work" he is to "make the whole of it a moral training."

As illustration is sometimes better than formal argument, we beg to submit to Archdeacon Walter and his reverend colleagues the following specimen of what "moral training," according to Church parsons, might come to.

TEACHER (examining a religious arithmetic class): Lord have mercy on us! Deliver us from the Evil One! O sacred and mysterious Three in One guide our arithmetic into thy living truth. Superintend our bills of parcels! And in our hardest duodecimals and our vulgar fractions may we ever glorify thy precious name! Now, boys, how many pennies are there in a shilling, God help us?

Boys: Twelve, sir, thank the Lord.

TEACHER: And if by God's help I put ten of these pennies into the missionary box, how many should I have left? Christ help them to answer rightly!

Boys: Two, sir, if God so wills it.

TEACHER: In the name of the God of Decimals, amen! And now by the divine assistance which you must prayerfully invoke, multiply the number of pieces Christ was sold for by the number of days he was tempted of the Devil. (The boys give various answers). O Christ confound—no, I mean Christ bless you. Try this instead. Multiply five loaves and two small fishes by the divine power, and what is the result?

Boys: Twelve baskets of fragments, thank the Lord.

TEACHER: Right, my boys; always praise God's holy name. Oh, may he always bless your practice and sanctify your rule of three! And now, as a reward, go into the playground and kneel down—D.V.—and say private prayers for half an hour till the religious geography class is ready. No unholy laughing or playing, mind! O Christ, confound their knavish tricks! On Thee our hopes we fix! Bless me and my salary, and enable me to give a sound moral training by the "constant use of ejaculatory prayers" throughout my work. Amen. Go and pray. (Infant class is heard singing "Twice one are two, O Lord," "Twice two are four, O Christ," and they similarly consecrate the rest of their arithmetical tables to the glory of God and their own salvation.)

The religious geography class we presume will proceed somewhat as follows:—

PRAYERFUL TEACHER: Lord love us! What shape is the globe?

Boys: The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.

TEACHER: Capital answer, and God will reward you for your piety. But if the Government inspector asks, what will you say? O Lord, desert us not in our present trouble! Look down upon us in our distress! Enlighten us with wisdom from above, and keep thy Word for ever in our hearts!

Boy: Four-cornered, sir.

TEACHER: O Christ! A four-cornered globe!

Boy: Yes, sir; the Bible says so.

TEACHER: God —, I mean heaven help us. You'll ruin me if you talk like that to the Government inspector. He wasn't selected for religious qualification, and he'll stop the grant and say I'm incompetent. The parson may take it in, but the inspector won't, God condemn him for his infidelity. Well, boys, who made the globe?

Boys: God, sir.

TEACHER: And who made the ocean?—Lord save us from drowning in it!

Boys: Amen. God, sir.

TEACHER: And who made the land, and England and France, and Europe and Asia and Australia and everything else, bless his holy name?

Boys: God, sir.

TEACHER: Ah, now we're getting on. From secular knowledge and over-pressure of brains, good Lord deliver us!

Boys: Amen.

TEACHER: Celestial dove inspire our hearts! Where's heaven, boys?

Boy: The Lord only knows, sir.

TEACHER: Christ forgive us! The children of God must be more definite in their celestial geography. Once more, in God's name, where's heaven?

Boys, pointing: Up there, sir.

TEACHER: Right, thank the Lord. And angels defend us, where is hell? Keep us, good Lord, from Satan's clutches.

Boys: Down there, sir.

TEACHER: Praise the Lord, for flesh and blood hath not

revealed it to us, but our Father which art in heaven. And where is the village of Methem ammah-Kadesh barnea-Ephrata-Marvham? My the Lord in his infinite mercy forgive the wretches that coined these-these-these-sacred, blessed names.

Boys: Forty-seven miles north-west of Kibrothh-attaavah-Kirjathjearim, where Merodachbaladan-Nebuchadnezzar-Mahershalahashbaz-Shimshai-Shishak-Adammelech-Ephes-Dammim used to live.

TEACHER: Splendid! Won't the Bishop be delighted! O, Jehovah-elohim-nissi-shammah-tsidkeun, guide our tongues aright that not one syllable of all thy holy word may ever go astray! And where is Manchester? Lord pardon this digression, for thy servant is in the house of Baal and in the bonds of iniquity. (Dead silence.)

Boy: Please, sir, that isn't in the Bible.

TEACHER: Blessed answer. You are right, boy. Let us study the holy land first, and unholy lands afterwards. Then God will send salvation from the skies and make our religious geography shine like unto the little stars which he supplemented the mighty majesty of the sun and the saintly brightness of the midnight moon. And when did these heavenly creatures once stand still?

Boys (repeating text): "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves of their enemies."

TEACHER: Sacred Trinity, hear thy wisdom from the mouths of babes, and bless it to their everlasting benefit and to the furtherance of my worldly and heavenly prospects! Now, boys, for your home lessons to-night learn by heart the first twenty chapters of Exodus and the hundred and ninth psalm, and draw a map illustrating the forty years' wanderings, and also a map of the world, shewing the routes by which the polar bear and the Australian kangaroo and the New Zealand apteryx and the South American sloth and armadillo travelled or swam to Noah's Ark. And don't forget to obtain as many signatures as you can from your parents and neighbors to those petitions I gave you yesterday against over-pressure in Board Schools.

W. P. BALL.

REVIEWS.

A Visit to the Grave of Thomas Carlyle. By SALADIN. "Whitminster Secular School Inaugurations." London: W. Stewart and Co., 41 Farringdon Street, E.C.—Collectors of Carlyle literature are sure to take note of the former of these two pamphlets, which is both interesting and instinct with the personality of the writer. The latter contains the speeches of Glegg Bullock, Esq., "Saladin," "Lara," Edith Saville and G. Minsou, at the opening of the school so generously dedicated by G. Bullock, Esq., to the interests of Secularism.

The Agnostic Annual, 1885. Cattell and Co., Fleet Street.—Contains articles by Moncure Conway, Dr. Aveling, W. W. Collins, Ignotus and others, and a vigorous poem by "Lara" on "Giordano Bruno." "Saladin's" name is conspicuous by its absence. There is a short paper bearing the signature of Dr. W. B. Carpenter, which we fancy we have seen in some magazine before. Thomas Mead contributes a capital translation from Victor Hugo. We notice that a monthly magazine entitled the *Agnostic* is to be published by Cattell and Co. in January, and is to be conducted "on high-class principles," whatever they may be.

PROFANE JOKES.

To an epitaph on a husband and wife in an English graveyard this holy text is added: "Their warfare is accomplished."

EVELINA has made her first pun. "If everything in heaven is so golden," she says, "is that why the guilty get in so easily?"

AN irreverent Englishman asserts that whatever theological differences of opinion there may be between his brethren and sisters north of the Tweed, they are united on the broad basis of eating peppermints during divine service.

REV. J. D. FULTON, of Brooklyn, exclaimed: "Place me upon the polar iceberg, where no verdure greets the eye, and where naught but the white bear's growl can be heard." And he was disgusted when a deep voice replied, "Amen!"

A PARSON, reading the burial service, was very much annoyed at a small boy who sat on a wall close by, amusing himself by whistling. The poor parson bore it as long as he could, but at last, much to the astonishment of all, he gave vent to his feelings by saying, all in one breath: "I heard a voice from heaven saying—Knock that young devil off the wall!"

"WHAT is that invisible power," asked an Austin Sunday-school teacher, "that prevents the wicked man from sleeping, that causes him to toss about on his pillow; and what should he do to enjoy that peace that passes all understanding?" "Go to the drug-store and buy some insect powder. Ma sent me for a pennyworth last Wednesday, and we haven't felt—" Johnny Spilkins would have gone into particulars as to the further

workings of the "invisible power," if his sister, who is a little older, and has ten times as much sense, hadn't pulled him down.
 DO CHRISTIANS BELIEVE?—A young lady read to her class in a Sunday-school the declaration, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47). One of the little scholars immediately inquired, "Is that true,

teacher; is it really so?" "Oh, yes," replied the teacher, "it is surely true, for Christ says so, and whatever he says is true." "Then you are saved, are you no?" asked the interested scholar. "I hope so," was the reply. "Hope so!" exclaimed the child; "why, I thought you told me just now it was sure enough?"

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