

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. Wheeler.

Vol. V.—No. 9.]

MARCH 1, 1885.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 109.



SATAN'S PANORAMA.

"And the devil taking him up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time."—LUKE iv., 5.

THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

THE fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon have set the British public in a patriotic fever. Our empire is at stake, say the Jingoës, and England must make a desperate effort to "smash the Mahdi." That will terrify all our enemies, and we shall be free to go on appropriating the world at our leisure. Others, who are slightly ashamed of this miserable mixture of bombast and cowardice, affirm that Christendom is threatened with another Mohammedan invasion, and that England, as the champion of civilisation, must stem the barbarian torrent. These monitors are aided by the clergy, who are vigorously beating the drum ecclesiastic. The Archbishops and Bishops have issued various forms of prayer for the safety and victory of our soldiers, and done their best to assure their flocks that our cause is patronised by the Almighty. Only one of these right reverend fathers in God has even hinted that the people we are going to massacre belong to the same human family as ourselves. The Bishop of Peterborough has "ventured to suggest" that in our prayers we should "give a thought" (nothing more) to the wives and children of the enemy. What a beautiful result of eighteen centuries of "Our Father which art in heaven"!

Among the minor sky-pilots the Rev. Hugh Hanna, of St. Enoch's, Belfast, has distinguished himself by the folly and ferocity of his sentiments. This charitable apostle of the meek and lowly Jesus has just preached a rousing sermon on the appropriate text, "Think not I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Mohammedanism, he remarked, "was one of the greatest barriers to the progress of Christian civilisation,"

and "God had now laid it on Britain to humble the pride of Mohammedanism, and to prove that the power of Christian civilisation is the dominant power on the earth."

No doubt Mohammedanism is, and always has been, a barrier to the spread of Christianity; for its adherents have an awkward knack of fighting, and they scarcely ever submit to Christian impudence without a desperate struggle. Nay, they sometimes retaliate, and afford the world the ludicrous spectacle of Christianity screaming against the universe for permitting its insolence to be chastised. Further, as Mr. Bosworth Smith has shown, the Mohammedan missionaries beat the Christian missionaries hollow in Africa. They convert ten times as many natives, and retain them after they are converted.

It is, however, utterly false to assert that Mohammedanism is a special enemy to civilisation. The "unspeakable Turk" is bad enough, but his religion is not the cause of his corruption. His sacred book, the Koran, is not half as cruel and filthy as the Bible. When Christendom was peopled by priests and slaves; when it was overshadowed by the darkest cloud of ignorance and superstition the world has ever seen; a splendid civilisation shone out in Islam, where a mosque was never built without a school beside it. Christian Spain has never equalled the prosperity and magnificence of the Moorish empire; and what Christian nation has yet eclipsed that glorious Persian empire, which for centuries boasted its astronomers, its geometricians, its historians, its philosophers, and its mighty [poets, while trade and commerce flourished in peace under the Crescent banners? It was Mohammedan learning that first broke in upon the dark night of Christian ignorance, and heralded the new day of science and philosophy.

Nor is it true that the followers of Mohammed have excelled those of Christ in cruelty and bloodshed; on the contrary, the Crescent has never gleamed over such awful atrocities as the worst that were beshone by the Cross. Go back seven centuries and compare Richard Cœur de Lion with Saladin, and see how the brutal Englishman pales before the chivalrous Saracen. Go back still farther, and read how the soldiers of the Cross revelled in blood and lust when they first wrested Jerusalem from the hands of the infidel. Gibbon says:—

"A bloody sacrifice was offered by his mistaken votaries to the God of the Christians: resistance might provoke, but neither age nor sex could mollify, their implacable rage; they indulged themselves three days in a promiscuous massacre; and the infection of the dead bodies produced an epidemical disease. After seventy thousand Moslems had been put to the sword, and the harmless Jews had been burnt in their synagogue, they could still reserve a multitude of captives, whom interest or lassitude persuaded them to spare."

After this fearful picture, let the reader turn to Gibbon's account of the recapture of the city by Saladin, who may be "deservedly praised for the glances of pity which he cast on the misery of the vanquished."

When Khartoum fell the other day the British public were regaled with another dish of "horful slorter." The Mahdi's troops had "perpetrated atrocities unparalleled since the days of Tamerlane." Women were ravished and tortured, babies were spitted on Arab spears, and the adult males of Khartoum were slaughtered by the thousand. Pulpit and press alike shrieked against these inhuman Mohammedans. But lo! these reports turn out to be pure, or rather impure, fiction; got up and circulated by Christian journals anxious to turn a dishonest penny. The future historian of our age will probably relate that, as usual, the Cross outdid the Crescent in slaughter, and added to its guilt the meanness of hypocrisy.

G. W. FOOTE.

GORDON'S RELIGION.

(Concluded from p. 62.)

We may now ask ourselves whether religion, that is belief in God, was really an ennobling, and consoling and generally beneficent factor in Gordon's life. That religion of a thoroughly genuine and fatalistic kind was a *constant* factor in shaping his thoughts and actions is certain. That the effects were beneficial may well be doubted. Those who hold the affirmative view would do well to take note of the following considerations.

(1) Gordon suffered much personal misery. Religion taught him to despise the ordinary joys of humanity. He thanked God that he had no wife and family as "ties and anchors to this earth." He described himself as "constantly in anxiety" because "the body rebels against this constant leaning on God; it is a heavy strain on it; it causes appetite to cease." His natural feelings were so crushed by this religious asceticism that, notwithstanding his good health, wonderful abilities and unprecedented successes, he constantly spoke of death as a "release from misery." Is this a state of mind to be commended or encouraged? Would not the extensive prevalence of such views be a serious evil to society? Most men would not be able to endure and overcome suffering as bravely as Gordon did.

(2) Happiness and misery, and personal character generally, are mainly constitutional. Without religion Gordon would have been Gordon still, but he would probably have been free from much of his suffering and from his fanaticism. His reason and emotions released from the theological bias would probably have found healthier employment for wiser purposes than the subjugation of brave Soudanese to a corrupt and oppressive government by foreign pashas and lawless Bashi-Bazouks.

(3) Gordon did not really believe in the God of the Bible, but in a better one, as most Christians do nowadays. The God he believed in forgave all men independently of their religious beliefs, and was directing all things for their ultimate good. The stock religions of the world, framed in barbarous ages, prevent progress in ideal religion and in practical morals. Good men have to rise above their religion and are really hampered and embarrassed by the ancient doctrines which they consequently find themselves compelled to reject one by one.

(4) Many contend that a belief in God, even if baseless, is useful to society by the self-sacrifice it causes on the part of believers like Gordon, who otherwise, it is assumed, would only study their own selfish interests. We find, however, that earnest believers in God—and we take Gordon and the Mahdi as example—are quite as ready to sacrifice others as themselves. Religion inspires both sides to mutual slaughter. Without religious excitement there would have been peace in the Soudan, and not war. This is typical of the results of the false belief called religion. It is true that false beliefs sometimes induce useful self-sacrifice; but nevertheless we protest against cheating as ruinous in many ways, and as thoroughly unfair to the supposed hero who is thus defrauded of his life or his labors under false pretences.

(5) Religion acts like the stimulus of a drug. It produces unnatural exaltation followed by unnatural depression. The power displayed is no proof of the benefit, and the occasional or exceptional benefit is no proof of the general usefulness of the excitant. Arsenic cures skin diseases and strychnine has so powerful an effect in stringing up the nerves that some doctors use it as their favorite "pick-me-up," but no one will recommend a daily diet of arsenic and strychnine. The evil results must be borne in mind as well as the good. If religion inspired the defence of Khartoum it still more certainly inspired the siege and the massacre. Christians who disapprove of this massacre by the Mahdi's troops ought to remember that it was in exact accordance with the instructions which God gave to Moses and Joshua. If Christians believe that religion rightly sanctioned and enjoined massacre as a duty in one case, why not in another also?

(6) Our "Christian hero" drew his greatest comfort from the doctrine of fatalism. He believed that everything happened precisely as God wills it and was fixed and inevitable beforehand; so that no man could escape from his fate or alter it in the slightest degree. A man of noble

mind may believe in theological fatalism without ruinous consequences, and may derive very great support from it, but the stimulus is not a healthy one and is apt to result, and in Gordon's case did result, in very serious evils. No one knows where fanaticism will end, since reason is put on one side. Many of Gordon's religious aberrations are known to the public, but we strongly suspect that the worst of them are suppressed in the interest of religion.

(7) Through his fatalistic mysticism and his excessive belief in God and in himself as God's personal agent, Gordon was led into deplorable errors, which in effect were great crimes. First, he was guilty of disloyalty to the British Government in committing them to a war with the Mahdi, the exact opposite of the policy which he undertook to carry out. He allowed himself to be carried away by bad temper at the Mahdi's rejection of his overtures, and by chivalric sympathy for the imperilled inhabitants and garrison of Khartoum, and by love of power and action and of adulation of a touching and inspiring kind. All these became summed up by his religious methods into a thorough belief in himself as divinely inspired to smash the Mahdi and subdue the Soudan. God and *Kismet* were all in all. Hence his instructions and his pledges were set at naught. He forgot that religion is not reason, and romance not statesmanship. Secondly, by preventing the early submission of Khartoum to the Mahdi, and by waging war along the Nile, he brought about the massacre of the people whom he sought to save.* Thirdly, he will have caused the slaughter of many thousands of Soudanese patriots, whom he commended for their rebellion against the "worst form of brigandage," and he has led us against our will into a useless war of vengeance and *prestige*. The enormous expenditure of British treasure and blood, and the possible serious disasters to our forces, are to our mind of less importance than the moral guilt involved in unjustifiable bloodshed. What have these brave Soudanese done to us that we should invade their country and slay them by thousands? Why are British lives to be sacrificed in crushing a wild but natural and honorable revolt against intolerable oppression? Because our Christian Government foolishly trusted its honor and its policy to the hands of a religious fanatic who believed his own impulses to be the inspiration of the Almighty, and who hence readily entered into rash and Quixotic enterprises and dragged others into them in defiance of common sense and international justice. When the glamor of Christian Jingoism has passed away and calm judgment becomes possible, our war against the Soudanese will be seen to have been one of the most senseless and wicked we have ever waged. If Khartoum had not fallen we should only too probably have been led into still graver difficulties, for our conquest of the Soudan would have had to be permanent and wide-spread, whereas now we can retire as soon as we have glutted our Christian wrath with a sufficient amount of Arab blood. And for the desolation and the anarchy that we leave behind us, religion will have been largely responsible by its misleading and overpowering influence on Gordon's mind, by its actual encouragement of Jingoism, and by the cowardly silence of its professors when lessons of peace and brotherhood are so urgently needed to stem the furious tide of conquest and destruction.

W. P. BALL.

REVIEW.

Our Corner. March. Freethought Publishing Company.—Mrs. Besant supplies two continued papers to the current number of her magazine, one on "The Redistribution of Political Power," showing the effects of the Bill of 1832, the other dealing with the important trial for the Knowlton pamphlet. A criticism on Evolution as its Own End, by "D.," is a masterly defence of Utilitarianism as against an attack of Mr. Punnett's in the quarterly journal *Mind*. M. D. Conway writes on the Life of Emerson by Oliver Wendell Holmes; and a Church of England clergyman, who "hopes soon to adopt some more honorable calling" shows (under the *nom de plume* of Alexander Dunbar) how slight are the duties required from ordinary clergymen, and how disproportionately they are paid. He proposes among other things that the immense wealth of the Church should be applied to the purposes of education and of friendly societies. Altogether it is an interesting number.

* If, as later reports have it, there has been no massacre, the folly of Gordon's policy would only be the more completely demonstrated.

ACID DROPS.

A CORRESPONDENT thinks the idea that persons have a "father which is in heaven" was probably first taught by priests for the benefit of their illegitimate children. It is hard to get along without a dad of some sort; and as these clerical progenitors were usually fugitive lovers, and reluctant to stump up their half-crowns for the maintenance of John or Mary, a putative father became a handy institution.

A SYSTEM of superstition which pays its Impostor-in-Chief fifteen thousand pounds per annum was started by a few sailors and bumboat women.

ÆSTHETIC lions refused the toothsome Daniel. Men less fastidious have smacked their chops at a common missionary.

THE negroes on the Cameroons River are, according to the correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette*, getting converted wholesale. The effect, however, of a too liberal dose of the "love of God" will probably be the opposite to that intended; for there can be scarcely a doubt that the unfortunate blacks will go in a body to hell. If this Christian God, they argue, is so amiable, there can be no necessity for praying to him for favors; and all their energies are directed to propitiate the Devil. Unless the missionaries are prepared to have the blood of an entire people on their heads, they had better turn from the error of their ways, and present the bloodthirsty Jahveh to their converts as that God presents himself in the Bible.

THE *Christian Herald* tells its readers to "grip somebody, and bring them to Christ," and so carry out the command in the parable, "compel them to come in." It narrates the case of one young man who "gripped" a passer-by and took him into a church and so got him converted. We are afraid that some worldly-minded people will resent the gripping process in an equally forcible way, and the pupils of the *C. H.* may then pose with blackened eyes and bruised noses as martyrs for the sake of Christ.

THE same paper tells us of a sinner who "was saved by the very skin of his teeth," by crying out just as he was dying, "Lord Jesus, save me!" "As the last word fell from his lips his spirit passed away." Eternal salvation was secured by the utterance of a moment. If the man had died five seconds earlier, or had his attention drawn aside for a moment, he would have had to pass eternity in hell.

THE *Christian Herald* also tells us of a "railway catastrophe averted through prayers." But the catastrophe occurred, only no passengers lost their lives. It would be just as reasonable to say that prayer broke the bridge and hung the engine and tender over the river as to assert that prayer saved the rest of the train from following.

THE Baptists of Long Island are rather troubled about the case of a wooden-legged convert. Some thought the wooden leg ought to have been immersed, others not. The latter prevailed, and the artificial limb was removed before the owner was baptised. We trust that the man has not imperilled the salvation of his soul or of his wooden leg by this incomplete immersion.

AN article on the Marriage Law in the *Church Times* points out the lack of definiteness in Church teaching on such questions as "may a divorced person marry again?" or "should the Communion be allowed to persons who have married within the forbidden degrees?" It also shows that the table of prohibition might be reduced to half its present bulk without the omission of a single relationship. This is because we no longer make the distinction between relationship through a father and that through a mother, a distinction which was very general in ancient usage, as shown by Mr. Wheeler in his papers on "Primitive Marriage" in *Progress*.

AT Smethwick, Sarah Stanley of West Bromwich, was fined £5 and costs for fortune-telling, and the paragraph announcing the fact is headed "Superstition in the Black Country." Yet all over Christian Europe black divines live in clover by a kind of divination, a supposed knowledge of what will happen in another world, about which they know less than Sarah Stanley knows of the future of her "superstitious victims."

THE Rev. H. B. Robinson asserts that "Peter said what scientific men say, that the earth will be destroyed by fire." We should like to know the names of those scientific men. Men like Sir William Thomson rather think the earth will gradually part with its heat and cool down.

REV. W. H. DURNALL, a leading Presbyterian divine of Georgia, has become insane; whether through study of the Bible or not the reports are silent.

AN attempt was made the other day to sell "a well-bred Berkshire sow," belonging to a farmer at Farningham in Kent, for extraordinary tithe. The farmer appears to have been a bit of

a practical joker, and when the auctioneer arrived to look at the sow he so managed that the unwelcome intruder got splashed up to the eyes in a pig puddle. This was rather coarse work, but the farmer's next device had a spice more of humor in it. He lathered the sow with four pounds of soft soap. In the circumstances, the auctioneer, who did not like being laughed at, gave up the attempt to remove or sell this extraordinary tithe pig. This attempt to distrain makes up a total of thirty cases in which proceedings have been necessary to collect the extraordinary tithe in Farningham and adjoining parishes.

WE read that at Bethshan Faith-healing House "some touching cases of insanity" were "put into the Lord's hands." Certainly. This is done at every meeting, and there can be no lack of such cases while belief in faith-healing retains adherents.

THE Rev. W. W. Wentworth, rector of Distington, has been found guilty of adultery, but as his wife failed to prove "cruelty" also she was unable to obtain a divorce.

JOSEPH WOODS, a Salvationist, has been fined £1 for indecently assaulting Miss Dantzenburg, also a member of the Salvation Army, while escorting her home at eleven o'clock on Sunday night. Woods, who at one time was secretary to the Army at Boston, said that it was the custom that married men like himself should see the young women home after services. The magistrates severely censured the "gross misconduct" of the defendant, and said the case afforded a striking example of the imprudence of allowing such children out on winter nights.

SOME wicked wags have hoaxed "General Booth." He recently received a letter informing him that if he went to Liverpool Street Station he would find a horse and trap sent there by the Lord to be dedicated to his use. The great man sent a force of his most trusted sodgers to take possession. On inquiry they found a doll's clothes-horse and a mouse-trap awaiting the "General."

THE *Rock* tells us of a ritualistic clergyman who, although ordered off by the parent, kept up a clandestine correspondence with the young daughter and advised her to deceive her friends in order to come and confess to him in London. When charged with this, the reverend gentleman was unable to recollect giving such advice, but when his handwriting was submitted to him he did not charge any one with forgery. We quite agree with the *Rock* that a certain section of the clergy—and a very large section indeed, in our opinion—"seem to become incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood."

M. COUSIN, as Grand Master of the French Freemasons, has written to the Prince of Wales, who is Grand Master in England, to ask that the exclusion of the members of the Grand Orient of France from all fellowship with English lodges might be reconsidered. The pharisaic British branches of this universal brotherhood ostracise their French brothers because, in 1877, the Grand Orient cancelled the clause requiring belief in a "Great Architect of the Universe," so that Atheists might be admitted. The Grand Lodge of England, with the usual truthfulness of bigoted Christians, declared that this was "an express negation" of belief in deity, and, with the usual tolerant charity of Christians, refused to recognise those who had not gone through the deistic test. As the Prince of Wales now reaffirms this decision, the Council of the Grand Orient will appeal to Freemasons throughout the world. It is expected that a great international meeting will be held in London.

THE Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham, in his Lenten Pastoral, warmly denounces all Freemasons whether English or continental. He calls the latter Atheists, and says of the former that "by the very word 'architect' they already implicitly deny the true God, who is the creator of heaven and earth." If they continue to refuse to recognise the Atheistic Grand Orient of France he declares that very refusal shows that though they may have some regard for the aforesaid architect, they have none for Christ, since they do not equally refuse to consort with "Jews, Turks and infidels." The average English Philistine, who has become a Freemason with the object of gaining convivial society, must feel highly flattered by the attention his craft receives from these bishops.

WE find from the *War Cry* that "General" Booth is starting a new "cavalry corps," which will travel in huge vans fitted up with sleeping-berths. Mrs. Booth speaks of Christ parading up and down Palestine "with the rag-tag and bob-tail at his heels" like the Salvation Army. The Italian Corps tells us that they "kept hold of God" and that "the Devil has been raging again; he never kicks for nothing, and we are praising God for victory through the Blood." At Newcastle "a dead rat, well steeped in mud, found a resting place for a brief space upon a brother's face," and at Hyde, the soldiers of the Lord were "caught in a storm of rotten onions and oranges." At Deeping the Army is "blazing away like a house on fire" so that "the Devil might get measured for a coffin at once." "Major" Davey advertises for a

"real, good, hallelujah scribe" who "must be properly saved" and good at shorthand.

THE *Methodist Times* calls attention to an advertisement of "A Holy Ghost Free and Easy" in the *War Cry*. If the proceedings are as uproarious as those described as happening on the day of Pentecost—Oh what must it be to be there!

THE same paper advocates the establishment of a Methodist Salvation Army. The gospel of hubbub is such a screaming success among roughs in search of excitement that the Salvationist attempt to galvanise the dying body of Christianity is finding imitators in all directions. Christianity may be expected to expire amid maniacal convulsions similar to those which attended its birth.

NORMAN ARTHUR has been "reviving" in Scotland, and purloining goods. He is now doing sixty days in Perth prison, and on his release he will be "wanted" for other offences.

THAT catchpenny paper, *Sunday Words*, which is sold on the blessed Sabbath in direct defiance of the holy laws against Sunday trading, is very indignant at our disregard of the Blasphemy Laws. It calls on "the authorities" to put us down, with the true instinct of a Christian who, when he is worsted in discussion, generally yearns for the constable. It charitably proposes that we should be sentenced to penal servitude for life, like dynamiters, and flings about its elegant abuse in the most pious and edifying manner, calling us wicked, immoral, indecent, grossly blasphemous, and so forth. All this religious Billingsgate simply means that our Christian contemporary is afraid of competition, and wishes to see Freethought papers thrust out of the market, so that the purchasers may have Hobson's choice—Christian prints or nothing.

POOR General Stewart's victory was telegraphed to America, and it arrived as the Synod of Niagara was sitting. The news was received with loud cheers, and all the godly present then joined in the doxology. This is the beautiful result of eighteen centuries of "peace on earth and good will among men."

OUR troubles in the Soudan are after all a small matter. We have it on the authority of the *Christian Herald* that there are Scripture prophecies which indicate that Britain is to undergo the loss of "Ireland and India and its other colonies" about the period 1885 to 1887. Mr. Baxter, the editor (author of *Louis Napoleon the Destined Monarch of the World*) being in telegraphic communication with the governor of the universe, our statesmen will of course prepare for the inevitable.

THERE is no truth in the report that Archbishop Benson has ordered prayers to be offered up for the Mahdi and the Soudanese in obedience to the injunction: "Pray for those that despitefully use you." Like the Mahdi, he only prays for his own side, but as yet the Mahdi has got the best of it.

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE lectures are being delivered on Tuesday evenings at Dashwood House, Bishopsgate Street. Questions are allowed if they are of a *bonâ fide* character; that is, we suppose, if they are mild and easy to answer. The Rev. H. Sinclair Paterson appears to be the moving spirit, and the committee nearly all hail from City banks. It looks like a banking concern.

IN the Rev. David Price, curate of St. Thomas's Church, Wigan, the Midland Christian Evidence Society have a worthy exponent of the creed that "thinketh no evil." Lecturing upon infidelity he declared that the barest mention of its doctrines would "pollute this sacred edifice and outrage your feelings," and then, with the tenderest regard to truth and feeling, proceeded: "I will merely state, in passing, that their principles licensed theft, cruelty and hypocrisy, and allowed the gratification of every vicious propensity. This motley gang of infidels did not, in their lives, rise above their opinions. Some of them, as Paine and Bollingbroke, were drivelling drunkards and shameless libertines; others, as Rousseau and Voltaire, literally wallowed in shame and crime; even the best of them, Gibbons (*sic*) and Hume, the great historians, are notorious for misrepresenting facts, for corrupting the texts of books, and for perverting history." The Rev. David Price betrays too much ignorance for us to expect him to repeat his kindly assertions outside the coward's castle of his sacred edifice.

ONE night the Laird of Kingkettle was reading a chapter from the Bible to his family, "And Solomon had three hundred she-asses," etc. "And," said the laird, looking up, "I think Solomon was an ass himself. Wad it no hae paid him far better tae hae kept three hundred milk kye, and sent the milk tae E'nboro?"

TRAVELLERS of experience regard sleeping cars as snore's arks.

THE first recorded case of hair-splitting in disputed cases was Solomon's.

ASTONISHED Cockney: "Hof course there's a hel; wot would the halphabet be without a hel?"

WHY was Pharaoh's daughter like a broker?—She got a little 'prophet' from the rushes on the banks.

THE LAY OF THE BOARD SCHOOL TEACHER.

I teach the Bible ev'ry day
Against my inclination,
Must either tread "the narrow way,"
Or lose my situation.

The children's memories I cram
With verses called "beatitudes."
The ten commandments (by I. Am)
And other dreary platitudes.

I teach the boys to love their "frères,"
By Jacob's bright example;
The way they should obey their "mères,"
By giving Christ's—for sample.

The parts obscene the Board omit
From their approved selection—
For boys and girls they are not fit,
Not being quite perfection.

But Jahveh, Jesus, and the Dove
And their relation, Polly,*
Old Nick, and hell, and "Heavenly love"
I teach, till melancholy.

If, bigot, you'd my feelings share,
Please use imagination—
Suppose you have to starve, or swear
Your creed a fabrication.

ONE OF 'EM.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

GOD.—The God of the Unitarians is a bachelor; the Deity of the Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, and other orthodox Protestant sects, a spouseless father with one son, who is identical with himself.—*Madame H. P. Blavatsky*, "Isis Unveiled," vol. ii., p. 2; 1877.

CHURCHES.—All national institutions of Churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolise power and profit.—*T. Paine*, "Age of Reason."

THE CHRISTIAN MIRACLES.—Just think what the "reporters" of the New Testament miracles were. So far from being qualified judges, they were avowedly ignorant men, in an age which, considering its comparatively advanced civilisation, was one of exceptional credulity and superstition. In their eyes every phenomenon they could not otherwise explain was caused by the will of some being superior to nature. The consequence was, miracles were to them—what they still are to all people similarly situated—a part of the ordinary occurrences of life. Every illness, mental or bodily, was the work of evil spirits, and the chief remedy was in the hands of the magician, who could exorcise these spirits.—*Henry Coke*, "Creeds of the Day," vol. i., p. 178.

ANTIQUITY OF THE VEDAS.—Whether any fragment of our Bible can compare with them in antiquity is not known. But we do know that, whilst the oldest manuscript of the Hebrew Bible dates from the tenth century after Christ, every line of the Vedic scripture is probably as it was three thousand years ago; and certainly every word and every syllable was counted, and stood as it now stands, six hundred years before the Christian era.—*Henry Coke*, "Creeds of the Day," vol. i., p. 76.

THE MESSIAH.—According to the prophecies, the Messiah could only spring from David. When, therefore, Jesus, a Galilean, whose lineage was utterly unknown, had acquired the reputation of being the Messiah, what was more natural than that tradition should, under different forms, have ascribed to him a Davidical descent, and that genealogical tables to correspond should have been formed to support his pretensions? Matthew seems to have adopted the line of kings of the house of David, but Luke's genealogy appears to be altogether a fabrication.—*D. F. Straus*, "New Life of Jesus."

THERE was quite a row at a recent meeting in a Richmond, U.S., chapel vestry between Uncle Mose and Deacon Gabe Snodgrass. "You is the biggest black rascal in Austin," said Deacon Snodgrass. "You is a heap bigger one," returned Mose, placing his hand on the ivory handle of his umbrella. "Bredderen," interposed Parson Blodsoe, "you talk as if dar was nobody else present 'ceptin yersefs."

THE Rev. Mr. Munro, of Westray, one day preaching on the flight of Lot from Sodom, said: "The honest man and his family were ordered out of the town, and charged not to look back: but the auld carline, Lot's wife, looked owre her shoulther, for which she was smote into a lump of salt." And he added, with great unction, "O, ye people of Westray, if ye had had her, mony a day since, ye wad hae putten her in the parritch-pat!"

* Roman Catholics will please pardon this familiarity.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 1, Assembly Rooms, Grosvenor Street, Manchester; at 11, "Christianity and Poverty;" at 3, "Religion and Dynamite;" at 6.30, "Cheap Salvation."

MARCH 8, Milton Hall; 15, Northampton; 17, Walworth; 22, Grimsby; 29, Glasgow.

APRIL 12, Milton Hall; 19, Hall of Science; 26, Hall of Science.

MAY 3, Hall of Science; 10, Milton Hall; 17, Hall of Science; 24, N. S. S. Conference; 31, Manchester.

JUNE 7, Liverpool; 14, Plymouth.

CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL business communications to be addressed to the Manager, M. W. J. Ramsey, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C. Literary communications to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C.

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct 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.—E. Drain, E. Sims, Edwin T. Watson, G. H. Cramlington, D. P. T. Entwistle.

F. PYFORD.—Thanks. There must be some give and take in these matters. A single Freethinker cannot get on a School Board and carry everything before him.

J. CUMMING.—Every little helps. Cuttings are always useful.

J. BENT.—Dickens's Guide to London is a very good one. Order of any bookseller.

R. SCHEUMAN AND ANON.—We thank you.

W. T. BARRY (Canada).—Very pleased to hear from you and to receive the papers.

F. H. HART.—Received with many thanks. We will write to the gentleman.

W. LOVEDAY.—We are not aware who "Mr. Bradlaugh's lecturers at Northampton" are, and therefore we cannot tell whether any or all of them have been converted. You had better ask Mr. Bradlaugh himself. We have heard many such stories before, and all were false. We have been converted ourselves several times—according to report.

F. W. CRESSY sends stamps for his overweight letter.

STANBACH BELIEVER.—Our Christian Government's treatment of poor soldier's wives is nothing novel. What can you expect? Tommy Atkins is only a man and a brother in church and in the grave. Christianity has always as much hypocrisy as "suits its book."

J. E. ROOSE.—The satire is a little too obvious.

CAXTON.—Thanks. Do you mean that Charles Dickens is the editor of *Sunday Words*?

J. TIMBS.—Sorry you had to wait for "Jonah's Excursion." There was a slight delay in printing. It is ready now and selling rapidly.

A. J. VENIS, 9 Charlotte Street, Blackfriars, S.E., supplies the *Freethinker* and other literature.

H. A. KEMP wants the June ('84) number of *Progress*. Can any friend oblige?

AN ATHEIST.—The Rig-Veda of the Hindus, the Shoo-king of the Chinese and the Egyptian Book of the Dead are all older than any portion of the Bible. An halfpenny stamp is insufficient for letters.

G. COCKMAN.—Your notice is too late. Mrs. Besant's lecture will be delivered before the *Freethinker* is in our reader's hands.

J. HETHERINGTON.—Your converted shopmate, who fears that he may love his wife and children more than Christ, is on the broad road to prison or the asylum. Any man who loves a dead Jew more than his own living family has a screw loose somewhere.

H. HUNT.—Thanks. See "Sugar Plums."

A. WILTSHIRE.—What do you mean by "the greatest Protestant country in Europe?" Explain, and we will reply.

PERSONNE.—We are much obliged.

J. B. SHAW.—The statement that the clergy are not state-paid is one of those quibbles which Mr. Gladstone's peculiar conscience lends itself to. The clergy have no right to a single halfpenny except that given by Act of Parliament. If they are not state-paid, neither is a policeman.

J. ANDERSON.—Pope Honorius was condemned as a heretic by the Council of Constantinople 680 A.D. This does not diminish his infallibility.

J. HARE.—We do not know of any portrait of Charles Southwell. Perhaps some reader could inform you.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Evening News—Palladium of Labor—Citizen—Liverpool Echo—South London Chronicle—Birmingham Daily Post—Boston Investigator—Truthseeker—Sunderland Daily Echo—Staffordshire Sentinel—Liverpool Daily Post—Guardian—Herts and Essex Observer—Hoyland Guardian—Lucifer—Clerkenwell Press—Sheldrake's Aldershot Gazette—War Cry.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

We offer a PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best Comic Bible Sketch, and ANOTHER PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best Comic Religious Sketch on a topic of current interest.

The drawings should be done in pen and pure black ink on white card-board. They should be carefully done with all the lines well distinct, so as to be reproduced by the photo-zinc process. Washes or colors must not be used. The drawings must of course be original, not copies; and they should be about one-third larger than our ordinary single or double column size.

The first competition will close on March 1. The winner of each prize will be announced in the *Freethinker* under his own name or a *nom de plume*, whichever he prefers.

A remittance according to value will be made to the owner of any other drawing which we may publish.

SUGAR PLUMS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the somewhat inclement weather, large audiences welcomed Mr. Foote last Sunday at Liverpool. The hall was terribly crowded in the evening. Several opponents, with no pity on themselves or the audience, insisted on having their say. One of them was evidently a Salvationist, for he several times called the lecturer "Mr. Booth." He murdered the Queen's English in the most extraordinary manner, and kept his audience in roars of laughter. One of his lapses was extremely funny. Mr. Foote, in commenting on the Bishop of Liverpool's attempt to egg England on to further bloodshed in Egypt, remarked that he would sooner see the Bishop himself extinguished than any Arab in the Soudan. The audience greeted this observation with loud cheers; but the Salvationist thought it a cruel remark. "Mr. Foote is very hard on the Bishop," he said, "but I don't agree with him; I don't want to see the Bishop distinguished." And the best of it was, the poor fellow couldn't understand what the audience was laughing about.

THE Chatham Branch of the N. S. S. deserves great credit for its exertions. Spreading Freethought is a very difficult task in such a bigoted place. Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant have delivered political lectures to good audiences, but Mr. Foote's lecture on Monday last was the first of a more pronounced character. Grave doubts were entertained as to the success of such a hazardous experiment; but a capital audience assembled, listened to the lecture with unflinching interest, laughed and applauded every two or three minutes and finally passed a resolution against the Blasphemy Laws without a single dissenter. Mr. Boorman and his fellow committee-men are encouraged to go on "pegging away."

THE following is an extract from a letter written to one of our readers by a Christian friend, who has resided in America for four years:—"With regard to the chapels and churches, there are a pretty good number of them, and they are as a rule—in fact almost universally—very much more beautifully fitted up inside than in England. Splendid carpets all over, and other comforts and luxuries abound. The majority of both the well-to-do and poorer classes here never think of going to a place of worship under any circumstances, unless they have to go to a funeral. Even marriages are generally solemnised at home. On Sundays you can see crowds hurrying to the theatres both afternoons and evenings, and with the exception of the Roman Catholics going to mass early in the morning, it is very few you can see going to churches or chapels."

MR. RICHARD CONGREVE, on behalf of his fellow Positivists has issued an early protest against the war in the Soudan. But what avail protests from unbelievers when the Christian Church, through its official representative the Archbishop of Canterbury, gives its sanction to slaughter?

THE *Philosophic Enquirer* of Madras, in an article on Christian Missions, declares that Secular education and Christianity have by no means progressed side by side in India. On the contrary, even the missionary schools prove "hot-beds of infidelity" instead of covert factories.

EX-REV. GEORGE MILN of Chicago, who is now starring as an actor, was recently interviewed by a reporter of the *Daily Record*, and among the questions asked by the inquisitive pumper of the press was the following:—"Do you object to stating why you left the pulpit, sir?" "Not at all. I quit preaching because I had nothing to preach. A good reason wasn't it?" and the actor smiled pleasantly. "In other words, I read the modern Materialistic philosophy until my confidence in the supernaturalistic dogmas of the Church was impaired. Like Othello, I found my occupation gone, and quietly addressed myself to building up a new career."

AT an Indian murder trial the chief justice solemnly inquired of an aboriginal witness as follows: "Red Buffalo, do you believe that if a man die he shall live again?" "Not by a damned sight," was the profane reply, "Red Buffalo no fool. Indian no die but once; once dead always dead." Red Buffalo's testimony was not received.

THOSE who have been astonished by the reports of "Major" Pearson's "miraculous" cases at Hanley should read the paper on Miracles, Revivals and Faith-Healing in the March number of *Progress*. They will find sufficient evidence that so far from the "Major" being correct in boasting "there has been nothing like it since the day of Pentecost," such phenomena are common

accompaniments to religious excitement and are to be found in all religions.

THE *Athenæum*, in a review of Canon Rawlinson's new book on "Egypt and Babylon," says: "The best modern criticism and research goes to show more and more clearly that Daniel was not written under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar nor even by a man who knew much about the times of this king. The statement that the four Jews became men of importance in the empire of Babylon is a pleasing fiction, the like of which is found in all Jewish history. Joseph goes to Egypt and becomes second in the kingdom. Esther, from an obscure position, is made queen, so likewise the captive Darius appear as a ruler of Babylon."

A NEW letter of Charles Lamb's has recently been published in which he says: "I am determined my children shall be brought up in their father's religion, if they can find out what it is."

LARGE public meetings at Pembroke, Carnarvon, and other towns in Wales, have passed enthusiastic resolutions calling on the Government to take up the question of disestablishment. The time is nearly ripe for separation of Church and State in Wales and in Scotland, and this will be the natural preliminary to disestablishment in England.

THE Archbishop of York says that the law of progress is "I must overcome," whilst that of the spirit is "I must obey." We are glad to see the antithesis between progress and religion thus acknowledged. Yes, the distinction is admirable. The Stephensons and Darwins "overcome;" the Jesuses and Pauls "obey."

MR. BRADLAUGH'S candidature for Finsbury has horrified Parson Playford, the chaplain of Holloway Gaol, and raised on end his remaining grey hairs. Last Sunday he introduced the subject in his sermon. He told his unfortunate congregation that Atheism threatened to reign in England, and if it triumphed the glorious gospel would be prohibited in all public places; nay, the time might come when even the poor prisoners would have no chaplain to watch over them and pray for them. The poor old gentleman was deeply affected, and we understand that his washing-bill this week includes an extra dozen pocket-handkerchiefs.

READERS of *Progress* will not complain of want of variety. Mr. Foote continues his "Prisoner for Blasphemy," describing his incarceration in Newgate. Those who enjoy a keen, intellectual encounter will appreciate the vigorous criticism of a critic in *S. Britton's* paper, "Is Shelley a Great Poet?" "Faith-Healing" comes in *apropos* of the Staffordshire miracles. Mr. Collins criticises "The Duke of Argyll on Science." Mr. Wheeler concludes his papers on "Primitive Marriage," the present number illustrating the customs of marriage by capture and by purchase among various races. Dr. Aveling shows how far chemical science has succeeded in producing organic forms. Among lighter pieces are—a story by B. V., entitled "Thrice Seen;" an amusing exposure of Christian Schools, by an Usher; a lively paper on Literary Rejections; and some short poem.

MISS CONSTANCE HOWELL, who is ever foremost in these matters, sends us £1 towards the funds of the Society for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. We hope her good example will be extensively imitated.

THE Liberal Association of New South Wales announce as their basic principle the complete secularisation of the State. They have already achieved the success of obtaining the opening of art galleries on Sundays.

CONFUCIUS AND CHRISTIANITY.

As a rule, biographers and translators are partial to their subject. Dr. James Legge, of the Chinese Mission, who through the medium of the Chinese classics and other publications has done much to bring Confucius before an English audience, is an exception. He is biased against his author, and takes every occasion to disparage the Chinese teacher.

As the *Edinburgh Review*, in noticing his translation of the Chinese classics, remarked: "Words are to lose their wonted sense, and a resemblance as clear as the sun in heaven is to be pronounced a divergence as wide as the poles, rather than a single anticipation of Christianity shall be found in Confucius" (No. 264, p. 305). This bias animates a tract on "Christianity and Confucianism compared in their Teaching of the Whole Duty of Man," by Dr. Legge, which is published by the Religious Tract Society as No. 18 of the "Present Day Tracts," designed to meet the scepticism of the age. Confucius, according to Dr.

Legge, was a very defective teacher. "There was no glow of piety in his utterances. He never called his disciples to join with him in adoring God." "He had no gift or aptitude for anything like theology." Poor heathen! how much he is to be pitied for having no gift for theology!

This poor pagan did not teach with authority. He did not arrogate the claim of being "the way, the truth, and the life," or call all that went before him "thieves and robbers." He was modest enough to describe himself as a transmitter, not a maker. He said: "I am not one who was born in the possession of knowledge. I am one who is fond of antiquity, and earnest in seeking it there. The sage and the man of perfect virtue, how dare I rank myself with them? It may simply be said of me that I strive to become such without satiety, and teach others without weariness."* How, then, can he be mentioned in the same breath with a divine teacher?

Dr. Legge admits that "when we turn to the Confucian teaching of the duties of man to other men, we ought to accord it much appreciation. It is at once comprehensive and minute. The analysis of society into the five relations† covers the whole ground. And the duties incumbent on those relations are enjoined with explicitness and point."

But what avail was it to teach the relations between man and man when he knew nothing of the relations between man and God. We are told in the Confucian analects that "The subjects on which the Master did not talk were prodigious things, feats of strength, disorder, and spiritual beings." Ke Loo asked about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master said, "While you are not able to serve man, how can you serve their spirits?" Ke Loo added, "I venture to ask about death." He was answered, "While you do not know life, how can you know about death?"‡ The poor heathen, in his blindness, knew nothing of how God had passed condemnation upon the world for the sin of Adam, and of how, four thousand years after, he would redeem the world by the sacrifice of his innocent son, who was the same as himself. He contented himself with teaching conduct instead of creed. The Rev. Dr. Legge says Confucianism "keeps the masses of the people at an awful distance from God." What blasphemy! The ruler of the universe cannot influence the Chinese because the teacher they look up to, refused to talk on subjects he knew as much about as Dr. Legge—that is precisely nothing.

Dr. Legge admits the similarity of what he calls "the silver rule" of Confucius: "What ye would not that men should do to you, do not ye do to them," which was promulgated over 500 years before the time of Jesus, to the Christian "Golden rule." He half-heartedly allows that although expressed in the negative, Confucius also understood it in its positive and most comprehensive force. But he says that the rule "was prompted chiefly by his sentiment of justice," as if that was a disparagement.

Dr. Legge makes use of the fact related in the Confucian analects, that once, when Confucius was asked concerning the doctrine of repaying injury with kindness, he answered, "With what, then, will you repay good? Recompense injury with justice, and return good for good," to show Confucian is lower than Christian morality. Now the very question shows that the doctrine of returning good for evil was known 500 years before Christ. Indeed, it was explicitly taught by Buddha and Laotse. We venture to think the answer of Confucius was a wise one. A standard that can be acted up to is better than an ideal but impracticable one.

Our missionary author repeats several times that Confucius was not a perfect character, and as he is not alleged to have been a god, that might go without saying. But this is exactly what the Chinese say of Jesus. Brought up as they are in the strictest notions of filial obedience, those who are acquainted with the Christian Scriptures are always disgusted to find the Christian hero represented as saying to his mother, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" They, like us, consider his example by no means

* Lun Yu., vii., 19—33.

† The duties of the five relations are—between father and son, affection; between ruler and subject, righteousness; between husband and wife, concord; between elders and youngers, proper distinction; and between friends, fidelity.

‡ Lun Yu., vii., 20; xi. 11.

a perfect one. It must be remembered, too, that there is a most minute chronicle of all the sayings and doings of the Chinese teacher, while the accounts of Jesus are so meagre and unreliable that it is one of the most stupid of absurdities to suppose that a man was "a perfect example" who is never exhibited as a lover, a husband, a father, or in any of the important ordinary relations of social life. If the Chinese investigate Christianity in the same spirit with which our missionaries regard Confucianism, they will be as little likely to become Christians as Dr. Legge is to turn Confucian.

J. M. WHEELER.

MOSES THE MAGNIFICENT.

BEFORE introducing "Holy Moses" to the reader of these sketches, I may be allowed to show how two midwives shaped the destinies of two nations.

It will be remembered that the Israelites multiplied at so prodigious a rate, that the king of Egypt, "who knew not Joseph" said, "Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we!" On this question of population his Majesty formed a resolution—to check it on other than Malthusian principles. His first plan was to set task-masters over the men, and afflict them nearly to death with over-work. This proved ineffective. We are led now to Ex. i., 15, and when we remember that one midwife was scarcely a sufficient staff for the lying-in hospitals of so numerous a people, we are not surprised to read of two—Mesdames Shiprah and Puah. Pharaoh called this long train of nurses before him, and asked why they had saved the male Jewveniles alive, in defiance of his decree. With the address common to ladies in all ages, they excused themselves, and promised to act differently afterwards; but yet, when a daughter of Levi "conceived and bare a son," it was not destroyed. His mother, with the supernatural penetration of a Jewess, and the unbiassed estimate of a mother, "saw that he was a goodly child," with a most orthodox nose. She hid him three months. When this was no longer practicable, she made for him an ark of bulrushes—a model of Noah's ark, we presume, but with no window for prying crocodiles to look through and be moved to tears at the sight of the "sweet little cherub" within. How he was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter is a tale as familiar as household words. Verse 5 informs us that that the princess "sent her maid to fetch it," while verse 10 of the same chapter reads: "And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son, and she called him Moses, and she (Pharaoh's daughter) said, Because I drew him out of the water." Of his youthful exploits we know but little. It is fondly supposed by the orthodox that he played under the shadow of Cleopatra's Needle, and that when the Egyptian grammar of the period has become generally intelligible, we may expect to find thereon something like this—Moses Misspharaoh. His mark. It is believed that he did not smoke.

The Egyptians, learned as they were in the arts, and, moreover, made of fine coloring clay themselves, did not invent the tobacco-pipe. Moses, however, like Jesus, kept his youthful doings dark. Like Jesus, he compensated for it afterwards by being "transfigured."

And it came to pass when Moses was grown (it took him forty years to grow, see Acts vii., 21), that he went out unto his brethren and looked on their burdens, and he spied an Egyptian boxing an Hebrew, and he looked this way and that way, and seeing no man, and being taught of God, he hit the Egyptian below the belt and killed him. Moses distinguished himself afterwards in that line. The Amalekites fell before him when he put his hands up (Exodus xviii., 8). Some may object that Moses the "meek" knew nothing of pugilism. But he mentions it surely in chap. xxi., ver. 18: "And if men strive together and one smite another with his fist," etc.

There are certain contradictions about Moses which we would like some able divine to reconcile. For instance, as to his "meekness." We fancy he could be magnificently angry. It is a question, too, whether or not he was truthful, but he told the Lord to his face, "I am not eloquent," while Stephen, who was full of the Holy Ghost, knew perfectly well that he was "mighty in words" (Acts vii., 22).

Moses Peregrinus appreciated the aphorism "Prudence

is the better part of valor," for after executing the sinful Egyptian without giving him the benefit of clergy, and giving him a summary and secular funeral, he soon left Egypt. Supposing for a moment these lively and deadly anecdotes to be true, we get some idea of Hebrew brotherhood and chivalry at that time, for after killing a tyrant, and trying to conciliate two quarrelsome ones of his own persuasion, Moses is severely asked, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" His kindly interference so exasperated his brethren that we suppose they turned informers, to the peril of Moses's life. A noble race to be chosen of God!

Running from Pharaoh was thirsty business in a hot climate, and there was no public-house. So donning a piece of blue sugar-paper he sat down by a well and watched Truth lying at the bottom! If, as Schiller says, "Tis Venus who brings everything that's fair," Moses should have thanked that goddess when he saw tripping towards him seven daughters of the only parson Midian appears to have fed. Seven! A sacred number, and to a bachelor a band of hope. It would seem that the daughters of the clergy in that latitude were not treated with the respect due to the fair sex. Some shepherds arrived, and seeing they were real little "lambs" they drove them away. But Moses assisted them—meek and melanc-holy Moses! This led to an engagement, and Moses being grown (forty years of age) he married Zipporah, and lived happily ever after. Well, perhaps; but unlike modern romances, this one places the marriage in the second chapter, and then forgets it until there is a marital "shindy" in the village inn (Exodus iv., 25, 26).

So far the history of Moses is about as credible as novels usually are. But if we ventured on the third chapter of Exodus we should find a tale of magic, mystery and murder hard to be believed. "Lord help my unbelief!" I had almost omitted to notice a little mistake of Moses in the last verse of chapter ii. He says God had respect unto the children of Israel, whereas another writer (taught of a holy ghost that neither Moses, Aaron, nor Hecate of Endor ever saw), said of the "immutable" God he was no respecter of persons.

We will not at present follow Moses to the burning bush—we have our boots on, so *au revoir*.

W. C. SAVILLE.

TO A CELIBATE.

Give me your hand, my brother,
We'll tread life's mingled way
Assisting one another
As best we may.

'Mid tares and fairest flow'rs
Our winding pathway lies
And, oh! the choice is ours,
Which to despise.

From Ignorance and Error
All hurtful things have grown;
The baleful seeds by Terror
Erstwhile were sown.

The fen-sprung God of Anguish
Hath said: "But pain is thine.
The flowers of Joy let languish—
Or Hope resign."

Shall we the thistles cherish,
And tread the flow'rs below
Till all but thistles perish?
My brother, no!

EX-RITUALIST.

It is a good thing for Noah that he had the only ark afloat in all the universe at the time of the flood. If there had been just one more ark, there would have been a collision the third day out, unless those things were managed better than they are now.

THE Jews of Berlin have been made happy by the decision of a learned Rabbi that oysters are not fish, but plants, and may be eaten, although the law of Moses prohibits the eating of fish without scales.

SAID a good sister in her testimony at a late camp-meeting, "My husband opposed my coming to this sacred spot, but I can truthfully say that in coming here I have received a blessing, and I know that when I reach home my husband will get a blessing." No one seemed to doubt her.

PROFANE JOKES.

A CLERGYMAN was giving Ralph a lesson in morals. "Now," said the preacher, "what is your duty toward your Christian neighbor?" Ralph: "To keep your eye on 'im, sir."

Two churchwardens were engaged in the evangelical occupation of squabbling. "Who are you?" exclaimed one. "I'm a poor, humble Christian, you d—d old hypocrite, was the mild reply.

"Well, well!" said Mr. Jarphly. "Well what?" asked his wife. "I am just reading of the missionaries' attempt to introduce the Bible in China, my dear," replied Mr. Jarphly. "What is strange about that?" inquired Mrs. Jarphly. "Oh, nothing particular, only I've seen it in calf, and in Russian leather, and in cloth, and I thought I would like to see it in China," and he innocently scratched his nose.

ETHEL's mother was reading her Sabbath-school lesson to her, when she came to the verse: "But when they next saw Joseph they found him in a position of great authority and power, and—" "Joseph was king, wasn't he, mamma?" interrupted Ethel. "No, Ethel, he was not king, but he was very high—next to king." "Oh, I know, mamma; he was Jack—Jack is high!" Alas! Ethel had seen too much card playing.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY
(FOREST HILL BRANCH),

2 WALDRAM ROAD (near Station).
THE attendance of all Freethinkers living in or near Forest Hill is earnestly desired at the Sunday Lectures (7.30 p.m.) We contemplate a removal to more commodious premises, but the support of all lovers of the Cause is needed.—Mr. V. L. R., 26 Corfe Road, Forest Hill, will gladly answer inquiries, etc.

READY BY THE FIRST OF MARCH,
The New Monthly Anti-Political Paper,

THE ANARCHIST
(A Journal of Sociological Science),

Edited by H. SEYMOUR.
PRICE ONE PENNY.

London: The International Publishing Co., 25 Newington Green Road, and all newsagents.

Now Ready.

JONAH'S EXCURSION

TO NINEVEH.

By G. W. FOOTE.

With Twenty-Four Illustrations by Paul Bellevue, and a Frontispiece.

Handsomely printed on toned paper. Handy for the pocket.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St., E.C.

SATIRES AND PROFANITIES.

BY THE LATE
JAMES THOMSON (B.V.)

With a brief Introduction by G. W. FOOTE.

The most Brilliant Volume of Freethought Wit and Satire ever Published.

192 pages. Handsomely bound in cloth

Price 2s. 6d.

"The twenty-three papers of this best work of English satire which has appeared for many years, are replete with humor, satire and instructive raillery. Celestial and terrestrial despots receive no mercy from the gifted author, who holds them up to the scorn of good men and women. There are many laughter-provoking hits in each of its 191 pages, and old imposture must turn pale with horror and affright at this bold 'blasphemy.'"—*Lucifer* (Kansas)

"As clever as they are often profane."—*Christian World*.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

PROGRESS.—Vol. IV.

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1884.

Now Ready. Neatly Bound in Cloth,

PRICE 2s. 6d

Containing articles by G. W. Foote, J. M. Wheeler, Dr. Aveling, Dr. Drysdale, W. P. Ball, Norman Britton, S. Britton, John Robertson, Louise Bevington, Mrs. Edgren, G. Temple, etc., on a vast variety of advanced questions in Religion, Politics, Sociology, Philosophy, Science, Literature and Art

Only a limited number are for sale, and no more will be bound up.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING COMPANY'S LIST.

Aveling, Dr. Edward.
Darwinian Theory—The ... 0 6
Monkeys, Apes, Men ... 0 6
Origin of Man—The ... 0 6

Collins, W. W.
Geology and the Bible ... 0 1
Life and Death—An Examination of the Question, "Does Man Survive Death?" ... 0 2

Holyoake, G. J.
Last Trial for Atheism in England. A Fragment of an Autobiography. Post free ... 1 6
Secularism a Religion which gives Heaven no Trouble ... 0 2
The Social Means of Promoting Temperance, with remarks on errors in its advocacy ... 0 2

Ingersoll, Colonel Robert.
Breaking the Fetters ... 0 2
Difficulties of Belief ... 0 2
Do I Blaspheme? ... 0 1
Farm Life in America ... 0 2
Flight of the Shadows ... 0 2
Hereafter ... 0 2
Prose Poems—Spoken on Memorable Occasions ... 0 2
Religion of the Future ... 0 2
The Dying Creed ... 0 2
The Clergy and Common Sense ... 0 1
The Great Mistake ... 0 1

Moss, Arthur B.
Christianity a Degrading Religion ... 0 1
Delusions of Theology ... 0 1
Natural Man ... 0 1

Paine, Thomas.
Complete Theological Works ... 1 0
" " " In cloth ... 1 6
The Age of Reason. With Biography of the Author by Charles Bradlaugh ... 0 6
Ditto, Library edition, large type, paper covers, 1s.; cloth ... 1 6

Wheeler, J. M.
Frauds and Follies of the Fathers ... 0 6
Gospel Lies ... 0 1
Letters from Hell ... 0 1

MISCELLANEOUS.

Blasphemy Laws; should they be Abolished? By W. Hunter, LL.D., M.A. Barrister-at-Law ... 0 2
Blows at the Bible. By Joseph Symes Or in six numbers at 1d. each. ... 0 6
Essay on Miracles. By David Hume. With an Introduction on the views of Campbell, Paley, Mill, Morley, Tyndall, Huxley, etc., by J. M. Wheeler ... 0 3
Freethought Gleanings ... 0 1
Holy Ghost's Arithmetic ... 0 1
Mill on Blasphemy. A reprint (with notes) of his *Westminster Review* article on the prosecution of Richard Carlile ... 0 2

Old Thoughts for New Thinkers. Being Selections from the "Pensées Philosophiques" of Diderot. Translated from the French by W. Hardaker ... 0 1
Profane Jokes—Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Each ... 0 1
Shelley on Blasphemy. A reprint of his splendid Letter to Lord Ellenborough on the imprisonment of Daniel Eaton for publishing Paine's "Age of Reason." With an Introduction ... 0 1

Strange History of Joshua Josephson. Eighteen illustrations. With an Introduction. A very remarkable publication. Every Freethinker should possess a copy, and lend it to his orthodox friends ... 0 2

Three Trials for Blasphemy. Before Lord Coleridge and Justice North. With a Verbatim Report of Lord Coleridge's Summing-up, of Messrs. Foote and Ramsey's Speeches in Defence, and of Justice North's Unmannerly Interruptions. Limp cloth ... 1 0

MR. W. J. RAMSEY will Lecture at 4 Stonebridge Terrace, Seven Sisters' Road, this Sunday at 3.30 p.m. Readings before the lecture. Afterwards a meeting will be held (Mr. Ramsey in the chair), for the purpose of forming a Tottenham Branch of the N. S. S.

MR FOOTE'S WORKS.

Arrows of Freethought. 112 pp. ... 1 0
Blasphemy No Crime. The whole question fully treated, with special reference to the Prosecution of the *Freethinker* ... 0 1

The Folly of Prayer. New edition; with fresh Introduction ... 0 1

Atheism and Morality. New edition; fresh Introduction ... 0 1

Secularism the True Philosophy of Life. An Exposition and a Defence. (*In Wrapper*) ... 0 4

Death's Test, or Christian Lies about Dying Infidels ... 0 2

Atheism and Suicide ... 0 1

The God Christians Swear By ... 0 2

Was Jesus Insane? ... 0 1

Brown's Story; or, The Dying Infidel. 16pp. 0 1

Law and Gospel. Letters to Lord Coleridge, Judge North, Gaoler Harcourt, and Lawyer Giffard ... 0 1

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

First Series, bound in elegant wrapper, One Shilling.
Second Series—13, Daniel and the Lions; 14, The Jew Judges; 15, St. John's Nightmare; 16, A Virgin Mother; 17, God in a Box; 18, Bully Samson. 19, Gospel Ghosts; 20, A Kissing God.

Price Fourpence.

PROGRESS

A Monthly Magazine,

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE

The MARCH NUMBER contains—

Faith-Healing. By Hero Jewel.

The Duke of Argyll on Science. By W. W. Collins

I do not Know. By L. J. Nicolson.

Seen Thrice: A London Study. By James Thomson (B.V.)

Between the Years. By E. V. W.

Is Shelley a Great Poet? By S. Britton.

Christian Schools (continued). By an Usher.

Primitive Marriage. By J. M. Wheeler.

Man's Manufacture of Organic Substances. By Edward Aveling.

Literary Rejections. By Ignotus.

Prisoner for Blasphemy. 1X. By G. W. Foote.

Two Victims. By E. Vans.

Just published, 148 pages, price 6d., by post 7d.

LOGIC AND UTILITY: the Tests of Truth and

Falseness and Right and Wrong, by G. R.

Also (price 3d., by post 4d.), "State Measures for the Direct Prevention of Poverty, War and Pestilence,"

68 pages.—E. Truelove, 256 High Holborn.

S. HARTMANN,

8 LONG LANE, ALDERSGATE STREET LONDON,

WHOLESALE BOOT & SHOE Warehouseman,

And Importer of Foreign Boots & Shoes. A large and well-selected stock always on hand. Most advantageous place for cash buyers.

TO FREETHINKERS, Etc. TRIAL SOLICITED. BEST STYLE, FIT AND VALUE

H. HAMPTON, TAILOR, 14 Gt. Castle Street, W. A FEW DOORS FROM REGENT CIRCUS.

Thwaites' Liver Pills

Are acknowledged to be the best Family Medicine in the World by the many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after you had read it you might say it was only advertising puff; but I ask One Trial of the LIVER PILLS; if not better than any you have tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. I recommend them for INDIGESTION, LOSS OF APPETITE, DIZZINESS, BILIOUSNESS, COSTIVENESS, NERVOUSNESS, PALPITATION OF THE HEART, PILES, ETC., all of which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what we call a sluggish Liver. Try some of the LIVER PILLS as soon as you can, as they are PURE HERB PILLS, and may be used at any time by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking cold. Prepared only by GEORGE THWAITES, 2 Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees. Sold at 1s. 14d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post for 15 or 36 Penny Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

TEETH, 2s. 6d. each, on vulcanite; upper or lower set, £1. Best quality, on vulcanite, 4s. a tooth; upper or lower set, £2. No extras. Completed in four hours when required. Best teeth on Platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18-carat gold, 15s. Painless extraction daily, with gas, 6s.; without, 1s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.—MR. STANTON, R.D., 128 Strand, London. Hours nine to eight.

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

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