

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. V.—No. 15.]

APRIL 12, 1885.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 115.



THE LORD BURYING MOSES

"So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."—DEUTERONOMY xxxiv., 5, 6.

THE RISEN CHRIST.

A FAMOUS Russian czar went the round of his palace sentries one Easter morning, giving the customary salutation "Christ is risen." One of the soldiers on guard happened to be a Jew, and when the czar saluted him he ground his musket and replied "Christ is *not* risen." For a moment they stood confronting each other, a frown on the czar's face and a look of stern defiance on the soldier's. Christian and Jew flashed mutual hostility for the millionth time over the Prophet of Nazareth. But this time the poor Jew's blood did not drench the soil, nor were his goods confiscated to the use of a Nazarene. The great czar felt through all his anger a sense of the man's courage in that prompt challenge of the autocrat of all the Russias, and with softened look and waved hand he passed on his way.

"Christ is risen," cries the Christian. "Christ is *not* risen," cries the Jew. Thus they have opposed each other ever since the tragedy of Calvary. The unfortunate Hebrew has paid dearly for his obstinate disbelief; Christians have wreaked upon him the most diabolical revenge; his lamentation has gone up to heaven from many lands, through many centuries: "How long, O Lord, how long?" He has been robbed, reviled, scourged, mutilated and murdered; he has seen wife and daughter sacrificed to Christian lust; he has wandered from city to city and country to country, the Ishmael of Christendom. But through all vicissitudes he has displayed the wonderful tenacity of his race; he has lived to see some of the greatest minds, like George Eliot, fascinated by his history or his religion; and before he loses himself in the world's general population, he will probably witness the final collapse of Christianity. "Christ is *not* risen" is already sounding from multitudes

in Europe and America, and the cry swells louder and fuller with every year.

Mr. Matthew Arnold, while calling himself a Christian, devotes much of his leisure to reminding us that the Bible miracles are all fairy tales, and that the supernatural birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, are mere inventions of his adoring disciples. In other words he is justifying the poor Jew—"Christ is *not* risen."

It is easy to see how miraculous stories about Jesus would arise. His resurrection, for instance, was credible enough to people who could believe in wholesale levitations. Just look at Matthew's story of the saints who got out of their graves at the crucifixion and went for a walk. Christians are remarkably silent about this prodigious marvel; they confine their attention to *the* resurrection of their blessed Savior, although it is a small matter in comparison with the other.

"And the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

People who could believe a story like this would not hesitate to believe the narrative of Christ's resurrection. They were fully prepared for its acceptance, on the principle that the whole includes a part.

Shakespeare, in "Hamlet," notices similar prodigies at the death of Cæsar:

"In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mighty Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

When profane historians made up such stories for the death of Pagan kings and emperors, is it likely that the Christians would do any less for their Savior?

Of course it never occurred to the Christians to ask what became of those "saints." According to Eusebius, Quadratus presented an apology to the Emperor Hadrian about A.D. 120, in which he asserted that some of them were still surviving. No doubt they were, and we dare say some of them are alive now, at least as alive as they ever were. In what condition did they arise? Were they stinking like Lazarus? How did they get new suits of clothes? Who trusted them for a tailor's bill? Did they go home again "like ghosts to trouble joy," as the Lotos Eaters say in Tennyson's poem? Did Mr. Isaacs find his widow married to Mr. Solomons, and did Jesus have to decide "whose wife is she at the day of resurrection?"

The resurrection and ascension of Jesus himself I have dealt with fully in my Bible Romance of *A Rising God*, to which I refer all my readers who are anxious to study the subject. Let it here suffice to say that a more loose, absurd and self-contradictory story was never palmed off on the world. It would not stand five minutes' examination in a court of law. Surely, then, it must be rejected in the high court of reason. The orthodox world may celebrate their risen Christ at this period of the year, but the festival becomes more and more a holiday and less and less a solemn celebration. The world is beginning to echo the Jew's cry, "Christ is *not* risen."

G. W. FOOTE.

WAS JESUS CRUCIFIED?

Most persons consider that, whatever may be thought of the miraculous element in the Gospels, the fact that Jesus was crucified is indisputable. The Jews, however, who really ought to know something of the matter, have quite a different tradition. In the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu" Jesus is represented as having met his death, in accordance with Jewish law, by stoning and hanging. In the Talmud he is not referred to as the crucified one, but as the hanged one (תלי), and it is also stated that he was previously stoned. How came the Jews to have so different a version? It is also curious that Peter, in the Acts, should be represented as saying to the Jews, "Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts v., 30; x., 39; see also xiii., 29, and I Pet. ii., 24). Paul certainly preached "Christ and him crucified," by which he evidently meant something mystical, for he declares that Christ was crucified among the Galatians, and that he himself was crucified with Christ (Gal. ii., 20; iii. 1; v., 24). Yet he also declares that Christ was made a curse for us, "for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii., 13; see I Cor. xii., 3). The Mohammedans have the tradition that Jesus was not crucified, but another in his place, and a similar story was found in the ancient Gospel of Barnabas, which declared that Judas was crucified in his stead.

The story of the crucifixion as told in the gospels is attended with many difficulties. In the first place Jesus is said to have been crucified on a Friday at the beginning of Passover, yet according to established principles of Jewish law the Passover never can fall on a Friday, and no execution could take place at that sacred time. Jesus is arrested on Thursday night, brought before Annas and then before Caiaphas, the writers being evidently under the mistaken impression that there was more than one high priest and that the office was for one year only (see John xviii., 13; Acts iv., 6). He is tried by the Sanhedrim at night, when they never sat; taken before Pilate who sends him to Herod, is brought back to Pilate, condemned to death, taken to Calvary and executed, all, according to Mark, before the third hour, *i.e.*, nine in the morning next day, and according to Matthew and Luke by mid-day.

The conduct ascribed to the Sanhedrim of spitting in the face of Jesus, buffeting him and striking him with the palms of their hands, like lawless ruffians instead of a dignified assembly of the *élite* of the nation, is equally incredible. To the full as preposterous is that related of the Roman governor Pilate. That finding no fault with Jesus, whose saying, "my kingdom is not of this world," would be sufficient exoneration from the only charge Pilate could care for, that of sedition, he nevertheless gave in to the clamor of the mob he despised, although the priests had been afraid to arrest Jesus, because the people were

friendly to him; and that none of all those who had witnessed Christ's miracles had a word to say for him, is more than strange. The stories that there was darkness over all the earth for three hours, that the veil of the temple was rent, that the earth did quake and the rocks were rent asunder, that the graves were opened and many bodies of saints which slept arose and came out of their graves, and went into the city and appeared unto many, bespeak the legendary character of the Gospel narratives and cast doubt upon the certainty of every part of them. Jewish history moreover knows of no such spot as Golgotha or the place of skulls, nor is it likely that the Jews, with their strict regard for the burial of the dead, would permit any such place to exist within or near the precincts of the holy city.

The story of the two thieves is also of a dubious character. It may have arisen from the prophecy "he was numbered with the transgressors." Neither Jewish nor Roman law punished theft with death. Matthew and Mark make both the thieves revile Jesus, Luke makes of one a more ardent believer in his fellow-sufferer than even his disciples. The inscription on the cross and the last words of Jesus thereon are differently reported by the various evangelists. It is also very improbable that the mother of Jesus would be a witness of the agonising scene.

If Jesus was not crucified, but stoned and hanged, how could the story of the crucifixion arise? Rabbi Wise makes a suggestion on the subject which is surely worth some attention. It is this. There existed at the commencement of the Christian era a widespread and deep sympathy for a crucified king of the Jews. This king was Antigonus, son of Aristobulus II., and the last of the famous Maccabees. Herod, with the assistance of the Romans, defeated Antigonus and took Jerusalem after a long and obstinate siege. Antigonus surrendered to the Roman general, Sosius, who handed him over to Mark Antony. Antony had him executed at Antioch as a common malefactor. Strabo, Plutarch, Dion Cassius and Josephus all relate this as a remarkable event, for never previously had the Romans put a king to death so ignominiously. Strabo says that because the Jews obstinately refused to recognise Herod, Mark Antony was persuaded to try this severe method to remove their respect for their lawful king. Josephus tells us he was beheaded, but the seeming contradiction, which probably arose from Josephus's well-known suppression of offensive truths, is explained by Dion Cassius, who tells us that he was first crucified and whipped, and then had his throat cut (B.C. 37). The passage in Dion Cassius (xlix., 22) may be found cited in the Appendix to the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu," together with the opinion of Rabbi Wise that the sympathies of the masses for the crucified King of Judæa, the heroic son of so many heroic ancestors, and the legends growing in time out of this historical nucleus, may have been the source whence Paul and the evangelists preached Jesus as the crucified King of the Jews.

On the other hand may be set the alleged evidence of Tacitus (An. xv., 44), stating that the Christians followed "one Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate." If this passage is genuine it looks like a confirmation of the story of Jesus being crucified—crucifixion being a method of execution among the Romans as stoning and hanging were among the Jews. With this important exception there exists outside the New Testament no scrap of evidence, whether of book, manuscript, or inscription, for the crucifixion.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE use of the quasi-rational method of explaining away miracles is spreading in the Church. The Rev. H. B. Robinson teaches his congregation that the manna rained from heaven every week-day for forty years was either a certain kind of dried moss, or else the dried sap of the manna plant blown into the air in huge clouds by the operation of ordinary natural laws. Moses, too, did not convert the Nile into blood; he only covered it with red *algæ*.

THE clergy of Bulgaria have been "out on strike." In former years the State subsidised the Church in the hope of gaining its influence. This year the parliament refused the grant and the priests retorted by shutting up shop, leaving their flock without shepherds to baptise, marry or bury them. This proceeding has so alarmed the peasantry, and especially the women, that they have agreed to provide the priests with an equivalent for the subsidy, and are subscribing jewels and household goods for that purpose. Perhaps our clergy will profit by the example and go on strike when Disestablishment comes.

ACID DROPS.

A CORRESPONDENT in the *Derbyshire Courier* notices that during the very hour our ministers were praying to God to "scatter the people that delight in war" our invading army was slaughtering Arabs wholesale. As with the slavery question in the past, so now with the war question and all other undecided questions needing heroic effort and advanced view, the Church sides with the powerful oppressors and leaves the conflict of righteousness and peace to poorer and braver men.

DAMFLASK reservoir is out of order. What blasphemer invented the name, we wonder? Was it our Bishop Hellm(o)uth, of Bridlington?

THE clergy are beginning to leave off howling at Darwin. The Rev. Joseph Cook acknowledges the "stages of an immeasurably long process of development" culminating in man as "beyond question," and he has the audacity, now that incontrovertible facts have driven him to this position, to claim that "the entire past history of Nature is, therefore, a Messianic prophecy." A "logical" necessity of the doctrine of Evolution, he holds, is the development of perfection, that is of Christ, the only sinless and perfect being. Hence Evolution points to or prophecies the Jesus of the Gospels! What next, we wonder? Was the ichthyosaurus a type of Jonah and the whale? Did the palæotherium anticipate Elisha's bears? Were the sigillaria emblems of the tree on which Christ died? Did the carboniferous strata foretell the black and sinful nature of man, and did the chalk formation and the old red sandstone indicate that his sins would be made as white as snow by washing in the old red blood? Did the palæozoic rocks foreshadow the Pentateuch, and the subsequent strata the psalms and gospels and epistles built up on the crude and flinty foundation of the Mosaic law? Was the pterodactyl a most plain and undoubted prophecy of the ascension of Christ and the rising of man from the reptile stage to heaven and immortality? Claim them all, Joseph, while you are about it. Show how the igneous rocks prove hell and the archæopteryx proves heaven. Go ahead; the bigger the folly and the assumption the more successful you will be for awhile, but the sooner the bubble will burst, and the sooner people will see for themselves that all the fossils are plain antetypes of Christian dogmas and their fate.

THE village of Llanwdd is in North Wales, look you! and through that sequestered spot runs the course of the Vynwy Waterworks, which are to supply Liverpool—at a cost which has almost paralysed Liberal and Tory alike—with water in the distant future. Llanwdd possessed a churchyard, which the engineers very irreverently proposed to utilise as part of the site of an enormous reservoir, merely covering the graves with a bed of concrete a yard thick. This was too much for the simple faith of the villagers, who thought a corpse, which had been buried with toes turned to the east in view of resurrection contingencies, would scarcely have a fair chance if he had to break through a yard of concrete and eighty feet of superincumbent water.

THE difficulty so far as the "rude forefathers of the village" who had living friends were concerned, was obviated by removing their corpses to another graveyard, but those unfortunates who had no friends may find themselves on the wrong side of a bed of concrete—or of something else—at the Day of Judgment. However, the water supply may possibly be available by that time, and afford some mitigation of their hard lot.

THE *Church Times* says the average value of a benefice in South Wales is only £182. "This is the wretched pittance which Mr. Richard's friends want to purloin." Considering that the wretched pittance are derived from property belonging to a people only a small minority of whom agree with the Church of England, this is rather good. The thief cries out that the swag is small, and yet the rightful owners demand its restitution.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* thinks that the Established Church is almost as great a curse to the nation as the liquor traffic. The Episcopalians reciprocate the compliment, and consider the Dissent of their Christian brethren one of the greatest curses of the land. We will not quarrel with either of these views, for we feel that if the Christian sects would demolish each other like the celebrated Kilkenny cats, the world would be a great gainer.

THE Rev. Prebendary Scott, M.A., has been preaching on the Eighth Commandment. The first and greatest lesson he learns from this sacred injunction is that disendowment of the Church he belongs to is robbery of God. It is picking of the Church's pockets and running away with the money, he says. But his Church took over the endowments of the disestablished Romish Church, and it keeps exclusive possession of national property and revenue. The Anglican Church whitewashes its theft by calling it dedication to God, and brands honest restitution of the people's property to the people as robbery.

A WRITER in the *Jewish World* says that Leviticus xxiv., 16, which in the English version reads "he that blasphemeth the name of

the Lord, he shall surely be put to death," should properly be translated "he that pronounceth the name of the Lord," etc. Jahveh was so jealous that he ordered death for all who ventured to use his name. To the present day the Jews invariably substitute *Adonai* or Lord for the ineffable name of Jahveh. The superstitions in connection with the sacred name are fully elucidated in the notes to the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu" where it is suggested that as the sacred name could only be pronounced by a person who was perfectly clean, this may account for its being lost among the chosen people.

THE newest thing in advertisements is "Salvation Pills; Warranted without Mercury." They are appropriately sold by Fox and Co.

THE Navy Mission Society issues a quarterly letter to the objects of its attention. We see that the last number of this periodical denounces Devil-Driving George of the Salvation Army who went off from Whitechurch, with his landlady, "a very stout woman" of thirty-five. The amorous couple carried with them the poor landlord's watch and clothes, and seven pounds of his money, leaving him without a penny to pay the quarter's rent with. What does Booth say to this?

"GENERAL" BOOTH has been summoned at Rowley for refusing to pay poor-rate. He contends that the Army ought to be exempted as other religious denominations are. The magistrates made an order for the amount claimed to be paid within seven days.

THE latest Salvation Army handbill we have seen shows how the Boothites are obliged to go further and farther in the line of sensational blasphemy. The Purity Meeting advertised for April 7 is to include "Jovial jolly bumping cups of Salvation Tea," "new bosses on Chargers," and a display of the "East London Devil-Shakers." "Oh! What a kick up! My word!" is a fair sample of the latest word of the Lord.

"YOUR Lord was crucified for you on Good Friday. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" So said the posters stuck on various churches, but the multitudes streaming by took no notice. They intended to be happy while the sunshine lasted, and saw no reason for converting a holiday into a day of mourning because God killed God to appease God two thousand years ago.

DURING the Good Friday services in St. Paul's Cathedral a well-dressed young man, named Charles Beere, rushed forward, seized the chalice on the communion table, dashed it to the ground, and proceeded with further acts of mischief until he was secured by two policemen. His relatives state that he is suffering from religious depression, and that his mind is unbinged. We wonder what Jesus Christ's relatives thought of his somewhat similar exploits in the temple.

AN Unanniversary Society is being established. It proposes to ignore Christmas, Easter and other time-honored Pagan festivals. If it could manage to successfully ignore quarter-days, it would be extremely popular.

A ROMAN Catholic Freemason, named John Igoe, having died at Rugeley under the influence, it is said, of drink, the Roman Catholic priest declined to perform the funeral service over him. The parish vicar also refused. How charitable these orthodox people are. They cannot even forgive a dead man and recognise the common bond of humanity in the solemn brotherly attentions due to a departed fellow-being. They prefer to outrage the kindly though somewhat exaggerated susceptibilities of the multitude by letting a man, whom they say Christ died to save, be buried "like a dog" as folks say. Eventually, however, a Congregational pastor, further on his road towards Freethought and a wide human charity, took pity on the outcast corpse as the heretic in the parable of the Good Samaritan took pity on the wounded man whom the priest and the Levite had passed by, "because," as the school-boy said, "he was already robbed."

THE parishioners of Stavely thought one chapel would be enough for their new cemetery, but the Bishop of Lichfield declined to consecrate any portion of the cemetery if a separate chapel was not provided for Churchmen. If there is only one chapel, he says, it must be reserved for the Church of England portion of the cemetery. It was then felt that the only solution of the difficulty, and also "the only way of preventing unseemly squabbles" between Churchmen and Nonconformists, was to erect two separate chapels. The parishioners have accordingly agreed to saddle themselves with the cost of the two buildings. It is hoped that by this strict policy of isolation, Christian strife and hatred may be prevented from breaking out in "God's acre."

MATTHEW ARNOLD contributes to the current number of the *Contemporary Review* a comment on Christmas, in which he seeks to mollify the orthodox by assuring them of his profound respect for the Bible. As, however, he calls the miraculous conception a legend unsupported by any word of Jesus Christ himself or by any single word in the letters of Paul, Peter, James and John, he is hardly likely to be successful in his attempt.

MR. ARNOLD takes some pains to point out to the orthodox that the supposed prophecy in Isaiah about a virgin, or rather a damsel, conceiving, has no reference whatever to Jesus. No one is now surprised at the appearance of such rational criticism in the columns of the *Contemporary*. Yet half a century ago the "Age of Reason" was repeatedly prosecuted for having anticipated Matthew Arnold's criticism.

MR. ARNOLD is, after all, only one of those trimmers who are for ever seeking to put the new wine of modern thought into the old theological bottles. He says there is no book like the Bible and no teacher like Jesus, yet he shows the one is full of childish legends, and no more than any other modern man attempts to put in practice the teachings of the other. The beauty of Christ's morality is a very fine subject to write rhetorically about, but to attempt to follow it is quite a different matter.

THE Church Association have memorialised the Queen as the Head of the Church against the appointment of Dr. King to the Bishopric of Lincoln on the ground that he holds anti-Protestant doctrines. Dr. King was celebrated at Oxford for his extreme Puseyite views.

CLERICAL arrogance is as pronounced as Congregational hypocrisy. The Rev. Rees Williams, rector of Gyffylling, champions the Church in Wales on the ground that "it keeps one respectable person living in such parish."

AN accident occurred at the Gospel Mission Hall in Old Street, E.C., on Good Friday. God broke down the balcony during the religious services, and the occupants were thrown to the ground. Many persons were bruised and otherwise injured. One girl had her arm broken. Was this a judgment on religious people to punish them vicariously, as is the approved Christian method, for the indifference of the holiday-makers outside?

ONE effect of the threatened electoral action of the opponents of Church and State is evident in the fall in price of advowsons, or presentation to livings. Two, which were recently sold at the auctioneers' in Tokenhouse Yard, fetched little more than a year's value of the living.

THE sentence of six months' imprisonment on Mrs. Weldon, after the jury had recommended her to mercy, was, to say the least, severe; but if it is true, as reported, that Gaoler Harcourt has since sent her enemy, Dr. Forbes Winslow, to inquire into her mental condition, such a scandalous proceeding would warrant the instant expulsion from office of a person capable of perpetrating so flagrant an injustice.

IN presenting the Albert Medal to Sergeant Cole, Gaoler Harcourt marred the effect of the whole ceremony by calling upon the wrong man. It was unpleasant for Sergeant Cox to be mistaken for the hero of the day; still more so for the police to know that their official head could not remember the name of one of their number who had performed an act of daring which was in everybody's mouth.

AN "angel" has been suing for a portion of the funds of the Irvingite Church, but Mr. Justice North has dismissed his action. The "angels" and "apostles" of this church have lost the power which they professed to exercise of speaking in unknown tongues, like the original apostles on the day of Pentecost. The guidance and presence of the Holy Ghost is so poor a help to them that they have to come to a law court to settle their money disputes. The intoxication of enthusiasm has died out and hopeless vulgarity alone remains.

THE *Church Times* laments, not that a majority of the human race remain outside the limits of Christendom, but that countries once Christian have fallen under the sway of the false prophet, by which polite epithet it means Mohammed, and what is sadder still, the vast number of Christians there are whose Christianity is but nominal. It might have added that most of those who look into its evidences and are not interested in its support, deliberately reject this divinely-revealed religion which those who are paid to preach never feel themselves called upon to practise.

A BROCHURE entitled "The Missing Chapter in the Life of Mr. Joseph Barker," printed at the *Herald of Progress* office, Newcastle, attributed Joseph's conversion to spiritism. We think it very likely Joseph was a good deal like Zimri—

Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts and nothing long.

AT a meeting of the Birmingham Branch of the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, the Rev. J. W. Reynolds is reported to have stated "as a fact, there was no one more easy to convert than an orthodox Jew." What a wonder, then, that the chosen race have not all been converted long since. Surely Mr. Reynolds's experience must have been among the Jew pedlars, who get baptised and tipped afresh as new converts in every town they travel to—or was he simply telling a fib?

To the task of converting the Jews even the Inquisition proved inadequate. The only efficacious plan was that adopted by the Irishman, who, finding a Jew drowning in the water, caught hold of the hair of his head. "Will you belave in the Lard Jasus Christ?" "No." "Then down you go" (ducking him under). "Will you belave now?" "Y-e-s—anything to be saved." "Well, now you can be saved and go to heaven," said the good Christian, letting go his hold, and leaving the Israelite to drown.

A RETIRED business man of Chicago has published a volume containing the Lord's Prayer in 180 different languages, ancient and modern. We wonder whether this monument of wasted labor includes the London school-boy's version which begins, "Our Fah chart neven."

THE Vicar of Pontefract, notwithstanding the verdicts in his favor and the many distraints carried out, still has difficulty in collecting his tithes. He has had to summon 46 persons in Knottingley, and a number of them still hold out. Five of the cases are adjourned by the magistrate till next week.

THE Vicar of Dartford does not hesitate to seize farmers' property for tithes, but objects to pay for the use of the Board School on Sunday, on the ground that the Sunday School helps the work of the School Board. The Bible is such a good introduction to science and history, and the doctrine of the Trinity almost renders the use of arithmetic unnecessary.

W. WARE groans in the *Clerkenwell Chronicle* over the display of Freethought literature outside our printing establishment last Sunday. We presume he refers to the action of the Finsbury Branch of the N. S. S., who have had a stall set up on Sunday mornings under the shelter of our railings. It will probably take a great many Wares to drive them away, even though the pious beagle shouts "obscenity" with the full power of his brazen lungs.

THE President of the Devon Congregational Union in his inaugural address says that "Christians have been too exclusively spiritual, letting the outer world rush to ruin." So far as social and political reforms are concerned we agree with this president that "Christianity has hitherto scarcely shown her hand." She has usually shown her hoof and therewith has crushed liberty and progress. We wish she had been "exclusively spiritual" and that Inquisitions and Blasphemy prosecutions had never been known. Christianity is not merely indifferent to the ruin of the outer world; she has been an active agent in causing that ruin.

THE *Rock* is sorry that 4,000 persons met on Sunday afternoon at Leicester to protest against the war in the Soudan. It holds that it is a "desecration of the day of rest" to endeavor to prevent the murder of thousands of human beings, though Jesus, who was often far more liberal than his modern followers, allowed the Lord's Day to be broken even for the sake of helping an animal out of a pit.

THE Rev. H. Andrews, in his inaugural address at the meeting of the Suffolk Congregational Union, said the literal inspiration of the Bible was untenable, i.e., the Church has always been wrong in preaching this Christian dogma. Nothing very new in this. He proceeded to say that evolution was not inconsistent with revelation. If new, this is not true. Revelation declares man was made of the dust of the ground, and woman from his rib. Evolution declares that both have developed from lower organisms. But perhaps the Revised Version will do something to reconcile the two. Genesis i, 1, may be made to read, "In the beginning, God evolved the heavens and the earth."

SLIDING dogmatism is a very good term for the creed of trimmers like the Rev. H. Andrews. They throw out a doctrine now and again, as quietly as possible to the pursuing wolves of rational criticism; always maintaining, however, that it was no original part of the Christian faith, and professing absolute belief in what is left, until modern thought once more compels them to relinquish another doctrine.

ONE-HALF of the congregation of George Street Free Church, Dumfries, want a new church; the other half wish to stay where they are. The other Sunday the Rev. Mr. McNeil intimated they would refer the matter to the Head of the Church—in other words, have a trial by prayer. Two elders of each party were selected for the combat, and each prayed with all his might. The equality of the forces was, however, disturbed by the minister, who is in favor of a new church, taking the last prayer. We hardly know which was the most ridiculous—the praying elders, the congregation, or the minister, but would vote for the minister.

AT Penarth Police Court a man who was charged with sleeping out at some lime-kilns declared he was the Messiah. The magistrate might think him strange, but he was the stranger mentioned in the Scriptures. His Messiahship was sent to gaol for seven days. The business is evident about played out.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, April 12, Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town, N., at 7.30, on "Religion and Dynamite."
 Tuesday, April 14, Freethought Institute, York Street, Walworth Road, at 8.30, on "An Atheist's Creed."

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

MAY 3, Hall of Science; 6, Camberwell; 10, Milton Hall; 17, Hall of Science; 20, Camberwell; 24, N. S. S. Conference; 31, Manchester.

JUNE 7, Liverpool; 14, Plymouth; 28, Bristol.

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, 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. 7³d.

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.—W. D. Munroe, R. K.

G. L.—The Conference was noticed at the time. Mrs. Leslie's magazine is not known on this side the Atlantic, and Talmage's utterances do not possess the charm of novelty. He is only interesting when he aims at the sublime. He is then the most amusing speaker we know.

W. FARLEY, ex-Unitarian minister, Southsea, says that the *Christian Life* is far from being a representative organ of the Unitarian body, and that its editor is a man of no pretensions to learning or culture. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, he adds, have repudiated such illiberality as is expressed in the letter of a "Retired Solicitor."

A. TOWNSEND (Accrington) writes: "I wish personally to thank you for your clear, concise and truthful exposition of the evils of war in this month's *Progress*. I think it is one of the best things I have read from your pen. I was delighted with its terse phrases and with its compact completeness." Our correspondent will be glad to know that this article, considerably amplified, will be republished shortly in pamphlet form.

H. LENEY writes: "Allow me to thank you for your very fine speech on Thursday at St. James's hall, although the Liberal Press gave you but scant notice. I hope the day is not far distant when they will be unable to ignore you."

J. B. B.—Newspapers are welcome.

J. S. S.—Thanks for the cuttings. A paper on "Bible Witchcraft" appeared in the number for April 16, 1882. We may recur to the subject.

ANONYMOUS correspondents are warned not to expect answers. Their letters go into the waste-basket.

W. J. WILLIAMS.—J. Westall, New Oxford Street, W.; J. Brown, Holborn; C. Herbert, Goswell Road.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Staffordshire Knot—Western Daily Mercury—Truthseeker—Newcastle Chronicle—Kettering Observer—Sun—Paisley Express—Winnowing Breeze.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

THE Competition this month has been scarcely up to the previous level. For the Topical Sketch no drawings have been sent in that can be reproduced, though those of G. Collins and Churchwarden deserve honorable mention. For the Comic Bible Sketch the prize has been divided between G. Conway, Newtown Terrace, Longfleet, Poole, for "The First Sunday," and Wallace Fidler, New Square, Chesterfield, for "The Jewish Quack." These drawings will appear in our next issues.

HIGHLY COMMENDED AND MAY BE USED.—G. R. Warnes, M. Javeha, G. Collins, Churchwarden, II. Howard.

J. Apps, J. Tate and Pluto.—Drawings good, but with no sufficient point against superstition.

J. Dean.—The drawings, having to be photographed, must be done in clear, sharp line work, with perfectly black ink. Yours are too light. The ideas are good.

COMMENDED.—C. Prescott, Scorpion, G. G. H., W. Clark, A. Steeloi, Saturn, H. Wootton, Bob Saunders, H. Thorne, Faust.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MANY friends have asked Mr. Foote to reprint as a pamphlet his *Progress* article on "The Ogre" of war. Without exactly doing this he has managed to meet their wishes. He has elaborated the subject beyond what was possible in the limits of the article, making large additions, and especially amplifying the economical parts of the essay. Something also has been introduced on the Soudan war. As the document now stands, we believe it contains more information on the subject than is to be found anywhere else in so small a compass. The title is a capital one—"The Shadow of the Sword."

THE St. James's Hall demonstration against the Soudan butchery was a grand success. It was a splendid sight, that fine hall crammed from floor to ceiling with eager faces animated by a common purpose. Mr. Bradlaugh's introductory speech was not exactly a chairman's address, but it was remarkably vigorous in matter and manner, and it elicited many fervid outbursts of

applause. The seatless member for Northampton has seldom been seen in finer form. His colleague was a little disappointing. Mr. Labouchere was, to put it mildly, rather flat, and did not by any means justify his tremendous reception. Yet his speech read very well in the *Daily News*. Mr. Storey was in better form, though not in his best. One of his points about Christians on the eve of their most solemn festival contemplating another probable slaughter of their fellow-men, was very telling. Professor Beesly said some capital things. What a pity he is not an orator. Professor Rogers, whose frame and voice are both vigorous despite his years, kept the meeting animated. Mrs. Besant spoke remarkably well after her illness, and there was evident sympathy in the extremely cordial greeting the audience gave her. Mr. Foote's reception was enthusiastic enough to gratify him if he were as vain—say as Sir William Harcourt. The meeting did not share the *Pall Mall Gazette's* detestation of "him of the blasphemy prosecutions notoriety."

MR. CREMER told a good story. The Workmen's Peace Association convened a meeting on the Soudan business at the Memorial Hall. The Association was sure of the Freethinkers, but it wanted to feel the pulse of the Christians. Five hundred invitations were sent out to Congregational and other ministers. The only response was that three came and five sent apologies for their absence!

MR. LEICESTER provoked roars of laughter by saying that Mr. Bradlaugh, who was practically following the Prince of Peace, ought to be Archbishop of Canterbury. The joke struck Mr. Bradlaugh himself right under the fifth rib, and sent over two hundred pounds of flesh into convulsions.

REFERRING to the St. James's Hall meeting, the Rev. Newman Hall said in his sermon last Sunday that although scarcely any of the speakers were Christians, they gave expression to Christian sentiments. We honor Mr. Hall for his outspoken courage throughout this wretched business. When the news of Gordon's death reached England, he was one of the very few Christian ministers who denounced the policy of revenge. But, for all that, we must object to his ascribing Christian sentiments to us Freethinkers. Whether for good or ill, it is our own principles we act upon; and as Christianity does not take the responsibility for our failings, it shall not take credit for our virtues.

SPEAKING of the Peace Meeting at St. James's Hall, the *Weekly Dispatch* contrasts the efforts of the Secularists to secure peace and justice with the war policy or apathy of Churchmen and Dissenters. "Will they continue," it asks, "to leave Positivists, Freethinkers, and other heretics to do all the work in the most practical sort of Christianity that is possible now-a-days?"

THE Rev. C. Stirling declares that our difficulties abroad arise from our encouraging popish idolatry at home. He "would change all this even at the cost of civil war." The reverend gentleman would do well to gratify his bellicose propensities by going out to "smash the Mahdi."

Now that Egyptian affairs occupy so much of the public attention, an extract from the works of St. Augustine, relating to his travels in that part of the world, may be of interest. In his 33rd Homily, quoted by Mr. M. D. Conway in his "Demonology and Devil-lore," our veracious saint says: "I was already Bishop of Hippo when I went into Ethiopia with some servants of Christ, there to preach the Gospel. In this country we saw many men and women without heads, who had two great eyes in their breasts, and in countries still more southerly we saw a people who had but one eye in their foreheads." St. Augustine would have made an invaluable war correspondent.

MR. PROCTOR, in his essay on "The Great Pyramid," mentions that cakes, resembling in every respect the hot-cross buns so piously eaten at this season of the year, are sometimes discovered in the Egyptian monuments. They are really "bull cakes," sometimes being marked with the horns and head of a bull, and the four quarters of the cake signify the four quarters of the year. The sign of the bull was T (tau), and hence the sign of the cross.

THE Birmingham Branch of the N. S. S. is going to start a Secular Hall Building Company. The Committee would like to know, before beginning business, what measure of support they can reckon on. A good many shares have been bespoken already, and the Secretary will be glad to receive more applications as early as possible. Address Mr. J. Partridge, 32 Cardigan Street, Birmingham.

MR. GATHORNE HARDY, recently addressing a Conservative meeting at Doncaster, was asked whether he would vote for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. He replied that he agreed with the Archbishop of Canterbury that it would be a great advantage to have these laws altered. Not bad for a Conservative. Some of the Liberals might take a leaf out of Gathorne Hardy's book.

THE Churchman tolerates the Dissenter, and thinks that is about as much as he deserves. The Dissenter talks loudly about religious

liberty, claims religious equality, but, if a Secularist only dares to raise his head, there is at once a howl of pious indignation. We frequently hear Christians boast that their religion has stood the test of eighteen centuries, and they show their confidence in it by refusing the Secularists a room to lecture in. If they become powerful enough to build a hall or open a club, as in Leicester and at Northampton, they are attacked in a fashion suggestive of anything but the manner of the meek and lowly Jesus. Years ago, and we can remember it, when the propaganda of Secularism began in earnest, the press persistently refused to report the lectures of infidels, while the pulpit ignored them and stuck to the antiquated dogmas of an effete theology, until they were exploded alike by science and common sense. Now, it is no longer prudent for the press to ignore Secularism. The Northampton papers were compelled to give at least a decent outline of the lectures by Mr. Foote, whom Christians imprisoned for blaspheming their faith.—*Kettering Observer*.

THE bigots seem completely beaten at Oakenshaw Colliery. The *Freethinker* retains its position in the reading-room, although some objections were raised against it once more at the recent quarterly meeting. Against *Progress* there was not even a whisper.

AN esteemed correspondent, who was brought up for the Jewish ministry, informs us that he bought a copy of the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu," which he "stuck to and devoured every word." "Of the work you have published," he writes, "I cannot speak too highly. It is the very identical thing—could not be better. It is perfectly complete, even to including chapter iv., which all orthodox Jews reject, save as a kind of addendum."

FROM returns just published in the *Nonconformist*, it appears that since 1851 the religious accommodation in Lancashire has only increased two and a half per cent., while the population has increased seventy per cent. At the "most numerously-attended" services only 43 per cent. of the sittings were used.

OUR Calcutta contemporary with the pronounced title of *Anti-Christian*, is now enlarged. We are glad to notice that the editor, while opening his columns to all comers, is not taken in by that modern revival of ancient superstition, Theosophy.

WAS CHRIST CONSISTENT?

(Concluded from p. 111.)

In the minor aspects there is the same incongruity as of fire and water. One day Jesus preaches non-resistance to evil, and another day he heads a riot in the temple. He knows all things, but is deceived by a fig-tree, which, in his ideal perfection, he straightway curses and withers. He is lord of the universe, omnipotent and sublime, and he sets forth his awful grandeur and tremendous power by hunting petty devils about, drowning swine, getting money from fishes, and working a few local, temporary and commonplace miracles like those of the Salvation Army. He comes with a most important message to all men, and he delivers it to a few illiterate and credulous peasants in an obscure province, and never writes his precious words or sees that they are written by his disciples. He says, "My Father and I are one," and he cries, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He is a perfect example, and he plays truant and addresses his mother as "Woman." He comes to teach universal brotherhood, and speaks of Gentiles as dogs to whom he is not sent. He comes to bring peace and not to bring peace, but fire and sword. He teaches in parables so that men may understand, and so that they may not understand. He tells us to love our enemies and to hate our parents. We shall go to hell if we are angry with a brother, and we cannot go to heaven unless we hate our brethren. He forgives the woman taken in adultery, and denounces the most fearful judgments on those who ignore his verbal message or his "mighty works." He is omnipotent, but he cannot do these "mighty works" of petty faith-healing unless the patients believe in him (Mark vi., 5-6; Matt. xiii., 58). He is perfectly truthful besides being omniscient, and he accepts all the vulgar superstitions, such as belief in possession by demons who thus cause lunacy and diseases, and in exorcism; and he embodies these ridiculous and mischievous delusions in his glorious and eternal revelation. He gives his apostles power to cast out these non-existent devils, and they fail because "this kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting" (Mark ix., 28-29). He honestly quibbles and conscientiously deceives. He maintains the law of Moses to the last jot and

tittle, and abolishes it. In all the grand sincerity and certainty of almighty power and divine foreknowledge he excites vulgar fears by falsely announcing the rapidly approaching end of the world. He came to be our great exemplar, our pattern for imitation, and he has left the greater part of his life in obscurity. Between the ages of twelve and thirty we hear almost nothing of him. He never appears as lover, husband, father or patriot, and he teaches men to avoid all such entanglements for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He is a perfect hero and a perfect God, yet he falls into an agony of bloody sweat at the thought of his approaching death; he knows that by a few hours endurance of pain, certainly not greater than many men have unshrinkingly endured for their country or their religion, he will save mankind from everlasting torture, and yet he prays that this cup may pass from him.

All this "exquisite harmony" of pre-eminently noble conduct and pre-eminently lofty speech shows Prebendary Row how beautifully the divine and the human aspects of Christ's character "blend into each other." "Exquisite harmony" and "exquisite perfection" of the kind exhibited in the gospel legends show us that lovers of Christ are like Titania caressing the long ears of her "gentle joy." To reason with those who are blinded by religion is as useless as to reason with those who are blinded by love. But as religion is a matter of public importance and the source of much tyranny and evil, those who blindly and publicly exhibit their religious folly and endeavor to mislead others into similar absurdities must at least expect that reasonable men will endeavor to expose their mischievous illusions by argument, and to satirise and ridicule them out of existence when argument and remonstrance prove in vain.

The sheer impossibility of being at once infinite God and finite man rolled into one ought to be obvious. How can inconceivable and absolute deity, without body, parts or passions, be man, with body, parts and passions? To those who allow themselves to think, such unity will be incredible. It is a mere bundle of absolute contradictions, bound together by an absurd assertion. It is an abuse of language, and an insult to the intellect of the human race. A man-God or Christ is an infinitely more incongruous creation of the imagination than a centaur, or mermaid, or Assyrian winged bull.

W. P. BALL.

BOARD SCHOOL ESSAYS.

ADAM.

HADAM woz knot Heave, as everybody supposes but a mail of the utah gender, but is seeks woz never nown. He ad ony won farther an muther witch was living, bein god issell, like the siremeas twins, an was maid out of phig leaves an breth. The first wurd he spaked woz to cell is nite shirt for a mess o' hunshavery meet an to kuss a tree witch woodn't bare like he woz thereunto the lords hanger riz offul by makin it ale an rain stons an cats for forty days an nites, an avin got the neadle he maid Hadum a kote of meny kullers out of goffy wood an kust im for ever with a wife name Heave, sayin, beold for the Heave is in the mourning of the first borne, wearoph thou art lord of creamashun. God was sorry heed maid the whirld, bein so wiked, so he sed he'd try Hadum with the severn plagues o' egip sos heed kuss im an dye, but tho he suffered he woodn't dye to pleas God so the lord temted im with a phiry sord witch he coodn't swaller, not bein a hackroback, then god cent a serpint—a nadder—maid out o' happles to taint im but Hadum stoit the son, moon an stars from settin and graffled with the snaque by the beard an smited im a smut on its juggerson vane with the hangle o' deth, name salt Peter, an druv it inter bamboozlelum in a phiry sherry-hot name Latherus and cried out to the lord cum fourth ye sinner be not a frade I ham hear, so god cumd fourth an sed unto Hadum blessed are ye widders for I will be a muther to the horpuns an wash them every day in the blud o' the lam, an Hadum wept on gods sholder an they forgived won anuther from all sins. Hadum after cremated two kinds of evry unclean beast of the hair an fish of the see fride souls makril an stood eals bringin em untwo the lord to name witch he did kreckly from a nillustated gografy o' unnashrul mistry, so Hadam then givd god a wife vergin marey maid out of the tree of kollidge (Hasstrick PS bein in the garding of eaten it must a bin eaten kollidge) sayin beold ears plenty of happles so be frootfull an multiply an smuther the herth with yungsters an god luffed an sore that it woz good. O Hadum o Hadum thy daze is numbered thou must go on hy. Bein for thowsend yers hold Hadum new he coodnt live meny sentrys more so he becumd a norther by ritin the bibul, shakes pier, sparrowgrass lost an gained, meny more papars, also is my sundy cloze far away. He then stold a spade sos he cud shovel oph is mortle coil an dide the farther of sicksty child's wile the broom of yuth an a norrid wosp plade around is hi browze leavin the whirld in tears an det to morn is loss.

BILLY BROWN.

LONG AGO.
A SONG OF LAMENT.

OH why do we live in such prosaic days
'Mongst ordinary people with commonplace ways,
Who come across "miracles" only in plays
And die at a little past fifty?
Why don't we all live to five hundred or so
And then up above in a chariot go,
Like those ancient parties, Elijah and Co.,
Whose conduct was doubtful and shifty?

Chorus—It happened long ago, but never happens now;
We'd do it ourselves, but we don't know how.
If anyone tried he'd fail I vow,
But it happened long ago.

Why not have a "flood" and a nice little "ark"
On sanitary principles—saving the mark—
And stow a few millions away in the dark,
Then start it say—on the Atlantic?
Or, can't some great General speak to the sun
And tell him to "stop"—like the bold "son of Nun"—
Bah! folks nowadays have no genuine fun,
Their ways are so unromantic!

Chorus—It happened long ago, etc.

We ne'er see winged angels with faces all bright,
Of Devil-struck pigs never yet had a sight;
And Gabriel now never comes in the night
To virgins, strange secrets divulging.
How different now in our theories we are!
With unkind remarks pretty stories we mar—
Jones, only last week, tried to follow a star,
And his wife told him he'd been "indulging."

Chorus—It happened long ago, etc.

Of the lives of our poor we've heard a good deal,
And know there are hundreds oft wanting a meal.
Can't someone the hunger of five thousand heal
With a few little loaves and some fishes?
Then see by the wayside our halt, lame and blind—
Can nobody cure them?—'twould surely be kind.
Such useful "believers" we ne'er seem to find,
And so all in vain are our wishes.

Chorus—It happened long ago, so it ought to happen now;
And it's time that someone kicked up a row.
If they can't do it now, folks will wonder how
They could do it long ago.

J. DE FRAINE.

REVIEWS.

To-Day. April. Modern Press.—Ubiquitous G. B. Shaw begins a new novel. Rev. R. H. Newton concludes his eloquent paper on Communism. S. Dauncey begins a paper on Swinburne, Morris and Rossetti. C. A. Every has a remarkable article on "Am I a Socialist?"

Women's Suffrage Journal. April. Trübner and Co.—We heartily commend this little monthly to all who are interested in perhaps the greatest question now before the world.

The Pillars of the Church. By JULIAN W. Stewart and Co., 41 Farringdon Street.—This scholarly account of the legendary lives of the alleged evangelists, has an appendix, showing that the dogmas of Christianity have been established, not from scripture, but on the authority of Church Councils, and have been enforced by State power or persecution. It well deserved reprinting, and we hope it will have a good sale.

Man: Whence and Whither? By H. S. HARDWICKE, M.D. Price 3d. Sheffield: Published by the Author, 69 Wostenholm Road.—Dr. Hardwicke is a thoroughgoing evolutionist, not even pausing at the supposed chasm between animate and inanimate matter. The pamphlet is well worthy perusal.

Intellectual Progress in Europe. By DR. H. J. HARDWICKE. Sheffield: Published by the author.—A very fair resumé of Draper, but little more. Those who have not the opportunity of studying the original work may derive profit from this summary. It would have been civil, to say the least of it, if Dr. Hardwicke had acknowledged his indebtedness to the great American writer.

Little Lessons for Little Folks. Vol. I. By ELMINA DRAKE SLENKER, of Snowville, Virginia. Walter: Liberal, Missouri.—These little Lessons are crammed full of facts suited to delight and instruct the youthful mind, and contain none of the nonsense which so many have to painfully unlearn. "Aunt Elmina" is doing excellent work in America, and deserves all praise.

The People's Abridgement of Bishop Colenso's Critical Examination of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua. By JOACHIM KASPARY. Part III. Humanitarian Publishing Association, 6 Gibson Square, Islington, N. 1885. Eightpence.—The present part deals with the Book of Deuteronomy and the reasons for

placing it in the time of Josiah. It will be acceptable to many who cannot procure the larger work. Mr. Kaspary supplies a preface, and an appendix dealing with the not very closely allied subject of the Sermon on the Mount.

THE TRINITY.

[A POSER FOR CHRISTIANS.]

WHO was the mother of Jesus Christ?—The Virgin Mary.
Who was his father?—The Holy Ghost.
Who was the mother of his Father?—The Virgin Mary.
Who was the mother of the Holy Ghost?—The Virgin Mary?
Who was Christ's father?—Jesus Christ.
Who was the Father of the Holy Ghost?—Jesus Christ.
Who was Jesus Christ?—He was the son of his father and father of himself, also son of the Holy Ghost and father of the Holy Ghost.
The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are, we are told, all one, therefore Jesus Christ was his own father, his own son, the father of his father, the son of the Holy Ghost and father of the Holy Ghost. "He that believeth not shall be damned."

J. P. CHACE.

PROFANE JOKES.

A LITTLE MISTAKE.—Scene: Parish near Glasgow; Sarah calls at the manse to be admitted a member of the church. Minister (condescendingly)—"Yes, yes, Sarah! And you have come out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage?" Sarah (tossing her head)—"Losh me, minister, wha's been tellin' ye a' thae lees? I'm shure I thoct ye kent I was niver faurer awa frae hame than Glesca; an' as fur bein' in a hoose o' bondage, I'll jist gang hame an' tell my mither whit ye've said!" (Exit weeping.)

THOMAS, the herd at Maolachy, went to Dr. M'Audle for baptism for his child. "I hope you are prepared, Thomas," said he, "for so important an occasion." "Well," said Thomas, "I am not padly prepared, for my condition in life. I've a kist fou' o' bannocks, and twa stane o' good chese, and a braxy ham." "Ah, Thomas," said the doctor, "you are indeed carnally-minded; it's the letter and no the speerit o' the ordinance ye've been keeping in mind." "Ah, weel," said Thomas, "I didn't forget that neither, for I've a jar o' rael good stuff from Duncan the iunkeeper."

HIS FAREWELL SERMON.—A Methodist minister once started a church in a young Western town, but for want of pecuniary support was soon obliged to abandon it. His farewell sermon to the lukewarm brethren was characterised by more than elegance. He ended thus:—"At the last day the Lord will say to St. Peter, 'Where is your flock?' and St. Peter will answer,—'Here, Lord.' He will say to Calvin, 'And where are your sheep?' and Calvin will reply, 'Here, Lord;' and so all of the shepherds can answer. But when he asks me, 'Where are your sheep?' how will you feel when I am compelled to reply,—'Lord, I haven't any; mine are all hogs!'"

A RUSSIAN priest was so devoted to card-playing that he played up to the last moment before commencing the church services. On one occasion, having a particularly good "hand" dealt him, he thrust the cards into his pocket, intending to return and finish the game after the service. Unluckily the cards fell out on the church floor, to the extreme scandal of the congregation. The priest, however, was fully equal to the occasion. At the conclusion of the service he beckoned to one of the choristers, and asked him the names of several of the cards, which the boy knew correctly. He then suddenly asked the lad the name of the next saint's day, which the child could not tell. "See," cried the priest, turning to the congregation, "you teach your children the names of every card in the pack, and leave them ignorant of their religion! Let this be the last time I am compelled to bring playing-cards into the church to shame you!" and, picking up his "hand," he made an honorable retreat.

THE BISHOP'S SET OF TEETH.—A young country dentist had recommended to him lately as a patient no less a personage than the Bishop of the diocese. His first commission was a complete set of teeth, and a day was appointed for the prelate to call and fit them in. It was naturally a moment of anxiety to his dentist, as he watched his client examining himself and the new teeth in the pier-glass. Imagine his chagrin, however, when he distinctly caught an expression of a condemnatory character, and ending in "ation," from his client's lips. "I dare say they are a little uncomfortable, my lord," he murmured conciliatingly; "but just at first, and until you get used—" "Without doubt he shall perish everlastingly," exclaimed the Bishop with vehemence. "But," indeed, my lord, if you will but have patience," pleaded the dentist, "in a week's time—" "What do you mean?" inquired the prelate, turning round with a smile. "Why should I not have patience? The teeth fit me beautifully; it is the first time I have found myself able to pronounce the Athanasian Creed with distinctness for these twenty years."

ALFRED SCOTT THOMSON, of the Church Army, has been sent to Reading Gaol for one month's hard labor for leaving his child chargeable to the parish.

