

# THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. V.—No. 23.]

JUNE 7, 1885.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 126.



BOASTING IN THE LORD.

"In God we boast all the day long."—PSALM xlv., 8.

## SUNRISE.

THE dawning of the day of Freethought is over. It is now sunrise. All over the civilised world the young radiance is seen. The deep valleys of superstition are still in semi-darkness, but they catch a reflected light from the hills of thought and the universal mental sky.

Away in America, across the Atlantic which science has made a highway of commerce and civilisation, Freethought is rapidly rising. The most popular orator of the United States is a militant Freethinker. He is listened to with avidity by hundreds of thousands, and he can afford to smile at the bigots who shout "blasphemer!" and invoke the law to gag the man they cannot answer. Colonel Ingersoll has also become President of the American Secular Union, which is carrying on an active propagandist campaign in the States and Canada. Freethought journals are starting up, north, east, south and west. They all remember the *Freethinker*, and favor us with copies. The older journals, however, hold their own in the rival press. The *Boston Investigator* loses none of its vigor with old age, and the *Truthseeker*, under Mr. Macdonald's editorship, is more lively and interesting than ever. Besides these, there are daily papers, like the *New York Truth*, and weekly papers, like *Monroe's Ironclad Age*, that are avowedly Freethought. It is also a remarkable sign of the times

that the American papers, instead of burking Freethought meetings, give them good reports, and they vie with each other in publishing verbatim reports of Ingersoll's lectures. Fancy seeing Monday's edition of the *Manchester Examiner* or the *Leeds Mercury* containing four or five columns of a Freethought oration delivered in the theatre on Sunday evening!

Travelling round with the sun, we find Freethought active in Japan, which has been called the France of Asia. Imbued with Western culture, the Japanese are deserting their native religion, and our missionaries cannot persuade them to embrace Christianity. Freethought literature is extensively circulated there, and producing good fruit.

India also is awakening. Positivism is known to be making considerable progress among a certain educated section of native society, and Atheism is still more prevalent. We receive copies of the *Philosophical Inquirer*, the *Anti-Christian*, and the *Thinker*. Each is edited by a Hindu and a determined opponent of all forms of theology.

Freethought is rapidly advancing in Russia. The universities are hotbeds of "infidelity" as well as Liberalism. Educated men and women there are nearly all Freethinkers. A Russian professor assured us the other day, in an interesting conversation, that his colleagues all smiled at Christianity as a creed for slaves and fools, and they were doing their best for Freethought, although sadly cramped by the iron despotism of the Czar. The best blood of young Russia, congealing amid Siberian snows for the crime of loving freedom, pulses in the hearts of Freethought heroes and heroines who regard kings and priests with equal hatred.

Germany is Freethought to the core. Among its scientists and philosophers it is difficult to find a Christian. Every educated man is more or less a Freethinker; it goes without saying. Haeckel does not, like Darwin, hesitate about religion while bold in science; he frankly owns his scepticism, and wonders why Englishmen are so timid. Mrs. Grundy may still be a power in Germany, but Bumble is played out. Nobody fears him, except perhaps in the rural districts. In Berlin about five per cent. of the inhabitants (mostly women) go to church on Sunday, and the rest spend their leisure more profitably and agreeably in the museums, art galleries, theatres, cafés, public gardens and country fields.

In France the sunrise of Freethought is splendid. The Church pales before it, withers, and vanishes, like a ghost at the approach of daylight. We doubt whether there has been a single Christian in any French cabinet for the last eight years. President Grévy is himself a Freethinker. Gambetta was buried by the nation without religious rites, and the same happy fate has befallen Victor Hugo. Not a single priest figured in his funeral procession. The Church stood aside with looks of impotent hatred while the people buried their hero like Pagans. It is not a funeral, said M. Floquet, but an apotheosis. It is not a burial, said M. Augier, but a coronation. To the people he was king by genius and god by his mighty heart. What need of dead divinities of Greece or Palestine. Olympus or Calvary, while Humanity produces greater, glories? When the true gods come the half gods go, says Emerson; and Paris turns from the deities of the Church to worship the poet who expressed her noblest aspirations in immortal words.

London shows us the ignominious spectacle of a vulgar bigot as Lord Mayor, and a Common Council too largely sharing his views and character, refusing to consider a resolution of condolence with the French people in their great loss. Sir John Bonnett might have saved his time; for, after all, the condolence of such a body would be rather an insult than an honor. Fortunately, the

City of London does not represent the Metropolis in this matter. The London Municipality, when it comes, will know how to fraternise with the municipalities of other capitals on such occasions.

The London workmen are outside the Churches, and their leaders are nearly all Freethinkers. Our principles are rapidly gaining ascendancy with the masses. It is a significant fact that the London weekly papers, one after another, embrace the policy of printing a long list of Sunday lectures in Secular halls. By-and-bye we shall hold great public meetings in the metropolis as we did in Birmingham on Whit-Sunday. Freethought is advancing even in stolid Protestant England with its Bible and its beer. Here, as in France, although more slowly, education is being laicised, and the Church knows that this is the beginning of the end. G. W. FOOTE.

## THE NEW OLD TESTAMENT.

### III.—THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES.

THE prophecies are admittedly the most obscure portion of God's precious revelation. Some of them are so hopelessly confused as to forcibly suggest that they are rather the outcome of insanity than of inspiration. Anyone who will take the trouble to compare a standard translation, like that of Dr. G. R. Noyes with the Authorised Version, will see that there is not a single chapter, hardly a single verse, which is not susceptible of a different interpretation. Here, then, we should expect to see the greatest changes in a revised version. Yet it will be found that the most important changes are relegated to the margin. Indeed, throughout the Revision, where doctrinal passages are concerned, the improvement is usually not in the text but in the margin. A striking instance occurs in the passage put into the mouth of the dying Jacob (Genesis xlix., 10) and usually quoted as a prophecy of the Messiah—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh come," where the marginal reading is "or till he come to Shiloh." The fact that in twenty-two other instances where the word Shiloh occurs, it always refers to a place and not to a person, is sufficient to show the margin is correct. Yet Christians for generations have persisted in turning a mud village into the Messiah, despite the fact that the sceptre did depart from Judah at the destruction of the first temple, when Nebuchadnezzar led Zedekiah, king of Judah, into captivity four hundred and thirty years before the time of Christ. In the alleged Messianic prophecy of Balaam (Numbers xxiv., 15—24) the words "star" and "sceptre" being given without capitals are deprived of the fictitious significance attached to them in the Authorised Version, which, by the way, speaks of Balaam as "the man whose eyes are open," while the revise gives "whose eye was closed." This is a small matter. A more important change occurs in the words of Job to which Handel has set such magnificent music, and which are incorporated in the Church of England burial service (Job. xix., 25, 26).

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

Thousands of sermons have been preached on this text as evidencing Job's faith in the resurrection of the body, and in redemption through Christ. As a matter of fact, the writer had no idea of either of these doctrines. He did not even believe in the immortality of the soul (see Job x., 18, 19; xiv., 10—14). The Revised version translates:

"But I knew that my redeemer (margin 'or vindicator' Heb. *goel*) liveth, And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth (Heb. dust): And after my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet from my flesh shall I see God."

This, with marginal readings to the last verse, is simply an accommodation to the existing version. The learned Adam Clarke declares that "any attempt to establish the true meaning of this passage is hopeless." I do not think so. Let it be remembered that the Hebrew "*goel*" signifies avenger, and the true meaning appears—

"I know that my Avenger liveth,  
And at last he will rise over the dust  
And though my skin is thus torn  
Yet from my flesh shall I see God."

It is simply a poetic expression of Job's confidence that God would finally vindicate his integrity, and that, in the

words of the book, his latter end would be better than his beginning. Poor Job thought more of being quit of his own boils than of the blessed Savior who was to come long after he was dead.

In my humble judgment, none of the Psalms can properly be termed Messianic. Psalm ii., xxii., and xlv., have been thought so, either on account of their obscurity or because quoted in the New Testament. I shall briefly note where these are affected by the revision. Psalm ii., 12, marg., tells us that instead of "kiss the son," some ancient version renders "receive instruction," others, "worship in purity." The last rendering is best. Psalm xxii., 16, although the words are kept, "They pierced my hands and feet," the margin informs us the Hebrew text was "Like a lion," i.e., They surrounded my hands and feet with the strength and fierceness of a lion. It has no more connexion with the piercing of Jesus than with Wombwell's menagerie. Psalm xlv., 6, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," has the alternative, "Thy throne is the throne of God," etc., which is a different matter.

The celebrated passage, Isaiah vii., 14, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son," has now the alternative "Behold a maiden is with child and beareth." A better reading still would have been "a young woman," for the

word עַלְמָה has the idea of youth, but not of virginity. Its cognate עַלְוִים is properly translated "thy youth" (Is. liv., 4). The alteration to the present tense is sufficient to show the prophet's own "young woman" is alluded to, and not the lady afterwards courted by Joseph or Pandera. In prophecy nothing can be more important than attention to the tense, yet it is an admitted fact that in Hebrew the simplest rules of syntax are often disregarded, and one tense substituted for another. Ezek. xxvii., 34, reads in the common version, "Thou shalt be broken," and "shall fall," while the revision gives, "Thou wast broken," and "did fall." Jer. xx., 9, "Then I said," is changed to, "And if I say." And numerous other passages should or might have been similarly altered.

In the important chapter, Isaiah liii., the change of "he shall grow" into "he grew" bears out the true construction that the poet is speaking of the past sufferings of the righteous, personified as "my righteous servant" (v., 11), who are represented as prospering on earth, prolonging days and dividing the spoil with the great, etc., after humiliation and "deaths."\* The alleged prophecy in Daniel ix., 24—27, being so fully dealt with by my friend Mr. Ball, I shall merely observe that the marginal reading, "a most holy place," is certainly correct. The phrase is of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament, and is never applied to persons, but always to things. The altar needed anointing because it had been desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes, in whose reign lived the forger of the book ascribed to Daniel. The punctuation of the Revised Version at verse 25, is that of all copies of the Authorised Version until within the present century. The meaning would be clearer with a full stop at the end of "seven weeks." Anyone can now see that "the anointed one" was a temporal prince, probably Cyrus.

A notable alteration is that in Haggai ii., 7, where "the desire of all nations shall come" is improved into "the desirable things of all nations shall come." The following verse, speaking of "the silver and gold," shows the desirable things intended. The Jews did not believe that their Messiah would be "the desire" of other nations, but rather that he would punish them for their insults to the chosen people. Another noteworthy reading is that in the margin of Zechariah ix., 9, where the king of Jerusalem is described as "saved" instead of "having salvation." On the whole, the alterations, although far too few in number, are in the direction of rational criticism, and should make the task of the Freethinker an easier one.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE Paris correspondent of the *Leeds Mercury*, describing a religious service in the church of St. Clotilde, says "the congregation was composed of all elements of the population save the working classes, of whom I failed to descry a single member." People who work for a living see through the swindle of priestcraft.

\* See *Freethinker*, April 6, p. 103.

## ACID DROPS.

THE Free Church Assembly, Scotland, has condemned the Rev. Dr. Stuart Muir, of Trinity Church, Leith, for indulging in "Popish Practices." The reverend gentleman seems to have been too partial to candles and crucifixes. His defence was rollicking fun from beginning to end. Dr. Muir would earn a good living on the stage if managers would let him perform impromptu pieces.

ARCHBISHOP GIBBONS, of Baltimore, advises his flock "not to let their faith be tampered with," for men or nations that have once given up Christianity never recover it again. We agree with the Archbishop. The only people who are silly enough to profess Christianity are those who have sucked it in with their mother's milk.

THE Rev. Philippe Abier, of Whitehaven, whose wife recently got a divorce, has since been assaulting her relations. It seems the Holy Spirit works in his ministers in much the same fashion as in Bible days.

THE *Cambria Daily Leader* devotes over a column to the proceedings of General Booth at Swansea. It makes a choice extract from a Salvation soldier: "Now they says that hell has been left out of the new Bible that's come out, and some people have been asking me what we're going to do without it! Well, I don't know. It's awkward, but the general won't be beaten. He never has been yet, and if them Bible revisioners have done away with the old hell, we'll make another." This is about correct. If the Salvationists had their way there would soon be a hell on earth for those who disagreed with them.

WHAT beggars these Christians are! We have just been looking through the advertisement columns of a Catholic journal, and we find them swarming with clerical appeals for cash. E. A. Van Dale, of Exton, Oakham, asks for a "little help" to save his mission, and promises a photograph of his church to everybody who sends him five shillings. "Help for the love of Jesus, Joseph and Mary!" cries the Rev. J. Earnshaw, of Batley Carr, promising masses, children's prayers, and penances of the spouses of Jesus to all subscribers. W. Phillipson, of Butley, offers Holy Sacrifices to everybody who sends him "only a trifle." G. B. Fazakerley, of Aberford, is out of debt now, but alas! he wants paint and decorations, and he promises the prayers of thousands for your "safe life and holy end" if you send him a few pennies. And so the holy beggars go on. What are the police doing?

GENERAL BOOTH'S application to the Shoreditch Vestry for a remission of rates on the Grecian Theatre has very properly been refused, on the ground that the sale of the *War Cry* and other publications and articles deprives the place of the privilege of exemption accorded to places of public worship.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* irreverently says that "Moses had probably to take a nimble jump away from the rock after . . . he had knocked the water out of it." We should like to have the *C. C.*'s account, written in the same jocular, not to say blasphemous style, of the curious lesson in politeness which God by example taught Moses during the celebrated interview in the cleft in the rock. Did Moses feel any temptation, we wonder, to kick the part exposed to him with such an affectation of more than royal graciousness and condescension?

THE *Christian Commonwealth* has a leading article on "Revised Christians." It thinks that a "Revised Christianity" is far more needed than a Revised Version of the Scriptures. We think so too.

THE *Christian World* says that "to assert that mental treatment of itself will disperse a cancer, stop scarlatina, or take the place of a splint for a broken leg, is to fall back on miracles." Well, why not? Jesus Christ, Peter, Paul, James and all the first disciples (according to the story) fell back on miracles, and surely what was good medicine and surgery then ought to be so now.

MR. SPURGEON sold a big audience on Whit-Sunday. He announced a sermon on "The New Gospel," and people thought he was going to hold forth on the Revised Version; but to their great disgust, he simply indulged in another fling at the "philosophers."

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, in his American Addresses, sneered at the "wonderful flexibility" of the Hebrew language, which can be made to mean almost anything its interpreters desire. Here is a very good instance. In the authorised English version, Proverbs xviii, 24, reads thus—"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly." In the Revised Version it reads thus—"He that maketh many friends doeth it to his own destruction."

THERE is no fear of God's Word going out of date if Hebrew texts can be deliberately translated in such opposite ways. All the Church has to do is to revise its fetish every generation.

Perhaps the Bible of a hundred years hence will resemble the present one in nothing but the name.

FUTURE revisers will doubtless translate the Creation story with a copy of Darwin on the table. Adam will then turn out an anthropoid ape, and the tree of knowledge will be used for the exercise of his arboreal instincts; and instead of bearing apples, that famous piece of vegetation will grow nuts. Then the painters will go to work, after the fashion of Griset, and paint us Adam and Eve up a nut tree, and the Devil tempting them with a fine cluster of filberts.

THERE is a "Christian Conference" held in London several times a year, and attended by ministers and laymen of various persuasions. No reports of its proceedings ever get into the papers. Happy is the Conference that has no history. The Prince of Peace has come at last.

THE Rev. Brooke Herford is great at assertion. He says that "the Bible remains after all tests and assaults, and is more revered and more authoritative with men than ever." Buncombe, sir, buncombe; pulpit clap-trap. You and your like get a good living by preaching from the Bible and a few millions of people pretend to believe it is God's word, but the last thing you or they ever think of doing is to obey it. The "authority" of the Bible is so great that any man who appealed to it in Parliament or even at a vestry meeting would be considered a crank.

WHAT a lot of rubbish is talked about this "blessed book"! There are the best part of a hundred million English-speaking people in the world. Nine-tenths of them are supposed to believe the Bible is God's Word, containing rules for their guidance in this life and directions how to get to heaven and keep out of hell in the next. That is the theory. Now look at the fact. For fifteen years the public have been apprised by newspaper paragraphs that a body of learned divines were revising the Bible, bringing it up to date, and making it a close copy of God Almighty's original. When their work was completed the advertising trumpets were set blaring, north, east, south and west. While it was being printed the newspapers frequently referred to it, and when it was nearly ready for sale the public journals of every description devoted whole columns to explaining the processes of printing, binding and distribution. But no particle of information as to the contents of the volume was allowed to transpire, every precaution being taken against such a dreadful contingency. Everything was done to stimulate the public curiosity. Well, the book is now out, and of course there has been a large sale. It is rumored that a million copies have been circulated. But what a paltry number compared with the population of the English-speaking world! There are seven million families in the United Kingdom alone, and after fifteen years' puffing only one in every fourteen has invested in a copy of the revised guide to glory. The same amount of puffing would have worked off nearly as many copies of any other book.

A FRENCHMAN proposes to erect a tower a thousand feet high, with rooms at the top for invalids to enjoy mountain air without climbing. Not a bad idea if it can be carried out. Perhaps the Tower of Babel was, after all, a sanatorium, and the Lord smashed up the concern lest it should prove a very good substitute for the tree of life. We wonder whether this enterprising Frenchman is any relation to the architect of that big affair.

THE *Church Times*, while deploring the "scandalously inadequate translation" of Deut. xxvii, 23, says, "The Revised Version has, on the whole, improved the case against the promoters of incest," i.e., those who would accord liberty to marry a deceased wife's sister. It cites Lev. xviii, 18 as "And thou shalt not take a woman to her sister to be a rival to her," omitting the words which follow, "in her life time." The legislation was directed against those who followed Jacob's example and married two sisters at the same time. It does not even prohibit polygamy or concubinage, both of which were practised by all the holy men of God and sanctioned in the blessed book by which Christians wish to regulate modern institutions.

THE Abbé Roca, in his recent work "Le Christ, le Pape et la Démocratie" (Paris, Garnier), addressed to Leo XIII., declares as a fact within his own knowledge, that there are Roman priests saying mass regularly who are Atheists. Yet the Catholic Church boasts loudly of its effective discipline over all its clergy.

THE trustees of Cheshunt College and Lady Huntingdon's connexion are four in number; and they are self-elected—that is when there is a vacancy they elect some friend of their own. They have absolute power over property worth some hundreds of thousands. The *Church Times* says "If we are to have disestablishment, we hope that Parliament will not overlook this nice little nest-egg."

BOOTH'S "Salvation Life Guards" are doing a hundred miles' march in fine weather, with devil an enemy in sight. There is enjoyment galore; the brave fellows victual on bread and beef, and pig together at night in more or less clean straw. They consist of saved "drunkards, liars, thieves, infidels, poachers,

parsons, blackies, sailors and nailers." We doubt the infidels, but are ready to allow all the rest. What a pity there is not a converted "humbug" in the company. Booth himself would do for that part, if he ceased handling the cash.

ST. ANN'S CHURCH, Nottingham, seats twelve hundred people — when it can get them. At present, judging from the vicar's handbills, there seem to be a good many empty pews. The Rev. J. D. Lewis begs the parishioners to come on Sunday and fill them up. We are glad to see the reverend gentleman begging for a congregation, and we hope he will go on begging for many years to come. Disestablishment will end his troubles by-and-by.

SKY-PILOT LEWIS whines about our dearly-beloved queen in his handbill. He calls her a "splendid pattern of Christian womanhood." Perhaps she is. Sky-pilot Lewis is a better authority than we are on that subject. But when he prates about her *simple living* and her *self-denial*, on the best part of half a million a year, we beg to tell him that he is playing the humbug.

THE Rev. Spinther James, Baptist minister, of Llandudno, has been fined ten shillings and costs for drunkenness. He had been taking a little whiskey for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities.

A PRIMITIVE Methodist preacher at Murton, near Sunderland, named George Dawson, has been reverting to primitive customs and has eloped with the wife of another man. Dawson has left a wife and nine children. Are the love-feasts which occasioned such scandal in the early Christian Church and which the Primitive Methodists delight in keeping up, responsible for the frequent occurrence of this sort of thing?

C. H. COLLETTE, of the Vice Society, writes in the *English Churchman* concerning the Roman priesthood: "I unhesitatingly assert that there has been no body of men who have committed so many literary forgeries, falsified so many documents and published so many deliberate untruths." Very good, Mr. Collette, but remember it was through these men's hands that you received your precious Bible.

THE *Church Times* says: "In the United States, the rowdy and criminal class is almost entirely Roman Catholic, and actively so; and in no country where the modern Latin clergy have much influence over the lower classes, is the moral condition of those classes healthy." Yet the *Church Times*, by its advocacy of Ritualism and sacerdotal pretensions, has been doing its best to lead people Romewards ever since it was started.

THE late P. J. Smyth, M.P., who was a Catholic and a Home Ruler, left directions on his death-bed about the publication of a pamphlet, "The Priest in Politics," in which he shows that nine-tenths of the evils that have afflicted Ireland are directly traceable to the influence of the clergy.

ISAAC: "I see by the paper that they've published a revised edition of the Old Testament." Mrs. Partington: "Does it say who writ it?" Isaac: "No." Mrs. Partington: "Well, it's perfectly scandalous. It must be a device of them infidels."

ALTHOUGH the revised version of Ecclesiastes, "Vanity and a striving after wind," is hardly a literary improvement upon "vanity and vexation of spirit," there is no doubt that in the pulpits it will be found a truthful and appropriate change.

If the Archbishop of York had lived when Christianity was a living faith, he would certainly have suffered for heresy—that is if he said then what he says now. In a sermon at Northallerton Church it is reported that "the Archbishop observed that he would venture to say that heaven and hell were not places." Yet the Archbishop has sworn that he believes Jesus Christ "descended into hell." If, as he would have us believe, hell is not a place but a state of wickedness, does he mean to say that Jesus descended into a state of wickedness?

THE Ultramontane *Journal de Rome* expresses its satisfaction with the progress of Ritualism and the practice of auricular confession in the Church of England. The late Earl Russell expressed his opinion that there were members of the Church of England who at the same time belonged to the order of Jesuits, and the Ultramontane organ hints in the same direction.

THE Rev. Dr. Greeves, President of the Methodist Conference, has been preaching at Nottingham on the lively topic of "David's Death-bed." He said, "Although David's death-bed was shadowed with many sad and gloomy memories, he ventured to think that his rule had been just and good. Taking his life broadly and generally, he deserved to be called a man after God's heart." Dr. Greeves says there were two matters "which might well distress the mind of the dying king"—his adultery with Bathsheba and treachery to her husband, and his sin in numbering Israel, on account of which prudential step the Lord slew seventy thousand innocent persons. Dr. Greeves does not tell us that, according to the history, these little matters did not distress the dying king a bit. His distress arose from his not

having slaughtered Joab and Shimei, whom he strictly charged Solomon to execute. But, says Dr. Greeves, "David was sure of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." If the Lord Jesus Christ was moved to come to earth on account of human wickedness, he certainly ought not to have delayed his arrival until a thousand years after David's death.

A MISSIONARY paper declares "It is one of the most hopeful features of our Christianity at the present day that she no longer treats the Jew with cold indifference." Our reading of history tell us that so far from treating Jews with cold indifference the Christians have all along taken quite a burning interest in the chosen race.

WE see that Thomas Cooper in publishing his "Thoughts at Fourscore," still advertises himself as author of the suppressed "Purgatory of Suicides." Ancient Thomas possibly has a shrewd suspicion that his heretical poem will be remembered when all his orthodox productions are lost in merited oblivion.

ONE of the latest Christian publications is entitled "Ethics of the Holy Ghost." We didn't know he had any. If under the exigencies of modern progress he descends to such human requirements we trust that he will commence by explaining his breach of the seventh commandment in his dealings with the espoused wife of Joseph, and of the sixth commandment in killing Ananias and Sapphira. Other little peccadilloes and frolics can then be dealt with at his leisure.

ANOTHER Christian book is called "Steps unto Heaven." If this is founded on the story of Jacob's ladder, the Steps unto Heaven will be covetousness, falsehood, robbery and fraud, followed by a promise of a tenth part of the proceeds to God.

THE Bishop of London has been solicited to preach at Epsom Race-course from the text "He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man" (Psalm cxlvii., 10).

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Jewish World* suggests that the Jews should now put forward an English version of their Holy Scriptures. If they did, no doubt it would be an eye-opener to many.

It seems they have a part of the under-shirt of Jesus Christ at Argenteuil, near Paris. It is warranted free from vermin and will cure some diseases at a distance of fifty paces. Even this relic is inefficacious in brain disorder, or we would recommend it to the attention of Cardinal Manning.

GENERAL BOOTH glories in the "persecution" of his army, many of whom are "in prison for Christ." But what does this mean? Let us take a practical illustration. Down at York, "Lieutenant" Annie Bell persisted in giving a public musical performance in St. Sampson's Square, despite the local bye-laws and the warnings of the police. She was, therefore, brought before the beak and fined; and as she refused to pay, she was marched off to prison for a month. While she is doing a little compulsory thinking, the Salvationists are celebrating her as "a martyr." Brazen-lunged and brazen-faced "Colonel" Cadman came all the way from Leeds to publish her martyrdom on a big banner, which was carried through the streets. But he was too discreet to share her glorious fate; the police told him to move on, and he moved on. These are General Booth's "martyrs"—poor silly creatures who fancy they serve God by making themselves a nuisance in the public thoroughfares.

THEOLOGY AND GEOLOGY.—Hardly less destructive to particular religious beliefs were the discoveries heralded by geology. That science showed that the cosmic conception contained in the Book of Genesis was fundamentally erroneous. It placed the creative period vastly further back in time. It contradicted the alleged creative order. It showed that the present configuration of the earth's surface was not the result of a number of short and isolated creative acts, but of the operation of a few general natural laws in continuous activity over an immense period of time. From the fossil remains it exhumed, compared and classified, geology demonstrated the previous existence of large orders of extinct animals and plants, of a diversity in special and generic characters, and an exuberance of numbers as rich as any now living. It reduced this apparent chaos of life-forms to order, and showed their gradual ascent from the simplest to the most complex organisation until pre-historic life merged in existing forms. Even man was not exempt from association with the great scheme of organic development. For geological research has revealed his existence in conditions of life and in a state of organic development, which place him in these respects nearer to allied animal forms than to the complex product of civilised life among the highest examples of the race in our own day. Geology also shattered for ever the penal character attached to death in the Bible, by showing that for ages before the appearance of man death was the necessary fate of living things, and, by thus discrediting the Biblical narrative, destroyed the shadowy basis upon which this doctrine alone could rest.—*Westminster Review*, p. 71, July, 1882.

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, June 7, Camden Hall, Camden Road, Liverpool, at 11, "Victor Hugo" at 3, "Good God" at 7, "The New Bible; or God's Word brought up to Date."

JUNE 14, Plymouth; 21, Manchester; 28, Bristol.

JULY 5, Hall of Science, London; 12, Camborwell; 19, Milton Hall; 26, Claremont Hall.

## 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. 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—H. P. Bowden, C. D.

E. PANKHURST.—You have only to give notice of marriage at the office of the registrar of your parish and arrange a day with him for the ceremony. The process is both cheaper and simpler than employing a sky-pilot, which no *Freethinker* should ever sanction.

J. DAVIES.—You do us a service by inducing new-venturers to exhibit the *Freethinker*. Whenever they do so they are sure of a sale.

SEPTUAGENARIAN.—We have read your letter with great interest. *Freethinkers* do the cause great good by sending such communications to local newspapers that are fair enough to print them. Thanks for your good wishes.

J. R.—Not a bad idea. We will think it over. Unfortunately Mr. Foote is extremely busy at present. The texts would have to be given in full.

A. H. HUNTER.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

A. HARVEY.—Thanks for your interest in our welfare, but mesmerism isn't much in our way. Try Mr. Spurgeon.

SCRIBE.—Cuttings are always welcome. Send more whenever you like.

H. G. SWIFT.—Shall appear. Thanks.

J. THOMSON writes: "I tender you my thanks for publishing 'The Jewish Life of Christ.' I devoured it and lent it to a Christian friend who is painfully groping along the road to Freethought. I think it will open his eyes to see the light."

M. HORTOT.—It would hardly be worth while to trouble the old gentleman now.

L. JOHNSON writes: "Your 'Crimes of Christianity' is the very thing I've been looking for, and I don't see how the 'accursed creed' can stand against such an exposure, if the other numbers are anything like number one."

ANONYMOUS persons who send us tracts for the benefit of our immortal soul are warned that all such missives go straight into the waste-paper basket. If it were not that a Christian and a crank often mean the same thing, we should wonder why so many pious people unite to supply us with tons of waste-paper on the cheap.

INQUIRER.—You will find Mill's panegyric on Christ in his "Three Essays," edited by Miss Helen Taylor. We intend to analyse it some day, and to show that Mill merely gave the rein to his fancy. His reasoning is remarkably fallacious, and he shows surprising ignorance of the facts of the case.

J. F. REVIDGE.—There is no fear of our sketches being discontinued. We know their value and mean to maintain them. Sorry to hear of your illness. Your little designs may be useful as suggestions, though they are too rough for reproduction.

J. F.—Thanks. We are always glad to receive cuttings.

A. H. BURN.—Received with thanks. It is good to hear the sky-pilots groan.

J. BETTS.—Mr. Thomson, Magdalen Street, and Mr. House, Bethel Street, Norwich, both sell the *Freethinker* and other Secular publications.

R. E.—Thanks.

R. W.—Pope Gregory VII, in a council at Rome, enacted: "We, following the statutes of our predecessors, do, by our apostolical authority, absolve from their oath of fidelity, those who are bound to excommunicated persons, either by duty, or oath, and we unloose them from every tie of obedience."

D. KAY.—Thanks. You do a service by handing on the *Freethinker* when you have read it.

E. HALEY.—We should have been glad to give a good notice of the Report if you had sent it in time, but it is rather late now to deal with a meeting held on April 5. You might have remembered, too, that Mr. Foote, and not Mr. Ramsey, is the editor of the *Freethinker*, and that our address is not 28 Stonecutter Street, but 14 Clerkenwell Green.

W. A. SEYMOUR.—We are not very fond of taking Christian advice as to how this journal should be edited. Send your suggestions to the *Universe* or the *War Cry*. You point us to your Christian hospitals; we point you to your Christian gaols. You pray God to soften our heart; you had better ask him to harden your head.

B. DAWSON (Spennymoor) writes: "Your grand speeches at the Conference have put new life into us. Will you announce that *Freethinkers* in our district are requested to attend a meeting on Sunday, June 7, at 6 30, at Mr. Tunstall's, newsagent, High Street?"

H. BROWN.—Read the ninth page of the "Shadow of the Sword" if you want to know our views on the peace-at-any-price principle. When you talk of our being bound to fight Russia some day, and the sooner the better, you use the language of political ruffianism; and when you talk about our crippling Russia (a nation of eighty millions)

and reducing her to a third-rate power, you use the language of political lunacy. Jingoism are generally impudent, and you are no exception. The silly impertinence with which you conclude will ensure the swift passage to the waste-basket of any future letters you may send us.

S. BROWN.—You ask us how we justify our Comic Bible Sketches. Read our Introduction to Part I., just published, and you will there find what we have to say on the subject.

J. RAVSON.—The recantation stories about Voltaire and Paine, with many others, are dealt with in Mr. Foote's "Death's Test."

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Cambria Daily Leader—Universe—Truthseeker—Sunday School Chronicle—Family Herald—Anti-Infidel—Liberal—Willesden Herald—Nottingham Journal—Christian—Northern Echo—Hereford Times—Shipping World—Lucifer—Aris's Birmingham Gazette—Presbyterian—Leeds Evening Express—Present Day—Sheffield and Rotherham Independent—Christian Globe—Bailie—Hampshire Independent

## "FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

THE Prize for the best Religious Topical Sketch has been won by F. Wilcockson, 76 St. Stephen Street, Salford. It is entitled "Natural Selection" and will appear in our next number.

The Prize for the best Comic Bible Sketch has been won by D. R. Williams ("Mephisto"), 44 Barbara Street, Westbourne Road, Barnsbury, N.

The following are highly commended and will be used, a remittance according to value being sent to the draughtsmen:—"The Christian Idol," by J. Pinder; "Sal-Vation" and "Come Let Us Reason Together," by G. R. Warnes.

The following are commended, and any that are used will be remitted for:—C. Prescott, G. R. Warnes, J. Martin, C. Hogarth, G. L. Conway, "Pharaoh," H. W. Thorne, R. McPherson, Albert Smith, Theomachos, W. F. Curtis.

We offer another PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best Comic Bible Sketch, and a PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best Religious Topical Sketch suitable for reproduction; the competition to close on July 1.

The drawing must be done on white cardboard or thick white paper in pure black ink. The lines should be bold and well distinct. Washes or colors must not be used. The size should be about one-third broader than our ordinary single or double column size.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

DESPITE the warm weather, there was a capital audience at Milton Hall last Sunday evening. Mr. Foote's new lecture on "The New Bible; or God's Word brought up to Date" was heartily enjoyed, the humorous points being especially appreciated. We hear that the Branch is carrying on its outdoor propaganda very successfully in Regent's Park, and that Mr. Leekey is a first-rate advertising agent for the cause.

THE following story occurs in the *People's Journal* of Dundee, and if not true (and we fancy it is at least exaggerated) it is well found:—"At a mass meeting held last week in St. James's Hall, London, for promoting the abolition of the House of Lords, Mr. Foote, celebrated for his imprisonment for blasphemy, concluded an admirable speech with the lines from Shelley beginning, 'Men of England who inherit.' With rhetorical fervor and considerable dramatic power he began, 'Men—of—England,' when from an upper gallery, in stentorian and unmistakable accents, come the words, 'and Scotland.' The interruption was amusing, but it did not satisfy a compatriot, who was heard, on coming out of the hall, to say, 'Man, Geordie, ye sheedna hae said "Scotland," ye shud hae said Breetain.' 'So I wud, Tam,' replied Geordie, 'so I wud, but deil tak' me gin I could mind the name!'"

OUR Summer Number may be expected in less than a fortnight. A definite number will be printed and the formes broken up. Those who want to make sure of a copy had better order early. The Summer Number will be more profusely illustrated than any special number we have yet issued.

THE June number of *Progress* contains an exhaustive article on "Oaths and Oath-Taking" by Mr. Wheeler which will interest a wide circle of readers. Mr. Foote, besides criticising John Bright's letter on the Princess Beatrice dowry, continues his "Prisoner for Blasphemy," giving an account of his last hours in Newgate and of his transference in the prison van to Holloway Gaol. The late James Thomson's (B.V.) profoundly interesting biography of Heine is also continued, and there is the first Act of a Play translated from the Norwegian of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, the greatest writer in that language after Ibsen. Readers of *Progress* will be highly pleased to find this admirable work made accessible to them.

THE Rev. Z. B. Woffendale, in a letter to the *Presbyterian*, admits that the pick of the working men "in general still keep outside of churches." He hopes, however, that they will be brought into the fold some day. But his proposed method of doing this is obviously hopeless. He expects the ministers of Christ to improve in intellect, morality, devotion and public spirit. Impossible! They are getting worse every day.

PART II. of "Crimes of Christianity" is now ready. It deals with the conversion of Constantine and his state establishment of Christianity, the squabbles and mutual cursings of the bishops, the Council of Nice, the persecution and assassination of Arius, the death of Constantine, and the bloody quarrels which disgraced the Church in the reigns of his immediate successors. Chapter and verse is given for every statement as in the preceding number. Part III. will deal with the unscrupulous extirpation of Paganism under Theodosius, the destruction of its temples and academies by brutal violence, and the horrid murder of Hypatia. Part I. has had an excellent sale, and the success of the work is assured.

THE Hornsey Radical Association, which is being formed, and which we wish all success, has on its programme the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. Many other Radical Associations are giving prominence to this question. We hope our friends, in every part of the country, who take an active interest in politics, will insist on having the Blasphemy Laws brought to the attention of Parliamentary candidates and electoral committees. Hesitation would be a crime against Freethought.

THE *Truthseeker* of May 23 contains an interesting paper on "Some Christian Superstitions," translated from the Bengalee of a celebrated Hindu pundit by our friend Amrita Lal Roy.

MR. W. W. COLLINS is engaged on a new pamphlet, to be entitled "Law and God."

THE Birmingham Conference of the N. S. S. has naturally created some excitement in the capital of the Midlands. A North Warwickshire man gives vent to his feelings in the *Gazette*, but like many other rabid Christians who howl at Atheists through the editorial tube he omits to mention his name. He rages at the thought of Mr. Bradlaugh, the "representative of political Atheism," presiding at a Freethought demonstration in the Birmingham Town Hall; and absolutely foams at the idea of his being "supported by Mr. Foote, who has been imprisoned for blasphemy." No doubt this anonymous scribbler thinks his letter will shake the mayor and corporation into convulsions of remorse; but he will more probably shake them into convulsions of laughter.

THE Rev. J. Lemoine, who preaches in the vicinity of Commercial Road, London, has just made some admissions that are very damaging to his creed. "No argument," he says "has ever been constructed strong enough to prove God's existence," nor can "science find out the soul." This is exactly what the Atheist says, and it must be an eye-opener to some of Mr. Lemoine's congregation. He tells them that they must believe in God and the soul, not by the aid of carnal reason, but by the assistance of faith. In other words, Mr. Lemoine's religion comes simply to this—"Let us pray." People won't pay pew rents long for that sort of thing.

## A PROPHECY OF DANIEL'S.

(Concluded from page 174.)

THE inspired prophecy continues thus:

*Authorised Version.*

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

*Revised Version.*

"And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and his end shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined."

What an excellent vehicle for trustworthy prophecy must the extraordinarily flexible or obscure language be that lends itself so readily to these variable readings! "Not for himself" is the same thing as "shall have nothing," or as the marginal reading has it, "there shall be none belonging to him." Does the Holy Ghost mean that "desolations" shall continue "unto the end of the war," or that war shall continue till "his end" by "a flood?" And whose end is to be by a flood? The city's, the destroying prince's, or the wall-building Messiah's? And what flood fulfilled the prophecy, and ended Jerusalem, or the Romans, or Christ?

The reconciliation of these confused and conflicting readings, and of the alleged prophecies with their alleged fulfillments, is evidently a task more suited to the inmates of a lunatic asylum than to men who wish to retain their reasoning faculties in a state of sanity and usefulness.

I will keep to the question of time as the crucial one. How can Messiah be cut off after sixty-two weeks when

he does not appear till the seventieth week? Was the crucifixion to be eight weeks of years earlier than the incarnation? Did Christ die 56 B.C.? Or if the "seven weeks" of the Revised Version be adopted, did the Messiah appear fifty-six years after the promulgation of the decree of Cyrus? Did the real Christ come to earth in 480 B.C., and pass away utterly unnoticed? One thing becomes evident—that the prophecy, as a reference to the time of the coming of Jesus, breaks down miserably. Many of course will read the prophecy as announcing Christ's coming in sixty-nine or seventy weeks of years, and his being subsequently cut off after a further sixty-two weeks of years. But this reading, however natural, is untenable, because Jesus did not live on earth for 434 years between his birth and his crucifixion; and it is not permissible suddenly to change the weeks of years, as some might do, into ordinary weeks, in a pitiful attempt to make the length of the promised Messiah's life correspond more nearly with the duration of Christ's active ministry on earth.

The conclusion of the prophecy runs thus:

*Authorised Version.*

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even unto the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

*Revised Version.*

"And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and for the half of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the consummation, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolator."

According to the Old Version, Christ confirms "the covenant," which Christians regard as the Judaic or Old Testament dispensation. According to the New Version, the anointed one only makes "a" covenant. The Old Version, agreeably to Christian ideas, makes Christ stop the Jewish sacrifices for an indefinite period and presumably for ever. The newer, and probably more truthful rendering, makes the period of cessation only half a week. The one version makes Christ desolate the city until the consummation; the other makes somebody else the desolator, and pours out the wrath upon him, and not upon the desolate, as in the older version. Who is to determine whether prophecies of so uncertain and bewildering a nature are fulfilled or not? In the matter of time, Christ's ministry did not last a week of years, nor did he in the midst of it cause the Jewish ceremonial to cease, or make Jerusalem desolate until the consummation—that is, as far as I can see, though expert believers of all sects will of course be quite ready to point out how strikingly all these puzzling and conflicting announcements have been fulfilled. Unfortunately, they forget that the childish stupidities and falsehoods that satisfy Christian zealots have no validity in the eyes of those who are free to think.

There remains one matter to be cleared up. What is the rational explanation of this prophecy? Was it merely the result of the wild dreamings and imaginings of a captive Jew, or an historical narrative of past events written in the form of a prophecy, or part history and part dream? It must be remembered that the "Book of Daniel" was written or compiled or forged long after the events recorded in it, and Daniel was no more the author of the work as a whole than Moses was of the Pentateuch. It was a prose epic—a national novel of the period, addressed to solemn children—that is, to patriotic and religious Jews, who in intellectual aspects were in many respects little better than children. It abounds in post-prophecies, in which, as was common in those days, the history of events already past was given in a form more striking to the popular imagination than a bare record of facts would be. Most of its curious prophecies and visions can thus be referred to the past. Whether any of them were real attempts at forecasting future events is a matter too intricate and doubtful to be entered upon here. Dr. Davidson thus explains the alleged prophecy with which I have been dealing:—

"The Messiah cannot be intended, either in the 25th or 26th verse, because the Hebrew word wants the article. Cyrus is meant by the *anointed prince*: the *anointed one* who should meet with a violent death and have no heir, is Seleucus IV., Philopator, son and successor of Antiochus the Great, who was cut off by Heliodorus. The passage refers to the time between the des-

truction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans and the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes. The first week of years reaches from Jerusalem's overthrow till Cyrus; the sixty-two weeks from Cyrus to Antiochus; the last week (verse 27) embraces the period of the latter's cruelties. It is therefore preposterous to take the paragraph as distinctly Messianic, or a prophecy of Jesus Christ." W. P. BALL.

## REVIEWS.

*To-Day*, June. Modern Press.—There is not much variety or incisiveness in the contents. The most noticeable article is one on Walt Whitman by Anne Gilchrist.

*Evolution and Revolution*. By ELISEE RECLUS. International Publishing Company.—Anything this able and high-hearted man writes is worth reading. There is much in this pamphlet worth reflecting on.

*Earthly Hopes and Heavenly Expectations*. By C. C. CATTELL. Aston: Birmingham.—Some of the Secular points on this subject are put clearly in the author's usual manner, but seven pages of long primer make a small pennyworth nowadays.

*Robert Burns: Was He a Christian?* By SALADIN. Stewart and Co.—A reply to the *Ayrshire Post*, with an appendix containing the author's prize poem on Burns. We prefer the prose to the verse, though both will probably find admirers.

*Christians, Behold your God!* By CHARLES ROSE. Morrish: Bristol.—The author is a Bristol man, just returned from Australia. Like many other Colonists with the brains and energy that command success, he is a Freethinker; and in this pamphlet he gives some of his reasons for rejecting not only the Bible god, but every other deity in the world's pantheon.

*The Commonweal*. June. Socialist League: Farringdon Street. William Morris contributes a new poem, "Mother and Son." It has some fine points, of course; but it shows that political agitation and poetry do not go well together. Belfort Bax writes forcibly, though at times he is a little hectic, on "British Foreign Policy." J. Sketchley has a long windy letter to Mr. Chamberlain. Surely the nationalisation of the land can be advocated in a more practical and less florid manner. Dr. Aveling goes to the opposite extreme. He tells us in two long columns of stiff, harsh, and pseudo-scientific prose, that money is valuable metal and a medium of exchange. After this, Mr. Morris's article on "Attractive Labor" is quite refreshing. Eleanor Aveling's "Record of the International Movement" is interesting as usual. But the Socialists in England have not yet learnt how to write for the people.

*A Short History of the Bible, being a Popular Account of the Formation and Development of the Canon*. By BRONSON C. KEELER. Washington (U.S.): C. P. Farrell, Publisher.—This is a scholarly and useful work, giving in short compass an account of how the present books of the Bible got compiled, what books are now included which in earlier days were excluded, and what are now excluded which were formerly included. Mr. Keller has gone to the best authorities, notably citing the excellent work on the Canon by Prof. Samuel Davidson. His position would have been strengthened had he also availed himself of the researches of the author of "Supernatural Religion." He shows that the authorship of twenty-six books of the Old Testament and thirteen of the New have been disputed; that the books were not originally considered inspired, and that the Fathers of the Church were quite incompetent to judge even of their authenticity. In the early Church the forged Sybilline books, the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Gospel according to the Egyptians, the Book of Enoch, the Preaching of Peter, the Pastor of Hermas, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, the Wisdom of Solomon, and numerous other apocryphal pieces, were received as on an equality with those now deemed canonical. Mr. Keeler further shows how different were the early lists drawn up by various Councils of the Church and the disputes which raged about the various volumes. We give his conclusion in his own words:

"The Bible as we have it to-day, is hardly more than three centuries old; and there is another fact altogether too little regarded—the only men distinguished for their learning who now believe it to be the inspired word of God, are the men who are either directly or indirectly making their living out of it. No discussion of the question can be properly made which does not keep this in view."

The little book is excellently printed and tastefully bound, and is in every way a credit to American Freethought.

AN "International Faith-healing Conference" has just taken place at "Bethshan." There was a numerous attendance, and representatives were present from America, Australia, France, Germany, Holland, India, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. And this takes place towards the end of the nineteenth century! Civilization has much to do yet.

THE Whitehaven police have apprehended a fortune-teller who had obtained sums amounting to £100 out of a foolish woman for promising her a husband. The clergy obtain far larger sums on far wilder pretences. When are they to be arrested?

## EARTHLY PLEASURES ENHANCE HEAVENLY PLEASURES.

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."—LUKE xv., 7.

Then why not sin those hosts to please,  
Repenting at our leisure;  
Enjoy ourselves and take our ease,  
To give those angels pleasure?

For ninety-nine, upright and just,  
Can't please those heavenly hosts,  
As much as one "ungodly cuss"  
Blaspheming Holy Ghosts.

And when he is old and can partake  
No more of sinful pleasures,  
What joy those heavenly hosts will take  
At his repenting measures!

Then let us sin, dear girls and boys,  
Repent and be forgiven;  
The more we taste those sinful joys  
The greater joy in Heaven!

(Boston Investigator).

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

ONE day a Catholic priest, it is said, gave by mistake, instead of the sacrament, an ivory counter, which had by accident fallen among the holy wafers. The communicant waited patiently for some time, expecting that it would dissolve upon his tongue; but finding that it still remained entire, he took it off. "I fear," he cried to the priest, "you have committed some mistake. You have given me a piece of God the Father: he is so hard and tough there is no swallowing him!"—*Hume's* "Natural History of Religion," vol. iv., p. 465.

CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM.—It is well known that Romulus, mindful of his own adventurous infancy, became after death a Roman deity propitious to the health and safety of young children, so that nurses and mothers would carry sickly infants to present them in his little round temple at the foot of the Palatine. In after ages the temple was replaced by the church of St. Theodorus, and there Dr. Conyers Middleton, who drew public attention to its curious history, used to look in and see ten or a dozen women, each with a sick child in her lap, sitting in silent reverence before the altar of the saint. The ceremony of blessing children, especially after vaccination, may still be seen there on Thursday mornings.—*Dr. E. B. Tylor*, "Primitive Culture," vol. ii., p. 111; 1871.

WESLEY AND SCIENCE.—Thus we already find in Wesley that aversion to scientific reasoning which has become characteristic of orthodox theologians. He makes in one place the remarkable statement that he is convinced "from many experiments" that he could not "study to any degree of perfection either mathematics, arithmetic or algebra, without being a Deist, if not an Atheist" (Works, viii., 384). Others, he adds, may study these subjects all their lives without any inconvenience. His ignorance of course does not prevent him from forming some very decided opinions as to the value of scientific researches. He disbelieves altogether in the Newtonian astronomy. He doubts whether any man knows the distance of the sun or moon. He thinks that Jones (of Nayland) has totally overthrown the Newtonian principles, though he might not have established the Hutchinsonian; and that Dr. Rogers has proved the whole framework of modern astronomy to be quite uncertain, if not self-contradictory. The scepticism of believers is at least as curious as the credulity of sceptics.—*Leslie Stephen*, "English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," p. 412, vol. ii.; 1876.

A Quakeress, jealous of her husband, watched his movements, and actually one morning discovered the truant kissing and hugging the servant-girl. Broad-brim was not long in discovering the face of his wife as she peered through the half-opened door, and rising with all the coolness of a general, thus addressed her: "Betsy, thee had better quit peeping, or else thee will cause a disturbance in the family."

A MINISTER and a magistrate were once returning home along a country road, after an ordination dinner. They were arm in arm, and taking up pretty well the full breadth of the road. Pausing under the moonlight, the cleric thus addressed his boon companion—"You're a decent fellow, Bailie, but I've just a wee bit faut to fin' wr' you." "I'm sorry to hear that," replied the Bailie. "What is it ye mean?" "Weel, you see, Bailie, you don't attend the church quite so regularly as you might." "Weel, maybe no, but I never grudge my seat rent or tithes." "No, 'deed, I cannot say you do, Bailie. Weel, weel, then, let's say nae mair about it, for, after a', that's the principal part o' the business."

## PROFANE JOKES.

REVISED PUNCTUATION.—The Bold, Bad Flea.—The wicked flea, when no man pursueth but the righteous, is as bold as a lion.

OUR Printer's Devil (who is a thorough Cockney) observes that substituting Sheol, with one l, for Hell, with two, will make a h—l of a difference to the comp. These liberties with the aspirate are exasperating.

PAT had brought a "process" against his landlord and lost his case. Said a sympathiser, "Won't ye appale?" "No," replied Pat; "I'll lave him to Almighty God, and he'll surely play the Devil wid him!"

"It's very wrong to bet," said the Bible-hanger. "No it ain't, there's nothing against gambling in the Bible." And when the gospel sharp came to look he could only find that Joshua and Jonah's shipmates cast lots. He concluded it was a slight omission on the part of omnipotence.

"THEY tell me Parson Brown has a great ear for music," said Tonderson. "Yes," replied Togg, "I knew he had a great ear—two of them in fact, but I did not know they were for music. I supposed that they were for brushing flies off the top of his head."

THE Hebrew and the Samian sage  
Were surely much mistaken,  
When in their legislative rage  
They banished beans and bacon.  
Rather than such a dainty dish,  
Pythagoras and Moses  
Ought to have joined in Aaron's wish  
And banished both their noses.

## NOW READY. COMIC BIBLE SKETCHES.

### PART I.

Containing Thirty-nine Illustrations, including all those for which Sir Henry Tyler unsuccessfully prosecuted Messrs. Bradlaugh, Foote, and Ramsey.

WITH A

Special Introduction by G. W. Foote,  
and a Racy Frontispiece.

Handsomely printed on special paper, and bound in colored wrapper.

Forty-Eight Large Pages.  
PRICE FOURPENCE.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St

## THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST,

Being the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu" or Book of the Generations of Jesus. Edited (with an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes) by G. W. Foote & J. M. Wheeler.

Paper Covers—Price Sixpence.

Superior Edition (printed on fine paper and bound in limp cloth) One Shilling.

"Messrs. G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler have laid the Freethought party under great obligation by the careful manner in which they have collected and stated the information on a very doubtful and difficult subject. . . . We have no hesitation in giving unqualified praise to the voluminous and sometimes very erudite notes."—*National Reformer*.

"This work looks as neat and dapper as if the Virgin Mary had set up the types, and all the saints had blessed the printer's rollers. . . . Messrs. Foote and Wheeler's is far superior to the American edition. . . . The work will undoubtedly command a large sale."—*Secular Review*.

## SECOND-HAND BOOKS.

Discoveries in Egypt, by Dr. Richard Lepsius. This celebrated work, illustrated with colored frontispiece and map, 2s. 6d.

Beke's Originals Biblicæ, Researches in Primeval History, cloth; 1s. 6d.

The Principles and Practice of Medicine by Dr. Hughes Bennett; profusely illustrated; over 1,000 pages; perfect order; 3s. 6d.

The Works of Lessing in the original German; complete in 30 vols. (Vol. 2 missing); £1.

Schlegel's Philosophy of History; Bohn's series; 2s.

Sismond's Literature of Europe, 2 vols.; Bohn's series; 1s. 4s.

Carpenter's Manual of Physiology; 500 fine engravings; 3s. 6d.

Admiral Smith's Wealth of Nations; 3 vols., calf; 3s.

Historical and Biographical Dictionary of the Gods and Heroes of Pagan Antiquity, Popes, Historians, Poets, Painters, Learned Women, etc., with their principal works; by the Abbe Ladvoeat. Translated from the French. Four vols., bound in calf; excellent condition; 4s.

Gordon's Tacitus, complete in 5 vols.; calf; 3s.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter Street.

## CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY

G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler.

PART I.—CHRIST TO CONSTANTINE.

NOW READY,

PART II.—CONSTANTINE TO JOVIAN.

16 pp. Price One Penny.

The succeeding parts will be issued at intervals of a fortnight.

"A few weeks ago we had the satisfaction to draw attention to a new edition of 'The Sepher Toldoth Jeshu,' by Messrs. Foote and Wheeler. Now we have before us, by the same collaborators, the first instalment of their 'Crimes of Christianity.' In their preface the editors disclaim all attempts at mere elegance of literary style, trusting to establish their case and obtain a verdict by the bare and unvarnished recital of Christianity's crimes, as recorded in the pages of veritable history. As far as they have gone, the editors bid fair to effect the purpose they had in view. The evidence against the culprit, Christianity, is led with forensic skill. The patristic writers are made to turn the muzzles of their own guns upon their own entrenchments. Exceedingly relevant passages are selected from such writers as Gibbon, Locky and Jortin, which go far to establish that this 'blessed Gospel' about which we hear so much from its hirelings is a demon-message that has blighted and cursed the world."—*Secular Review*.

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

## THE SHADOW OF THE SWORD

By G. W. FOOTE.

BEING

A SECULAR SERMON ON WAR,  
Its Wickedness, its Folly, and its Cost,

WITH

ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO BRITISH  
OPERATIONS IN THE EAST AND THE  
THREATENED WAR WITH RUSSIA.

In Wrapper, Stitched, PRICE TWOPENCE.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"An ably written pamphlet, exposing the horrors of war and the burdens imposed upon the people by the war systems of Europe. . . . The author deserves thanks for this timely publication."—*Echo*.

"A trenchant exposure of the folly of war, which everyone should read."—*Weekly Times*.

"A wonderfully eloquent denunciation of the war fever."—*Birmingham Owl*.

"This pamphlet presents us with some startling truths that are well worth preserving."—*The People* (Wexford).

"Mr. Foote lends his pen to the effort being made to turn public opinion in favor of peace. . . . his happily-named pamphlet."—*National Reformer*.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

Audi alteram partem—Hear what an old creed can say for itself.

Pp. 106. Price 2s. 3d., post free.

THE ANTIQUITY AND GENUINENESS OF THE GOSPELS. A Handbook.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.—"Its reverend author has an original turn of mind."—*The Freethinker*. "Shows the hand of a keen and original thinker."—*Literary Churchman*.

"The writer possesses a judicial mind."—*The Guardian*. "In view of the loose statements that are frequently met with regarding the early testimony to the Gospels has rendered a useful service, by drawing up a list of the principal classical writers of Greece and Rome with the earliest testimonies we possess to the genuineness of their works."—*The Scotsman*.

"We strongly recommend the book."—*Clergyman's Magazine*.

W. H. Allen and Co., 13 Waterloo Place,

Pall Mall, S.W.

HALF-HOLIDAY HANDBOOKS.—Geological Rambles round London, Round Dorking and Neighborhood, Round Reigate, Round Richmond and Neighborhood, Croydon and the North Downs; 5d. each, or the set for 1s. 6d.; postage 1½d. each, or for the set 6d.—28 Stonecutter Street.

WORTH 2100—Tonic Bitters, a Physician's Prescription; Positiv. Cure for Indigestion, Nervous Debility, Palpitation, Flatulency and Liver Complaint. Cost trifling. The same is sold as a patent medicine at 4s. 6d.—For recipe, send postal notice for 1s., T. Jones, Providence Cottage, Sinthwick, Birmingham.

Price Fourpence.

## PROGRESS

A Monthly Magazine,

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

The JUNE NUMBER contains—

Royal Grants. By the Editor.  
Oaths and Oath-taking. By J. M. Wheeler.  
Modern Materialism. By W. W. Collins.  
A Fragment. By E. Vans.  
Prisoner for Blasphemy. XII. By G. W. Foote.  
The Warrior Boy. (A Poem) By Anti-ingo.  
The New Theology. By George Payne.  
Heinrich Heine. By James Thomson (B.V.)  
The Cholera Germ. By Edward Aveling.  
Christian Schools. By an Usher.  
To Lord Tennyson. By L. J. Nicolson.  
A Gannetlet; A Play in Three Acts. By Björnsterne Björnson.

"Progress is an advanced, thorough-going, drastic monthly."—*Oldham Chronicle*.

## BIBLE ROMANCES.

First series, in handsome colored wrapper, 1s.

## ARROWS OF FREETHOUGHT.

112 pages, in handsome wrapper, 1s.

"'Arrows of Freethought' and 'Bible Romances' are two volumes of merciless, vigorous, smart pamphlets, by G. W. Foote. The author believes in ridicule, sarcasm, blasphemy. He does not mince matters in the least. He strikes right out and takes his chance. He is one of the Freethought leaders who never did believe in trimming, and who has contempt only for those who do. He is a bold, relentless, and slashing champion of Secularism, and those who hold with him will highly prize these telling and outspoken articles and addresses."—*Oldham Chronicle*.

## 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.

## 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.

TO FREETHINKERS, Etc.

A 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, CONSTIVENESS, 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. 1½d. and 2s. 3d. 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 1 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.