

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

PRIZE CARTOON.



NATURAL SELECTION.—(See page 186).

"Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."—LUKE xvii., 36.

DESECRATING A CHURCH.

THERE was a Pantheon at Rome, which was a monument of the religious tolerance of the Empire. It was dedicated, as appears from the inscription on the portico, by Agrippa, son-in-law to the great Augustus, to Jupiter and all the other gods, with the same generosity that prompted the Athenians to erect an altar to the gods that might be unknown. A niche was afforded within its walls to every deity of the provinces whose devotees were willing to accept the hospitality; and Christ himself might have figured with the rest, if his worshippers did not scorn all other gods but their own.

The old Pantheon still exists, and bears the name of the Rotunda. But it is no longer a Pagan temple. It was rededicated by Pope Boniface the Fourth, in A.D. 608, to the Virgin Mary and all the saints. Another Pope, a thousand years later, despoiled it of its ornaments, which had been spared by so many barbarian conquerors. He cast some into cannon, and with the rest formed a high altar for the Church of St. Peter.

These alterations were of course justifiable. They were all made in the interest of Christianity. What could be more proper than the transformation of Pagan temples into Christian churches? What more admirable than

devoting to the worship of Christ the edifice which had echoed the tread of the priests of Jupiter? What more pious than singing the praises of Mary and all the saints in a temple where idolators had celebrated the glories of all the gods and goddesses of Olympus?

Such is Christian logic. But if the temples of one faith may be so transformed, why may not those of another? If Christianity had the right to devote the temples of Paganism to its own uses, why has not modern civilisation the right to devote the temples of Christianity to secular purposes?

The Church thinks otherwise. It is at present denouncing the secularisation of the Church of St. Geneviève, in order that Victor Hugo, who died a Freethinker and was buried without religious rites, might repose in an unconsecrated place. This building is the French Pantheon. It was secularised during the Revolution, and dedicated by the Republic, not to the gods of religion, but to the heroes of liberty. When the monarchy was restored it was reconsecrated, and purged of the luciferous taint of Voltaire's dust. But now the Republic is once more established on the ruins of monarchy and imperialism, it again secularises the Church of St. Geneviève as a tomb for its mighty dead. The Church is naturally indignant, but its anathemas are powerless. God does not interpose, and the Republic is too strong. Nay, there is even a rumor that the Roman Pantheon may be secularised also, and changed into

a natural mansoleum, where the youth of Italy may bend reverently before the tombs of such glorious soldiers of progress as Mazzini and Garibaldi, instead of honoring the very counterfeit presentment of fabulous old saints, chiefly renowned for their laziness and dirt.

The Church of St. Geneviève is desecrated, cries the Archbishop of Paris, and special prayers are offered up to that ancient lady in heaven to avert her wrath from the infidel city which has so insulted her. In one sense the Archbishop is right. The church is desecrated in the strict etymological meaning of the word. It has been converted from sacred to secular uses. But in the secondary meaning of the word the building is not desecrated, but honored, by being made a fit receptacle for the mortal remains of Victor Hugo.

A government decree and the removal of the cross on top of the church were the only steps necessary to its desecration. The consecrated character of the temple is gone. To the carnal eye the structure remains unchanged, within and without, except for the loss of a crucifix; but it is quite possible that a priestly nose would be able to scent the absence of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost has fled, angels no more haunt the nave and aisles, and St. Geneviève hides her poor head in grief and humiliation. No doubt; yet we dare say the building will stand none the less firmly, and if it should ever be pulled down, its materials would fetch as much in the market as if they were saturated with divinity.

Consecration is, after all, nothing but a priestly trick. What sensible man believes that the Holy Ghost, if such a being exist, is at the beck and call of every Catholic or Protestant bishop? Can the "universal spirit" dwell exclusively in certain places? Can the third person of the Trinity have sunk into such an abject state as to dodge in and out of buildings, according as he is wanted or not? Is there any difference that the nose, or any other sensitive organ, can detect between a consecrated church and an unconsecrated chapel? Can the geologist or the chemist discern any difference between the consecrated and the unconsecrated division in a cemetery? Is the earth affected by priestly mutterings? Do the corpses lie any more peacefully, or decompose any more slowly, for the words pronounced over the mould that covers them? Or is there any appreciable virtue in the consecrated water, with which the Protestant and Catholic are alike baptised, and with which the latter sprinkles himself periodically as a preservative against evil? Reason finds no difference; it is perceived only by Faith, which may be defined as the faculty that enables a man to see what does not exist.

G. W. FOOTE.

OUR CARTOON.

As will be seen, the portraits on the left and right of our Prize Cartoon are respectively those of Mr. Bradlaugh and Cardinal Manning. The gentleman in the centre is our artist, Mr. F. Wilcockson, who, in preferring the figure of the former as fittest to survive, admirably typifies the fate which may be expected to befall the rival claims of Superstition and Freethought under the influence of "Natural Selection."

WHY CHRISTIANITY LASTS.—Disconnect the Church from the State; let legislation be no longer moulded to its exigencies; remove all obstruction to freedom of discussion; let the same advantages be accorded to those who do not believe as to those who do believe; divest the clergy of the influence which is inseparable from their assumed position in society; and then if Christianity flourish, it will be through its own intrinsic merits.—"Christianity and Common Sense."

GOD AND HIS CREATURES.—Everybody that comes is against God. Every soul, they think, is like the wrecked Irishman. He was wrecked in the sea and drifted to an unknown island, and as he climbed up the shore he saw a man, and said to him, "Have you a government here?" The man said, "We have." "Well," said he, "I'm agin it." The Church teaches us that that is the attitude of every soul in the universe of God. Ought a God to take credit to himself for making depraved people? A god that cannot make a soul that is not totally depraved, I respectfully suggest, should retire from the business. And if a God has made us, knowing that we should be totally depraved, why should we go to the same being for repairs.—R. G. Ingersoll, "The Dying Creed," p. 8.

A NEW THEORY OF THE FALL.

If the Christian deity has any sense of humor, how he must smile at the contortions of his defenders. No eel ever writhed and wriggled in fist of cook as does a theologian in the grasp of science. In contending against Freethought, he will take more liberty with the inspired Word of God than an Old Bailey pettifogger would with the statutes of the realm. "Created" does not mean made from nothing, but the evolution of pre-existing matter. "Days" no longer mean days, but lengthy periods. The "whole earth" only signifies the limited region known to the early Hebrews. "Everlasting" and "eternal" do not mean never-ending—both signify a period of long duration. "Hell" does not mean a place of bodily torture, nor does "fire" imply flame. In short, the divine revelation means something entirely different from what those who believed in it in the past supposed it to mean.

A book just sent to us for review* exhibits in a marked degree the freedom Bible apologists will venture to take with language they profess to believe divine. The author, Mr. Colpitts Robinson, who is a Fellow of the Edinburgh Geological Society, has both the merit of understanding something of geology and of not attempting to strain the facts of science through the theological sieve. He has sufficient sense to see that if the Bible and science are to be reconciled, all the stretching must be applied to the former, the Bible being accommodated to the facts of science, instead of attempting to accommodate the facts to the theory of Scripture, as did the early theologians, who contended that God had placed fossils in the rocks at the creation in order to deceive scientists. At the outset he tells us that the old date of the creation (B.C. 4004) must be given up, for "geology proves that countless myriads of years have passed away since first our world was formed." He does not mention that that date was arrived at by carefully putting together the recorded ages of the generations from Adam to Jesus.

We shall not follow him in his attempt to interpret the first chapter of Genesis so as least to clash with the conclusions of geology. Those acquainted with the accommodations of Cumming, Pratt, Whitmore, Kinns and Co., must be sick of the repetition of this sort of thing. Even the suggestion (p. 56) that "the spirit of God" (or "a mighty wind") moved on the face of the waters "signifies the first creation of life in the ocean," is as unoriginal as it is far-fetched.

It is to Mr. Robinson's most original theory of the Fall that we desire to call attention, for here is the crucial point as it affects Christianity. If Eve was not actually tempted by the Devil and Adam did not fall, there was no necessity for God Almighty incarnating himself four thousand years after, or at whatever distance of time Mr. Robinson pleases. But, says that gentleman (pp. 115-116):—

"We shall show that the fall of Adam and Eve was brought about by the agency of *man*; and that the subsequent events of the Biblical narrative go to establish and prove the geological assertion that man has peopled the world for many times six thousand years, and that at the time when Adam and Eve lived, there were other men and women contemporary with this 'first pair who were made in the image of God.' *Animal* men they were, in truth; but still for all that they were men and women. Now concerning the sin of Eve, the Bible tells us that 'the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.' But we find that serpents are not in any way noted for their subtilty; nor, in the second place, are they 'beasts of the field;' nor, in the third place, does their physical formation permit of any articulation which might in any way be mistaken for human speech; nor do they in the least trouble themselves about a vegetarian diet."

He proceeds to notice "that Eve is in no way astonished at the creature speaking to her, whereas had she suddenly been spoken to by a serpent it must have completely unnerved her." Mr. Robinson then adduces the argument of Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, to the effect that the *Nachash* which tempted Eve may have been a creature of the "ape or *satyrus* kind." His conclusion must be given in his own words (p. 119):—

"And now for our conclusions derived from the above source. The Bible teaches us that the creature (*Nachash*) which deceived Eve ranked highest next to Adam in the order of creation, that

* "The Geology of Genesis," by E. Colpitts Robinson. Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row; 1885.

it was a creature which walked erect, spoke, and reasoned. From geology we learn that uncivilised races of men have occupied the earth for tens of thousands of years. Hence the creatures which came next in rank of intelligence and reasoning power to the 'man made in the image of God' were the men without that image, the 'prehistoric men,' possessing no spiritual, but only an animal nature like the 'beasts of the field.'

Here then is the solution of a great Bible difficulty. It was prehistoric ape-like man that tempted Eve, whether with nuts or apples Mr. Robinson does not inform us, nor does he condescend to explain the nature of the fall, though he hints (p. 121) that "We may expect to get considerable light and insight of the nature of the sin of Eve by a consideration of the punishment that was imposed upon her." Let not the reader ask why the serpent tribe should be doomed to crawl on their bellies for the sin of pre-historic man. Mr. Robinson has the ready explanation that this curse simply meant that "before the advancing strides of the descendants of Adam, the prehistoric man became extinct." Mr. Colpitts Robinson evidently has talents that should receive recognition from the Christian Evidence Society. With so fine a faculty of exegesis he will have no difficulty in showing that the prophets communicated with the deity by means of the telephone, or in proving the scientific accuracy of the stories of the birth of Jesus from a virgin mother and the ascension of the same mythological hero into heaven. Indeed, we cannot see why on his principles of interpretation the Bible should not be construed to teach any and every doctrine that has ever been held by the human mind. What more could be required of a divine revelation? J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

MR. COMMISSIONER KERR often gets frolicsome in the seat of judgment, and his jocularities are played off pretty impartially, for he is a man of moods, and as little to be counted on as the weather. The learned judge, however, sometimes forgets that humor and insolence are not quite the same thing. His treatment of Mr. Edward Snelling, a few days ago, was a sad display of his worst qualities. He declined to receive this gentleman's evidence because he had "no belief in God and a future state of rewards and punishments," and sneered at him as an ignoramus for not holding those doctrines. This arbitrary proceeding was a gross violation of law as well as decency, for although Free-thinkers are not legally entitled to sit as jurors, they are allowed by the Evidence Amendment Act to affirm as witnesses. Mr. Commissioner Kerr would act more wisely if he stuck to law and equity, instead of outraging both in the manner of Mr. Toole.

PRESBYTERIANISM transplanted from its congenial home among the mists and mountains of Scotland develops strange characteristics. A meeting of Presbyterians, recently held in Dublin, warmly declared in favor of the "kist and whistles," and one speaker declared that, if the Assembly "used discipline" to any church using instrumental music, they would "dance on the Assembly."

BISHOP FRASER has taken up the subject of the Real Presence, and says that the words used by Canon Carter would imply that it is "objectively localised." The London correspondent of the *Liverpool Mercury* recommends the disputants to postpone the controversy to the next world, in which they will have an eternity to settle it. But why waste an eternity over a matter which could be settled by an analytical chemist in a couple of hours? If theological controversies are to be continued in heaven, the "beast full of eyes within and without," will require the services of an optician in order to peruse all the current literature.

THE Bishop of Soda and Bran—we beg pardon, of Sodor and Man—speaking at Exeter Hall, laments the vast amount of drunkenness and infidelity in London. Christians usually display their Christianity and fairness by thus associating unbelief with vice, and they conveniently forget the association of Christianity with the theft of millions annually for a State Church and the murder of foreign patriots by armies blessed by the bishops of Christ. The Bishop proposes to imitate the missions of "the early days of Christianity." Miracles, then, must be worked and people must be struck dead for not bringing all their money to the bishops. Opponents like Elymas must be struck blind, while friends like Eutyclus should be raised from the dead. Well, if the bishops only try the suggestion they will create a stir. A Whit-Monday performance of bishops with tongues of fire playing around their heads might pass unchallenged as a harmless and interesting exhibition, but what a British jury might say of a repetition of some of the feats of the early days of Christianity we will not attempt to predict. We are sure, however, that bishops nowadays have too much respect for their own necks to repeat them even if they could.

ANOTHER ghost produced by "the celebrated mediums," John and Victoria Farren, for a dollar a visit, has been caught at New York. Isn't it nearly time this materialisation business was played out, Brother Jonathan?

THE latest sect in India is known as the Christian Fakirs. These gentry are not converted yogis, but missionaries seeking to attract the natives by adopting the mode of life of the hermits. A student of the Slang Dictionary says that Christian Fakirs are by no means a new sect nor confined to India.

It is announced that a new sect has been started, taking for its text-book Lawrence Oliphant's "Sympneumata," which contends that God is both male and female. We venture to prophesy that this religion will not succeed with the ladies. They like to worship a masculine deity.

At Bangalore, in India, large numbers of Brahmins of both sexes are receiving eternal salvation by being branded on both arms by the guru or priest, who receives fifty rupees from each person thus saved. The reception of this fee is evidently the most essential part of the ceremony. Hindoo salvation like Christian salvation depends on the trinity of £ s. d.

ONE of the religious ceremonies invented by the Brahmins is called "Talabharum." Rich men get pass-tickets for front seats in heaven by weighing themselves, and their families too if possible, against gold coins, which are then distributed among the Brahmins. The fattest converts, we presume, would be the most eagerly sought for by Brahmin missionaries, and prolonged fasting before the ceremony would, of course, be prohibited as a wicked fraud upon the priests.

GOD is once more devastating certain parts of Bengal with a famine. Isn't it time he grew tired of this wretched kind of work? Truly, the Devil is a far less mischievous fellow than his maker.

"OUR FATHER" has also been killing people with earthquakes in Cashmere. He has just crushed two hundred of his priests and worshippers beneath the falling masonry of a "Grand Mosque," and ruined thousands more by the destruction of their homes. As no Europeans, however, have perished, British Christians can behold the calamity with pious resignation.

THE feeling in favor of disestablishment is growing. The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland has voted for it by 473 against 63. This is the largest vote the Assembly has given on the matter.

ACCORDING to the *Rock* the banner of the Church Army at Preston has on it the text, "Fight the good fight of faith," and a representation of two battle-axes. Very appropriate, considering the bloodshed and strife Christianity has caused in the past and would again cause if any of these fanatical "Armies" only attained supreme power.

AN original farce by the Rev. A. J. Wilson, D.D., is to be performed in the Church Institute, Wandsworth. Religious people are horrified. We trust the reverend "farceur" has kept to his business and dealt only with sacred matters, which offer a wide field for clerical fun. Why should the religious farce be confined to the pulpit? We hope however that the sacred farce on the stage will be made a little livelier than the hopelessly dull one regularly performed on Sundays in churches and chapels.

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, Woodford Bridge, has been destroyed by fire. Why don't God look after his own sacred edifices?

THE "annual muster" of the Salvation Army took place at Exeter Hall the other evening. Hymns were sung to an accompaniment of bagpipes. "University Brown" sung a song and besought a blessing on the reporters, and "Uncle Josh," and the "One-Eyed Prophetess" also enlivened the proceedings. "General" Booth complains that they have been tried and persecuted in all directions. Thirty of his soldiers, it seems, are in prison in Switzerland, where the authorities do not consider fanaticism a legal excuse for law-breaking. "Abject poverty" is another of the trials the Army has to undergo. We wonder how much of it the "General" takes to his own share.

WE noticed a contingent of General Booth's lasses wending their way to Exeter Hall singing "Follow, follow Jesus." Two sergeants of the City police headed the procession to clear the way. For the life of us we couldn't tell which of the two policemen was supposed to be Jesus.

A CABMAN whose horse was frightened by a Salvation Army procession applied to the magistrate at Marylebone for advice. Damage to the extent of £2 10s. had been done to his cab. The woman in charge of the Army refused to discontinue the music and shouting when the horse commenced plunging, and afterwards she told the cabman to get compensation the best way he could. She was as impudent in fact as General Booth, who told one landlord whose houses were emptied of tenants by the

noise and hubbub of the barracks, that all he had to do was to make the houses over to the Lord, that is to General Booth, and all his troubles would cease in the best way possible. Mr. Cooke told the cabman that he could recover damages in the county court.

THE Rev. H. R. Peel, of Thornton Hall, Buckinghamshire, has hastened to Jesus by means of a double-barrelled gun, the contents of which he discharged into his breast by the aid, it is supposed, of a poker.

ANOTHER clerical suicide is that of the Rev. W. G. Whyte, rector of Ballinamallard, Fermanagh, Ireland, who had been charged with forgery and fraud to the tune of £12,000.

MR. SYMES, being prosecuted for giving Sunday entertainments in the Melbourne Hall of Science, to which persons were admitted by payment of money, appealed on the point whether the Act of George III., under which he was sued, was in force in the colony. Justice Williams has decided against him for technical reasons, but he entertains "great doubt" and expresses a hope that the case may proceed to the Full Court on appeal from his decision. Morally the result is a victory. Justice Williams decides that as far as religion and the prevention of breach of the peace by a dominant sect are concerned the Act is inapplicable, and it is only on the ground of a purely civil preservation of a day of rest, combined with previous decisions of the Supreme Court, that he hesitatingly decides against Mr. Symes, but without costs. Mr. Symes will appeal. Mr. Justice Williams lays great stress on Lord Coleridge's remark in *Reg. v. Ramsey and Foote*, that "the old cases can no longer be taken to be a true statement of the law as the law is now."

THE Melbourne *Daily Telegraph*, having invited some explanation of the above judgment in reference to Dr. Moorhouse's adverse remarks in its own columns, so treated Justice William's letter before printing it, that he had to forthwith publish another letter in another paper, the *Argus*, commencing thus: "Sir,—I was astonished to see in to-day's issue of the *Daily Telegraph* a letter purporting to be mine, mutilated both in the body and in the heading." The pious editor had purposely excised a phrase so as to produce a false impression. Justice Williams protests against this "pious fraud" and other similar ones, and he declines, of course, to have anything more to do with the organ of the pious party.

FAITH-HEALER Dowie draws the line somewhere. He has left the Australian Salvation Army because it is black-mailing wealthy citizens, who rightly or wrongly are pointed out as seducers by the prostitutes who join the Army. Of course the hush-money is extorted in the name of religion and for some charitable object such as the erection of a home for fallen women.

THE *Yorkshire Post* gives an account of a faith-healing demonstration in Leeds. A woman who wished to be cured of her (partial) deafness, and who "believed God would take her infirmity there and then," was experimented upon. Not receiving any benefit, however, from the "laying on of hands" (James v., 14) or the supplicatory exclamations and shrieks of men and women gesticulating on their knees in front of the platform, she was informed that her faith was not of the right sort, and that she must believe that she had received the blessing already. An old man was next tried, but after a while one of the spectators called out to the people that it was all a farce and that the old man was being coerced into saying that which he did not believe. Thereupon a large part of the audience left the building decidedly unconverted. None of those experimented upon appeared to receive any relief from their bodily infirmities.

"SOME men has brains and no money, and some men has money and no brains," said the Claimant. One of the latter species has been advertising in the *Glasgow Herald*. His object is to apprise the public of the fact that "Substance must have 'will force,' or it could not move itself into shapes." We suppose this metaphysical prophet announced his divine message through the advertising columns because the editor wouldn't insert it elsewhere. What we are coming to! What a degenerate age we live in! Centuries ago prophets could get a hearing and payment too; now they have to waylay their auditors and shell out themselves. Ichabod, Ichabod! The glory is departed.

ST. MARIE'S Roman Catholic Church, Worksop, has been the scene of a free fight in consequence of an attempt to eject a member of the congregation who took his seat without paying the required charge for admission. The officials tried to drag the man out from over the back of the pew. A tussle ensued, a number of the male members of the church coming forward to the help of the man who was being ejected.

SOME of the Christian Evidence lecturers are ingenious liars, probably as the result of long practice. But others, being perhaps in the stage of apprenticeship, are wanting in dexterity. They tell downright lies, unadulterated with a particle of truth, which is a very crude method. To succeed in this line of business they should mix up a little truth with every lie, to float it along the stream of credulity. Ever so small a quantity will satisfy

pious people, especially when the rest of the story is a calumny on some Freethinker. One of these incompetent practitioners in the art of lying for the glory and honor of God rejoices in the name of Lee. This gentleman recently held forth in Southwark Park, and in the course of an address marked by all the customary brilliance of his tribe, he asserted that the Secretary of the Kilburn Branch of the N. S. S. had lately died. We are happy to state, however, that Mr. Markall is still alive. But this part of the lie is innocent enough, and the Christian Evidence lecturers are welcome to slaughter every secretary of the N. S. S. in the same cheap and easy way. It amuses them and hurts nobody. Mr. Lee went on to say that Mr. Markall was buried, and that Mr. Foote officiated at the funeral. As a matter of fact Mr. Foote has not officiated at a funeral for years. Still the lie is harmless enough. But now comes its point. At the grave, said Mr. Lee, there was a scene. Mr. Markall's wife, who had been turned out of doors by her wicked infidel husband, appeared on the stage, armed with her marriage certificate, just as Mr. Foote was praising his exemplary life. But Mr. Foote was not to be beaten. With Satanic impudence he denounced the poor wife as Mr. Markall's "woman," just in the style of J. C. to his maternal parent. Mr. Lee came away then. As Bret Harte says, the subsequent proceedings interested him no more. We advise this romantic gentleman to study the Art of Lying a little more. Next time he indulges in a similar flight of fancy he should introduce a man who is dead, a burial that did happen, and a Secular lecturer who was there. We hope to hear better things of Mr. Lee. The worst business, even murder, may be treated as a fine art; and we trust that with much study and practice Mr. Lee will attain to some degree of dexterity in lying.

THE *English Churchman* denounces the Church of England Working Men's Society as "A Romanising Confederacy" and gives three columns of proof of the charge from publications issued by that curious body which is said to number at least two *bonâ fide* working men among its members.

MANY officers of the Guards at Suakim are ill, and they are being prayed for at the Guards' chapel in London. Twenty degrees less heat would be better than all the prayers in England.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury is quite right in saying that if the clergy wish to treat of modern scientific doctrines, it might be well that they should know something about them. A correspondent sends me the following observations upon astronomy by a Welsh curate, when preaching to an English congregation. He has transcribed them phonetically:—"A starr is but a lidl bot in the skye. Saw many starrs mèk one plannat. Saw many plannats mèk a constellesshon. Saw many constellesshons mèk one milkee wè. Six milkee wès mèk one rorriborriallis."—*Truth*.

HENRY HIMES is in trouble. His better half summoned him for an assault at Woolwich, and the magistrate adjourned the case for a month in order that the parties might agree to the conditions of a deed of separation. According to Mrs. Himes, her husband's grievance was her wearing a bonnet in the ordinary fashion, instead of one of the sort affected by the "sisters" of the Peculiar People, amongst whom he is an elder. He called the offending head-gear "a bad woman's bonnet," took away his two children from his wife and confided them to the "sisters," preached at her in chapel and finally left home because she would not "lead the life." He now offers her four shillings a week, and we hope the poor woman will accept it. His room seems better than his company.

ROBERT STACEY, described as until recently a prominent member of the Salvation Army at Middlesborough, has been charged with seducing his wife's sister and attempting to procure abortion.

A WRITER in the *Church Times* declares that though divorced persons may go through the ceremony of marriage, it is in fact null and void—"they can separate any time not being man and wife. For the contract they had previously entered into (at the real marriage) professed to be one terminable only by death. If, therefore, they have supposed themselves to have terminated it by anything else, they have lied to God and committed perjury. It is not really terminated, and, therefore, either the second marriage is a sham or they are guilty of bigamy." The writer does not pretend that this applies to marriages before a registrar where there is no occasion for perjury.

SAMUEL NUTT, editor of the *Spirit of Truth*, an odd sort of religious paper published near Bloomington, Illinois, died on the 21st ult. He believed that he had been commanded by the Lord to live without eating for forty days. He died of starvation on the thirteenth day.

THE Bernese Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has commenced prosecutions against the Jews for their divinely-enjoined but cruel method of slaughtering animals.

AT the Mossley Municipal elections Mr. Ireland, one of the candidates, issued a leaflet asking the electors to vote for Jesus Christ. His name is at the bottom of the poll.

SPECIAL NOTICE

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, June 14, St. James's Hall, Plymouth, morning, afternoon and evening.

JUNE 21, Manchester; 28, Bristol.

JULY 5, Hall of Science, London; 12, Camberwell; 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. 7½d.

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

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—J. A. Bradley, M. B.

S. WESTWELL.—Cuttings are always welcome, but please send them direct to the editor instead of Mr. Ramsey.

H. ASHBY.—We admitted that Victor Hugo was a Theist, but he was still a Freethinker, for he hated the tyranny of the altar as ceeply as that of the throne. It is hardly fair to quote his utterances of 1850. Many things happened after then, and Hugo's religion grew broader and vaguer, or more Pantheistic, as the years rolled by.

P. BOWDEN.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

R. MAYER.—Thanks for the paper. See "Sugar Plums." The extract is an old one and has appeared in almost every paper in England. We agree with you that there should be a Branch of the N. S. S. in Salford. Why not call a meeting somewhere (say at your own house) through the *Freethinker*, and see what can be done?

J. LUBBOCK.—Thanks. See "Sugar Plums."

T. EVANS.—We do not know where Thomas Paine's bones are now. They passed from William Cobbett's family on his death. Probably they are buried or otherwise disposed of. At least we hope so, for hawking about a great man's skeleton is a ghastly business, and it certainly throws no light on his life or his works.

IGNORAMUS.—The "Nephilim" of Gen. vi., 4, were "giants" and not an ancient order of teetotalers.

R. BURTON.—Your question as to the nature of the difference between the authorised and revised version of Gen. iv., 1, had better be sent to the *Family Doctor*.

J. GENIIFE.—Many thanks for your reference. Only now we should like to know Logan Mitchell's authority for the statement.

T. BROWN AND W. EDDISON.—Many Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

J. J. BROWN.—Thanks. Send us similar cuttings whenever you can.

S. MURRAY.—You want more practice.

H. ROBERTS.—We cannot pronounce on the likeness. Peter forgot to be photographed, and the Church forgot to present him with a portrait in oil. Mr. Foote will be glad to visit Hanley if a good hall can be obtained.

W. F. CURTIS.—Mr. Ramsey will supply you with a complete set of the "Devil's Pulpit" (46 nos.) bound in cloth for 2s. 6d., carriage paid.

M. H. BUNTON.—Pleased to hear from you.

J. P. CLAYTON.—Bonson C. Keller's "History of the Bible" is published at 75 cents.

W. SHORTHOUSE.—Pleased to hear that you so admire "Crimes of Christianity." Part III. will be ready next Thursday. It will conclude with the murder of Hypatia. When the numbers are completed they will be bound in a volume, which will be one of the cheapest and most useful ever published by a Freethought house.

B. BROWN.—Yes, send name and address to Mr. Ramsey.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Liberator (2 nos.)—Wage-Worker—Liberty—Madras Philosophic Inquirer (3 nos.)—Madras Thinker (3 nos.)—Dublin Express—Weekly Freeman—Liberal—Willesden Herald—Mossley Reporter—Northern Echo—Christian Age—Yorkshire Post—Ironclad Age—Boston Investigator—Truthseeker—Nottingham Journal—St. James's Gazette.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

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.

LIVERPOOL gave Mr. Foote a hearty welcome last Sunday. The morning and afternoon audiences were larger than on his previous visit, but the heavy thunderstorm and drenching rain prevented many from attending in the evening, although the seats were all occupied and a considerable number had to stand. The morning lecture on Victor Hugo was very much applauded, and it was noticed that many strangers came to hear the afternoon lecture on Good God!

THE Birmingham *Owl* says that "the article in *Progress* on 'Royal Grants,' by the editor, Mr G. W. Foote, who received

such an ovation in the Town Hall, on Sunday week, is well worth the attention of Birmingham politicians, as it contains a complete answer to the specious argument advanced by Mr. Bright in favor of the grant to Princess Beatrice. Mr. W. W. Collins, who was elected a vice-president of the National Secular Society, at the Birmingham Conference, has a clever article on 'Modern Materialism,' which goes far to prove that Mr. Collins writes almost as well as he speaks."

THE "Comic Life of Christ" is selling for a shilling out in Australia. It is said to consist of the series of illustrations in our prosecuted Christmas Number. The publisher is Mr. W. C. Andrade, of Swanston Street, Melbourne. We do not know whether he has reproduced our illustrations of the photo-zinco process, or is simply selling our "Joshua Josephson" at a high price. If the latter well and good; but if the former, it is hardly fair or courteous to us.

IN Rome, what the *Tablet* calls "Another great heathen funeral" has taken place, that of Count Terenzio Mamiani, minister to Pius IX. in the stormy days of '48. The Count refused all religious mummeries at his dying bed, and his corpse was escorted by the Freethinking associations through the principle streets of Rome to the railway station.

FREETHOUGHT is making good progress in Grays, among the mechanics employed at the New Tilbury Docks. Mr. Ramsey's lectures last Sunday were attended by large audiences, who cheered vigorously. The *Freethinker* was in great demand. Introduced only two years ago, it is now regularly sold by two newsagents in the little town, and the sale increases steadily.

UNDER the title of "A Charge to be kept at South Place," Mr. M. D. Conway's farewell discourse to the South Place Religious Society has been published. It is eminently readable and well calculated to make sympathisers with the Society wish that Mr. Conway's services could have been retained for its benefit. Mr. Conway, noticing the last meeting of the Christian Evidence Society, points out how the Church is veering round to the side of the heretics.

NOTICING the statement that Freethinkers are now more courteous and charitable, Mr. Conway says: "It was gratifying to hear this testimony from the clergy. Freethinkers, as is well known, have so long been in the habit of breaking their Christian opponents on the wheel, burning them at the stake, and thrusting those who ridiculed them into Holloway Gaol, that it is satisfactory to learn of their gentler frame of mind from the representatives of charity and toleration."

CONCERNING the Revised Version Mr. Conway remarks: "The recent translators have not ventured to handle some errors of the old translation, but others they have preserved simply because the age has not generally attained the religious elevation required for their elimination. Thus the revisers have continued the confusion of the names translated God and Lord—Elohim, Eloah, Jahve (Jehovah)—as if they all represented one deity, or one conception. Really, it is as if a writer on Greek and Roman religion should lump together Zeus, Jupiter, Herakles, Apollo, and the rest, as 'God.' Under those several names in the Bible different deities are hid, and they represent an evolution through many ages."

NINE Leicester Secularists have been testing the legality of Sunday cricket. They pitched their wickets, and began playing on a piece of Corporation ground last Sunday, and a large crowd watched the unusual event. Nothing miraculous happened—the sky did not fall, and the Lord did not even send a thunderstorm. But the police interfered, and took the names and addresses of the cricketers. The chief constable is expected to maintain the honor of the Sabbath by taking legal proceedings against them. We suggest that he should subpoena the Lord as a witness in the case, for there is considerable difference of opinion even among Christians as to the lawfulness of Sunday recreation.

THE *Wigan Observer* devotes a whole column to a report of Mr. James Greenwood's lecture in the Miners' Hall, Wigan, on Faith and Freethought.

THE Margate town-council, a few days ago, considered the application of Mr. James, Secretary to the Margate Mission, for leave to conduct open-air services on Sundays at Fort Green. This reverend gentleman's letter, which was read by the Town Clerk, wound up with an unctuous reference to "that Gospel which was good news to the world." Alderman Munns thereupon exclaimed, "Mr. James doesn't know much about the Gospel, I can see."

DARWIN'S corpse is in Westminster Abbey. That is all of him the Church ever had or will have. The national memorial of this great Englishman is in the Natural History Museum, South Kensington. It has been executed by Mr. J. E. Boehm, and it was unveiled last Tuesday by Professor Huxley, who was the very man for the task. We fail to see, however, any appropriateness in associating the Prince of Wales with the ceremony

He is nominally one of the Trustees of the British Museum, but we suspect he knows, and perhaps cares, as much about Darwin as about the belts of Saturn.

JOHN BRIGHT is an outspoken man, and whether you agree with or differ from him you cannot complain that he talks in a roundabout way. Mr. Graham Chester sent the great Tribune the text, "Blessed are the peacemakers." in nine languages. In acknowledging this linguistic feat, Mr. Bright says that the verse is well known to Christian people "and yet not one of them seems to accept it or to act upon it. We ourselves, perhaps the most Christian nation, or professing to be so, are not less given to war than other nations." As a Christian Mr. Bright of course hopes "the future may be better than the past." We hope so too, but for a different reason. Christianity is dying, and many evils will die with it.

GOD'S COMPLEXION.

MODERN Christians will tell us that God has no face, and therefore no complexion. All the anthropomorphic or manlike descriptions of his parts they assert are only figurative. Freethinkers could accept this explanation readily if Christians would only carry it far enough, and admit that the God built up of anthropomorphic figures of speech is himself a mere figure of speech or poetic figment gradually evolved, like Jupiter, Woden, Krishna and all the rest of the gods, from the wishes and fears and imaginings of men. But since they will not rationalise their myth so far as this, we must keep them to their text. We must teach them their Bible, and force upon them the responsibility of its statements.

If the Bible is true, if it is written in good faith and in honest language, the God who inspired it must have a face. For the Bible tells us that God talked with the Israelites face to face (Deut. v., 4), knew Moses face to face (Deut. xxxiv., 10), and talked with Moses "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex. xxxiii., 11; Numb. xiv., 14). It is true that God is made to say to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face and live: for there shall no man see me, and live" (Ex. xxxiii., 20); but this verse confirms and by no means denies the statement that God has a face. Although no man could see God and live, and no man hath seen God at any time (John i., 18; 1 Tim. vi., 16), yet many people saw God. Isaiah saw him (vi., 1); Amos saw him (ix., 1); Isaac saw him (Genesis xxvi., 2; and Aaron and Nadab and Abihu and seventy elders of Israel saw his feet (Ex. xxiv., 9—11), and he "laid not his hand" upon them. A God who had feet and hands and the "back parts" which he displayed to Moses (Ex. xxxiii., 23), must have also had a face. At least, it is no insult to assume that this is the case, even if the descriptions given of it are as meagre of particulars as the description of the rearward portion of God's anatomy exhibited as a great treat to Moses. Christ (Matt. xviii., 10) distinctly says that certain angels do always behold the face of God.

The foregoing anthropomorphisms cannot all be swept away as metaphors and analogies except by methods which would make language mean anything desired. The texts I am about to refer to may be more easily taken as only figurative, though the Christian would probably claim them as literal if it suited his purpose, and would then denounce us for flagrant dishonesty or stupidity if we maintained they were otherwise. How far Christians visually and pictorially realise God's "eye" in every place beholding the good and the evil, in the physical sense rather than a "spiritual," would be an interesting subject for investigation. The "mouth," the "voice," and the "nostrils" and the "breath" of God (Ps. xviii., 15) are not so easily imagined, nowadays, as materialistic in nature; and in investigating the half real and half figurative face of God with a view to determine his complexion some little jocularly over the incongruities and comicalities almost necessarily arises. Christians, however, have no real right to complain of our indulgence in relevant fun and "mischief-joy" in demolishing a solemn fiction and a crushing myth.

My own conclusion is that the God of the Bible is a negro. Adam was made in the image of God, but the Bible unfortunately forgets to tell us whether he was white, or black, or yellow, or red. Negroes, "God's images in ebony," most naturally regard Adam and his maker as of like color with themselves, and Darwinians may, perhaps,

decide that the primeval man was black and not white. The negroes, too, according to the story which many of us have heard, and which is quite as trustworthy as the early biblical legends, commonly hold that Adam and Eve were black, and that Cain, turning white with fear when the Lord questioned him about his murdered brother, was the progenitor of the white races. As negroes, moreover, incline to the belief that the devil is white they would also naturally regard Adam and the God in whose image he was made as being black. Red Indians naturally think the Great Spirit resembles them in complexion. White people, however, feel insulted if we attribute to their ideal-idol the complexion of a Red Indian, or a Chinaman or a blackamoor, but in Jeremiah (viii., 21) he expressly says, "I am black," and nowhere does he say, "I am white." If God is simply bruised, or "hurt," or "black" for the sins and sufferings of his people, his "black" eyes and bruised visage must be like a prize-fighter's, and may be only temporary. It is a pity that no formal scientific description of him is given in the Bible, as then we might easily settle this question and many others. The "Church," in her "love unto Christ," says: "I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem" (Song of Solomon, i., 5). Many of the most ancient images of Christ and his mother were black, and if the son were black, his father presumably was of a similar color. If Christ was white, as white people most naturally believe, then his father's complexion might also be assumed to be of Caucasian, or light Semitic character, an idea somewhat confirmed by Christ himself, when he said to his disciples, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John xiv., 9). We Freethinkers are open to conviction on the matter, and if the parsons do not accept our views, we ask them to give us the true biblical view of the proper color of the real face of the exceedingly personal God of Moses, and of the poetically-imagined face evolved by the somewhat less materialistic mediums subsequently set writing by the Spirit during holy *séances*.

I know there are a large number of texts which describe God's face as fiery and shining, but, after giving some of these, I shall show that—unless Christians foolishly maintain that a merely red or rubicund visage, as of a jovial old toper, is signified—there is no absolute contradiction in these Scriptural indications of the color of God's skin. God's face often "shines" in the Bible, and this property was communicated to Moses' countenance in a by no means figurative way, after talking with God face to face (Ex. xxxiv., 29—35). David and others often ask that God's face may shine upon them, and that he will lift up the light of his countenance upon them (Ps. iv., 6; xlv., 3; xxxi., 16). God appears to be a "consuming fire" (Deut. iv., 24; ix., 3; Heb. xii., 29) both physically and morally. He "went before" the Israelites "in a pillar of fire" (Ex. xiii., 21). When Isaiah saw him (vi., 1—4) "the house was filled with smoke." When Ezekiel beheld him (i., 27—28) he was like amber-colored fire, "from the loins upwards." Daniel (x., 6) saw a face, perhaps God's, which was "as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire." Revelation (i., 13—16) describing God the Son, says, "his eyes were as a flame of fire," and "his countenance was as the sun shineth in its strength," so that the son would appear to be, in this respect at least, a genuine chip of the old block. David says of the Father: "There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled at it" (Ps. xviii., 8; 2 Sam. xxii., 9).

The Lord thus appears to be quite as fiery a person as his rival, the Devil; and as he also rained fire and brimstone out of heaven on the cities of the plain, it may be that those people are right who say it is obvious that heaven is the real hell, and that it is Satan himself, disguised under the name of Jehovah, who has been running the Bible, and possibly the world too. Etymologists may now see a moral significance in the close connexion between the words *Deuce* and *Deus*, and perhaps also between such words as *devil* and *divus* and *divine*.

Having thus satisfactorily harmonised this Bible difficulty, I will conclude by helping the Christians to reconcile the probable blackness of God's face with its certain brightness. God's face, it may be concluded, is naturally black like charcoal, but when heated to incandescence, it is as lightning and as the sun in its strength, like the charcoal points and flying particles of carbon in an electric light. Sometimes God pities the world and takes a little rest, and he is then black, as Jeremiah describes him.

At other times he is heated white-hot with fury or pride or the electricity of the lightnings he holds in his hands, and then his countenance is so dazzlingly bright that no man can behold him under a full charge from the heavenly dynamo and live. And this also enables us to clear away another Biblical difficulty for our Christian friends. According to 1 Tim. vi., 16, God dwells in the light which no man can approach unto, and hence no man has ever seen him. But according to Ps. xviii., 11, and 2 Sam. xxii., 12, he made darkness his secret place, and surrounded himself with clouds and waters as pavilions of darkness. Paul refers to God in his incandescent state. David speaks of him in his unheated condition, when the natural blackness of his face and character would enable him to conceal himself in a gloomy darkness more befitting his moral aims and pursuits.

W. P. BALL.

NOTES ON THE NEW OLD TESTAMENT.

Apropos of the Revised Version, M. Weill writes in the *Jewish World* that the oft-quoted texts Isaiah i., 18—20, should read interrogatively, "Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord. If your sins are as scarlet shall they be as white as snow? And if they are red like crimson shall they be as wool?" The negative answer is understood, as is frequently the case in the Bible. Of course not! "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be devoured with the sword." Instead of teaching the doctrine of unconditional pardon it teaches the very reverse.

THE *Saturday Review* says of the new translation of Genesis i., "And there was evening and there was morning, one day," etc: "If it means anything it means the same thing most clumsily put, as the English of the Authorised Version means, put naturally and gracefully."

THERE is the Breeches Bible, the Vinegar Bible, the Treacle Bible, the Wicked Bible, the Atheist Bible, and the Murderers' Bible. Some have proposed to nick-name the Revised Version the "Caper-berry" Bible in allusion to the unhappy translation of Eccles. xii., 5, "the caper-berry shall fail," substituted for "desire shall fail." The caper, as pointed out, is not a berry, and though the Hebrew may mean caper, that plant was used to stimulate desire.

THE alterations in the Old Testament suggested by the American committee, and not acceded to by the English Revisers, amount to over eight hundred instances. Does this account for the new version receiving but a cold reception in the United States? Of the New Testament Revision the American importers had advance orders for about seven hundred thousand copies, but the advance demand for the Old Testament is only about a tenth of this number. Have the lectures of Colonel Ingersoll anything to do with this?

IN striking contrast to the flat reception generally accorded to the Revision by the American Press is an Arizona editor, who, reviewing it as a new book, speaks in glowing terms of the imaginative powers of the author. He declares that the tall talkers of the backwoods will be put on their metal to outdo the yarns of the new volume. A Protectionist Texas editor, however, protests in a vigorous leading article against the importation of foreign renovated Scriptures when the native and almost brand new revelations of Joe Smith and Brigham Young are but scantily appreciated. Home industry should be encouraged.

REVIEWS.

Socialist Platform.—No. 1. Socialist League, Farringdon Street.—The League is going to issue a series of Socialist pamphlets under the editorship of Messrs. Morris and Bax. The first is an "Address to Trades' Unions," and is written by Mr. Bax.

Bible Biographies—Adam. By W. W. COLLINS. Standring, London.—Not quite up to the author's usual level. He writes better when he deals with his special subjects. The cover has a portrait of Mr. Collins—a stranger might think it Adam's.

Republican. July. Geo. Standring.—The editor writes incisively on the Princess Beatrice dowry, and continues his People's History of the Aristocracy. Mr. J. M. Harvey writes forcibly on Parasites.

WE are very sorry to hear that Mr. R. Montgomery, of Grays, in Essex—to whom we are indebted for his ardent efforts in the Free-thought cause and his successful pushing forward of the *Freethinker*—accidentally inflicted a terrible wound upon his leg with an adze, and now lies in a bad way in Gravesend Hospital. He is constantly worried by sky-pilots and district visitors, who seem to think that he ought to see the merciful hand of the Holy Ghost in the slipping of the adze, and be thankful for the wound. We hope to hear of his speedy recovery, for we need all such sturdy workers in our ranks.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

CHRIST AND HUMANITY.—The result of Christ's slight regard for the ties of relationship is seen in the conduct of the monks and hermits, his ascetic disciples. Too often, in their pursuit of conditions believed to be necessary for their salvation, they were led into a cruel and selfish disregard of the feelings of those who loved them. Men, driven by terror into austerity and hardness of heart, refused to say farewell to a dying mother, or to look on a sister—for fear of pollution!—*J. F. Yorke*, "Notes on Evolution and Christianity," p. 129; 1882.

BIBLE SLAVERY.—"If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished. *Notwithstanding*, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money."—Exodus xxi., 20-21. "I shall never forget the revulsion of feeling with which a very intelligent native, with whose help I was translating these last words into the Zulu tongue, first heard them as words said to be uttered by the same great and gracious Being whom I was teaching him to trust in and adore. His whole soul revolted against the notion that the Great and Blessed God, the Merciful Father of all mankind, would speak of a servant or maid as mere 'money' and allow a horrible crime to go unpunished because the victim of the brutal outrage had survived a few hours"—*Bishop Colenso*.

SCIENTIFIC MATERIALISM.—We have come to consider life as the sound of a harp, of which death will cruelly break the cord. Then, in order that it may subsist, metaphysics are obliged to grow more and more subtle. The soul ceases to be an ethereal image of a real body, a shadow; it becomes the verbal entity of metaphysicians, a nothing so impalpable and inconceivable that every strong and free mind refuses to believe in it. The human being then knows that his poor personality is but a passing existence, since it springs from the ephemeral grouping of indestructible atoms, which the shock of death will one day disperse. From this moment man is really a man; the field of his activity becomes brightened and smaller in extent; he brings his dreams of happiness and his aspirations of retributive justice down from heaven on to the earth; he knows in what direction he ought to aspire, and he manfully resigns himself to that which is inevitable.—*Dr. Charles Letourneau*, "Sociology Based upon Ethnography," Book III., chap. xv., p. 273; 1881.

As a specimen of the amount of intelligence necessary to become an "adopted Conservative candidate" for Parliament may be cited the utterances of Mr. Henry Smith Wright, the Tory candidate for Nottingham. Asked the separate questions—Would he support an Affirmation Bill? and Was he in favor of the Blasphemy Laws?—he declared the two questions referred to the same matter, and he could not see why the rule of this Christian country should be altered for the sake of Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Wright apparently thinks a desire to affirm synonymous with blasphemy. His candidature is a fine compliment to the intelligence of his selectors.

DR. SOMERVILLE, after following the steps of Paul in a tour through Asia Minor and successfully addressing audiences on the sites of the "seven churches of Asia," left the Mahomedan districts and attempted to address his fellow-Christians at Athens. The people, headed by a priest, stoned the old man (he is eighty years of age), and he had to be escorted back to his hotel by soldiers and police, who protected him against further manifestations of Christian love.

IN New Zealand a Tohunga or prophet has arisen, who states that Christ's mediation is only for the white man. He offers the Maories his own plan of salvation. He makes burnt offerings of cats and dogs, and is now having an altar built on which to sacrifice his own daughter, who is a consenting party. Maria Pungare, the Maori soothsayer, is preaching the millenium, and stated for certainty that the end was to come on the 28th March. Crowds from all parts waited on her, and fully credited her most wonderful prophecies of the coming end of the world, and the craze seemed to increase as the foretold day approached. How ridiculous religion appears when Christianity is thus imitated.

TALMAGE tells us that Job's wife prescribed a little blasphemy as the best remedy for his troubles. Mrs. Job was not far out. It was piety that brought all his misfortunes upon Job and caused the destruction of his children. If he had only blasphemed a little before the commencement of his losses, God wouldn't have set Satan to persecute him just to satisfy the divine curiosity as to whether he would refrain from profanity or not.

"How dare you say 'damn' before me?" severely inquired a clergymen of a loafer. "How did I know you wanted to say 'damn' first?" retorted the bad man.

CURRAN AND THE PRIEST.—"I wish, reverend father," said Curran to Father O'Leary, "that you were St. Peter, and had the keys of heaven, because then you could let me in." "By my honor and conscience," replied O'Leary, "it would be better for you that I had the keys of the 'other' place, for then I could let you out."

PROFANE JOKES.

THE preacher was rather cynical than charitable who took for the text of a wedding sermon, "Let there be abundance of peace—while the moon endureth."

VICAR: "Did you ever think what you would do if you had the Duke of Westminster's income?" New Curate: "No; but I have sometimes wondered what the Duke would do if he had mine."

"NA, SIR."—At an hotel in Glasgow a gentleman, finding that the person who acted as waiter could not give him certain information which he wanted, put the question, "Do you belong to the establishment?" To which the waiter replied, "Na, sir: I belong to the Free Kirk."

A CERTAIN old English minister used always to have the book containing the banns put on the reading-desk just at his right hand. One Sunday morning he began as usual, "I publish the banns of marriage between—" and, putting down his hand in all confidence for the book, found to his dismay that it was not there. In his nervousness, while searching for the missing register, he kept on repeating the formula, "I publish the banns of marriage between—I publish the banns of marriage between—" till at last the clerk from beneath came to the rescue, with a suggestion whispered loudly enough to be heard all over the church, "between the cushion and the desk, sir." The book had simply slipped under the cushion, where the perplexed pastor found it.

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