

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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THE HEAVENLY BURGLAR.

"I will come on thee as a thief" (REV. III, 1) "As a thief in the night" (2 PETER III, 10).

THE LORD IN SPAIN.

THE Lord has recently been showering his tender mercies on Spain in the shape of cholera germs. Thousands of people have died, and many more thousands have ejected the Lord's present, after suffering the most horrible agony. Yet the clergy continue to preach that God is love. Well, if he is, we must agree with the poet that he *does* move in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. Human beings adopt a different method of showing their love. They strive to confer happiness on the objects of their affection, to minister to their wants, and to shield them from evil. But whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. He is the celestial pedagogue who says to the good boy, "Down with your trousers, sir!" and flourishes the rod as a sign of his approval. He treats his poor earthly children like the gentleman who sent his dear friend flying from the third landing; and the inhabitants of this plague-stricken and poverty-cursed planet might echo the sentiment of that victim of disguised affection:

"It was all very well to dissemble your love,
But why did you kick me down stairs?"

The Lord always had a strange way of demonstrating his regard. According to the Bible—which he dictated himself, and cannot complain of our appealing to—his chosen people, the Jews, whom he selected from all the nations of the earth as the particular object of his kind attentions, were always kept in hot water by this fantastic being. They were starved, planged, poisoned, robbed, and massacred, age after age with the most charming regularity. At length he sent his only son to pay them a visit, and it

must be admitted that they did him a shrewd turn, paying back the old fellow in his own coin, and crucifying his legal heir in order to show, according to divine example, how much they loved him. Soon after this their capital was rased to the ground, hundreds of thousands of them were butchered or sold for slaves, and the remnant were dispersed in alien lands, where they soon found that the tender mercies of Christ were very similar to those of his Father. God's chosen people show a uniform history of suffering and subjection. The fact is quite natural, and strictly according to the heavenly plan. But it makes ordinary people desire to remain unchosen to the end of the chapter. Altogether, the Lord has such a marvellous way of exhibiting his friendship, that our best prayer is that he may leave us severely alone. We can get on so very much better without him, like the plain-spoken farmer who said that his corn was coming up finely, and if the Lord would only let it alone he should have a splendid crop.

It is not easy to see why the Lord is so loving towards Spain just now. Judging by the cholera, he is certainly in a very affectionate mood. What is the reason? Can it be because Spain is so consistently Catholic? Protestants might say "That's it." But they forget the logic of divinity. God chastens those he loves, and the Protestant's exclamation would only serve to show that he is wrong and the Catholic right, which is exactly what we are inclined to believe. Catholicism appears to us the real unadulterated article, while Protestantism is religion watered down to suit worldly stomachs.

Putting the Lord aside, Freethinkers can easily understand why the cholera should rage in Spain whenever the heat is very intense; for there is always dirt enough in that glorious land, whose people are cursed and degraded by priestcraft and superstition, to entertain any plague that may pay it a visit. The Spaniards believe too much in prayer and too little in science; too much in godliness and too little in cleanliness. They should let God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and all the Saints, rest awhile; study the questions of drainage and sewage; and spend a larger portion of their incomes on soap.

The Freethinker also understands why the cholera does not punish England as well as Spain. We live in a colder latitude, and we observe a little more carefully the common laws of health. The ordinary Englishman is not so picturesque a figure as the Spaniard, but he is a good deal cleaner, if not always in his person, at least in his surroundings.

To the Christian, however, the problem is a different one. He believes, or at least he says so, that God is everywhere and does everything. Rain comes from him as well as sunshine, bad harvests as well as good, cholera as well as health. Why, then, is he now afflicting the Spaniards? He must have a reason for it, unless he is an irresponsible maniac, and we beg the Christians to tell us what it is. Our theory of the matter has been already broached—namely, that Spain is a pious country, and that the Lord has sent it the cholera as a token of his love.

This is a world where religion makes men cowards, and

"Where craven man tells God: What is is right."

To the Atheist it seems that the God of Nature is a monster. If he sent the cholera he is a wholesale murderer, and the doctors who are fighting it really tell him so by implication. Surely it is better to accept the laws of nature as the inexorable conditions of existence, subsisting in the constitution of the universe, and not dictated by a supreme intelligence. When nature is once personified, the idea of responsibility also arises; for what are evils in nature are crimes in God.

G. W. FOOTE.

CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORY.

THERE are two leading ways, each legitimate and effective, in which Christianity may be attacked. Its dogmatic pretensions may be brought to the bar of common sense; or its origin and credentials may be tested in the light of historical research. The former method is undoubtedly the simpler, readier and more decisive. What do the theologians know of the heaven and hell of which they prate? What reason can there be to believe that a virgin ever gave birth to a child? How can the death of an innocent person clear the sins of others who are guilty? Why is Christianity rejected by God's chosen people, the Jews? How is it a divine religion has engendered such numerous conflicting sects? Why should an omnipotent God send a revelation which the larger part of his creatures do not believe in, and how could a good God send the most of his creatures to hell? Such questions as these would, as the negro said, "overturn any system of theology." To the challenge to investigate the historic credentials of Christianity, the unlearned Freethinker may well reply, "Why should I burden myself with an inquiry which requires a ponderous baggage of erudition, when plain common sense and every-day experience settles it that your religion is not divine? Shall I be damned for not understanding Greek and Hebrew, or for being unable to decide as to the genuineness of the manuscripts on which the Christian religion is built? Is my eternal destiny dependent on not mistaking one foam-bell for another on 'that huge Mississippi of falsehood called history'? If God has anything to reveal to me, why not reveal it direct, instead of having committed it long ago to languages I do not understand?"

But the Freethinker may take another course. He may follow up the investigation and meet the Christian on his own ground. If he does so he will certainly be confirmed in his conclusions, for on the ground of history the Christian case breaks down at every point. The historic inquirer discovers in the first place that there is no contemporary evidence of the wonderful events narrated in the Christian Gospels, and that the earliest alleged testimony, that of Josephus, is a forgery, inconsistent with the fact that that author was a Jew. He will find that the Jews have a very different story to tell of the birth of Jesus from that told in Matthew and Luke. He will learn that so far from the Gospels having been written by the persons whose names they bear, there is no proof of their existence until the second century, and that they were selected from among a large number of such documents written in an age of superstition and amid an atmosphere of fraud. He will learn that the "inspired originals" are entirely lost; that the earliest manuscripts date from the fourth or fifth century; that these manuscripts contain other documents not in our selection and omit or change many words found in our version, so that altogether there are over a hundred thousand various readings of the word of God in the New Testament. He will ascertain that fraud and forgery have been largely used to bolster up the Christian evidences and that the pretensions of the Church have been supported by the most relentless persecution of heretics. In tracing the course of ecclesiastical history he will see that Christianity, so far from having brought peace into the world, has produced more strife and bloodshed than any other religion. In the history of its establishment, of the Crusades, of the Inquisition, and of its treatment of Jews, witches, heretics, and men of science, he will find abundant evidence that so far from being divine in its history, it has been of questionable benefit to humanity.

It is a striking fact, and one which tells in favor of those who attack Christianity from the historic side, that so penetrating a mind as that of George Eliot was not induced to question the Christian creed until she had been brought to read such works as Hennell's "Inquiry into the Origin of Christianity" and Strauss's "*Leben Jesu*." The fact is that most orthodoxly-educated persons never think of Christianity as being a subject of inquiry at all. Its truth is taken for granted, and its doctrines entwine themselves among the most cherished associations and prepossessions. On account of this strong fortification of prejudice what at first sight seems the longest way often proves the shortest road to Freethought. Many have been brought to scepticism simply by reading defences of the Christian evidences. Christianity claims to be an historic

religion. Once inquiry into its historic pretensions is aroused it only needs a fearless and dispassionate investigation to lead from the darkness of Superstition to the light of Freethought.

J. M. WHEELER.

UNADULTERATED CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANS are usually under the delusion that the one thing needful to cure all social evils is Christianity. As however Christianity obviously has not cured, and does not cure, these evils, believers have to qualify their assertions on the subject. Unadulterated Christianity, genuine Christianity, real pure thorough Christianity, is the article needed, and the apparent failure of the religious panacea, they claim is solely due to impurities and adulterations which destroy its efficacy. The *Christian Commonwealth* labors under this craze to a marked degree. "Pure unadulterated Christianity," it says, "must be the cure for all our social disorders." That all mankind should accept and manifest this pure unadulterated Christianity is regarded as quite a simple and practical matter, although so few samples of the genuine Christian can be found. Nothing but the real genuine Gospel religion will ever reform the world. The *Christian Commonwealth*, expressing representatively the proper Christian view of the matter continues:

"Hence our remedy for all the present distress is a return to the purity and simplicity of Apostolic faith and practice, both as regards the preaching of the Gospel and the organisation and development of church life. Give us the Christianity of the New Testament, and we shall have no special need to call in the strong arm of the law to help us in combating the foul emissaries of darkness who are now so constantly plotting against our homes and our country."

This is no new delusion. It is as old as Christianity itself. But it stands forth now as much more obviously a delusion. The sympathies and requirements of the moral and social sentiments are much wider in scope, and men are not satisfied with the salvation of a few elect. Spurgeon, indeed, speaking of the *Pall Mall Gazette* and its revelations, may say that the churches have not failed, because they have "kept a pure remnant alive in the land;" but this is in substance a confession of failure. Mankind at large, it is felt, are not powerfully affected for good by Christianity, and the moral failure of the actual Christianity of the people and of the nations has to be accounted for by fallacious excuses relating to its quality rather than to its quantity.

Supposing the unadulterated Christianity of Christ and the Apostles were universally adopted, what would be the consequence? Communism would be the first result, and the ministers of the gospel would strike dead those who, like Ananias and Sapphira, gave a false income-tax return to evade the full payment of the property-tax of one hundred per cent. Forethought would disappear, and people would be always thinking of the speedy advent of Christ and the terrors of the approaching judgment, instead of steadily working on for progress, prosperity and comfort. Those of full faith—and unadulterated Christianity in all must necessarily imply full faith in everybody—would refrain from marriage and worldly pursuits, and devote themselves entirely to Christ. Miracles, faith-healing, casting forth of devils, personal inspirations, divine revelations in dreams, and the innumerable other mischievous superstitions and subjective delusions of the Bible would return and be believed in with a docile reverence and slavish subjection of intellect that would be fatal to all civilisation and moral hope. For the elect few in all ages have been largely restrained from the worst follies and insanities of the religious mania by the steady influence of the common sense and worldly necessities of the many. If all mankind were afflicted with the genuine madness, this invaluable check to fanaticism would be lost. And genuine Christianity in a few will not save the world; for if it were so, all the world would have been nobly good and happy in the days of Christ and the Apostles.

Since the unadulterated Christianity of the original founders has entirely failed to put the world right, who will supply the real article, and guarantee its genuineness? There is not the slightest difficulty on this point. Every pious writer, every true Christian, every street-corner howler, is infallible in this matter, though unfortunately they differ as widely and quarrel as bitterly over

their conflicting contentions as did the original apostles, whose unadulterated Christianity they once more display to an admiring world. The *Christian Commonwealth*, of course, in common with all enthusiastic Christian authorities in all ages, is thoroughly imbued with this modest delusion. It will bring about the needful union of Christian sects and opinions into one homogeneous and unadulterated whole, in the simplest and easiest manner possible. All the essentials of Christianity are to be retained and the excrescences removed, and the editor, week by week, in his leading articles, volunteers his obviously invaluable services in deciding all the disputed points. Somehow the sects pay no more attention to his infallible decisions than he does to theirs, and Christian unity and purity remain as far off as ever.

To Christian fanatics or enthusiasts of this kind, who think that such ideas are practical, I suggest a much wider union. First, I would point out to them that the Christian union they contemplate ignores and excludes the Roman Catholics and Greek Christians. Why do papers bearing such titles as the *Christian World*, the *Christian Commonwealth*, the *Christian Age*, the *Christian Herald*, the *Christian Globe*, and so forth, omit news-reports from Roman Catholic churches, and only announce the meetings and sermons of Protestant sects, who are only a minority in the actual "Christian world?" Christian union must include more than protesting heretical sects. I suggest that the union include all religions and all mankind. I, imitating the modest assurance and the excellent example of saintly editors, offer my services in deciding the conditions of the union. I will earn the everlasting gratitude of these unionists, by settling for them, from the Bible of experience and knowledge, which are the essentials or moralities of human solidarity and which are the excrescences or superstitions. As my modest assurance, however, will not be quite as agreeable to Christian editors as their own, they are quite welcome to leave me out of the question, and obtain a decision in any other way they and the rest of mankind can agree upon. Perhaps they will hold a huge meeting of representatives of all religions, as described in Volney's "Ruins of Empires."

The editor of the *Christian Commonwealth* has a much better method, however, of securing this unity of the human race. He will diffuse unadulterated Christianity—that is to say, his own opinions and methods; and he has a long leading article, headed, "How the World can be Converted in Seven Years." He says:

"Let no one suppose that we have used a sensational headline. We feel confident that what is suggested in it is fairly within the range of possibility. But, in order to achieve anything like such success as is intimated, it is absolutely necessary that the Scriptural method of dealing with the unconverted should be adopted."

His method, which is quite as practical as Captain Bobadil's method of defeating an army, is that each Christian is to bring one additional soul to Christ every year, by which means the number of Christians would be doubled annually until it included all mankind. He estimates the "whole number of Christians at present in the world at, say, ten millions"—an estimate widely different from that which is made when Freethinkers are to be demolished with the argument of numbers. These ten millions will be twenty millions at the end of a year, forty millions at the end of the second year, and by the end of the seventh year they will have become over twelve hundred millions, which our Christian editor considers is the total population of the earth. But there are various considerations which, our enthusiastic propagandist thinks, "would make it possible to do the work in even less time than we have intimated." Perhaps one of these aids is the complete adoption of "the Scriptural method of dealing with the unconverted," which is described as so "absolutely necessary." Extermination was the commonest Scriptural method of dealing with the unconverted and with obstinate backsliders and heretics generally (Dent. xiii.) Christians have long adopted this method, but they have failed to convert the world thereby, just as Christ and his apostles failed to convert mankind in a far longer period than the seven years required by the scheme of our ardent modern believer in an unadulterated Christianity of which he shall be authoritative dispenser and infallible analyst.

W. P. BALL.

ACID DROPS.

THE Rev. J. Mayo, M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, has been fined £5 and costs for assaulting an invalid gentleman by endeavoring to overturn his bath-chair and drag it off the pavement. The plaintiff, who suffered from heart disease, was so prostrated that it was thought he was dying.

THE *Christian Herald* says that Talmage's sermons are now circulated all over the world at the rate of about ten millions weekly. This purveyor of Christian rubbish and Christian mendacity gives its own circulation as over 270,000 weekly. If it were true, as Christians say, that Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for only telling one lie, what ought to be the fate of the Rev. M. Baxter, "editor and proprietor" of the *Christian Herald*?

AMONG the faith-healing miracles recorded in the *Christian Herald* is the restoration of sight to a Miss Moorhead who had been blind in this restored eye since her birth. She had rejected the doctrine of faith-healing till she saw "that James v. 14, 15, was not only a prescription, but a command, in opposition to which she had been living all her life." Faith-healers rely much on these verses, which do not require faith, however, on the part of the sick, but only of the elders who pray over the patient and anoint him with oil.

THE *Christian Globe* thinks that biblical scholars owe a lasting debt of gratitude to the Palestine exploring expeditions. Among other archaeological exploits, "The 'pinnacle of the Temple,' on which the Tempter placed the Savior, has just been uncovered to its base, and is found still to have an elevation of 136 feet." We should like to have a photograph of this pinnacle, and if Jesus and the Devil would pose appropriately upon it so that the photographer could reproduce the original scenes we should be much obliged to them. Is it really as sharp as a needle where Jesus sat, or is this idea only an imaginative exaggeration of our own? As we know from the scholars of the Middle Ages that ten thousand angels could dance on the point of a needle, we may rest assured that J. C. would find no difficulty in sitting on the spike of a pinnacle, however sharp it might be. The photographer of the scene must take care, however, that he doesn't get twelve months in Holloway for blasphemy.

THE indictment of Louis Riel, the Canadian rebel, charges him with not having the fear of God in his heart, and "being moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil," in consequence whereof "he did levy and make war," etc. So the Devil isn't dead yet, in spite of the repeated assurances of the old soldier in one of Charles Reade's novels to the contrary.

THE "woman question" has turned up again at the Newcastle Wesleyan Conference. In face of Paul's declarations—"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" and "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection" (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35, and 1 Tim. ii. 11)—it was hardly possible to endorse female preaching. The Conference thought it wisest not to pass any resolution on the subject, but a distinction was set up between preaching and giving addresses in chapel, at tea-meetings, etc.

ONE hundred thousand pounds is required to establish a bishopric for the proposed new see at Wakefield. This is the figure at which successors to the one-garmented, moneyless apostles can be obtained.

APROPOS of the Archbishop of Canterbury's recently-expressed opinion that the best way of promoting Christianity is to increase the number of bishops at the low rate of £90,000 per head, *Modern Society* says:—"A French bishop is quite content with his £500 a year, and flourishes on the amount too; so does the Italian bishop on his £300 a year. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who would consider this sum to be queer wages, draws £15,000 per annum, and the Bishop of London, who pockets £10,000 a year, besides other pickings and scrapings, would laugh at it. Most of our other bishops receive salaries varying between £7,000 and £4,000 per annum, besides an immense amount of patronage."

REUBEN MAY, author of "The Dying Pillow; or, Infidel Death-beds," is before the public again. One of the receivers of his begging letters has sent it to the press, together with a reply stating that he would contribute when he received a balance-sheet for the past financial year. Reuben is a sorry humbug when he cannot even provide his dupes with a balance-sheet.

A PAPER on Transylvanian Superstitions in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* says that "If a house struck by lightning begins to burn, it is not allowed to put out the flames, because God has lit the fire and it would be presumption if man were to dare to meddle." An instance of how noxious superstition would be if only logical.

A BRIDGEPORT (Connecticut) man had a revelation that the Lord wanted him to work for fifty cents a day less than he was receiving. This is the first instance of the kind on record. Usually, remarks *Texas Siftings*, the "revelation" comes to the employer.

ONG AH MON, a Chinaman who was shot by a drunken rough in New York, was buried with both Chinese and Christian funeral rites. His future destination, therefore, must remain a question of profound uncertainty.

A QUIANT little boy of our acquaintance was sent to church the other Sunday for the first time. When the organ was played he astonished the congregation by crying "Bravo!" and clapping his hands. He didn't attempt to applaud any other part of the service.

THE York County Hospital needs a lady superintendent, and the advertisement says she must be a member of the Church of England. Broken legs wouldn't heal, we suppose, if the nurses were of any other faith. The hospital is a public institution, supported largely by Nonconformists. The Dean of York speaks of the remarks of the *York Herald* and its correspondents on the subject as a "wanton and unprovoked attack."

MARY F. CHANWOOD, a respectably-dressed young woman, committed suicide by leaping from Highgate Archway. She fell 70 feet on to the top of a cab, whence her body rebounded into the road. The cause of her desperate act was religious mania.

MISS ELLICE HOPKINS, it is announced on posters, will deliver an address "to men only" in the lecture hall of the Young Men's Christian Association, Aldersgate Street. If women are to be excluded from the audience they ought also to be excluded from the platform. We can understand why women might address women only on delicate questions, but the peculiar propriety of a woman addressing "men only" is beyond our comprehension, though the Christian Young Men, we suppose, will see it thoroughly, and will be drawn by the suggestive announcement in large numbers, as desired and expected by those who drew up the bill.

THE *Westminster Review*, in an article on Church Missions to Mohammedans in the Turkish Empire, declares that, although the annual expenditure is over eight thousand pounds, "no adult Mohammedan has yet been converted and baptised by the agents of the Society." "The reports of the Church Missionary Society itself prove that their mission to the Mohammedans in Palestine is an imposture."

THE article moreover affirms that the Church Missionary Society "has contributed to ruin the Jerusalem bishopric." Some will remember the rejoicing in 1841, when "the successor to St. James in the Holy City" was appointed. During the past forty-four years no progress has been made in Palestine in converting either Jews or Mohammedans, and now Prussia declines to fulfil her part of the contract then made with England—viz., to alternately nominate a bishop for the see.

ACCORDING to the *English Churchman*, the Catholics in England in 1845 numbered only 328,000, while in the present year they number 2,500,000. It is not stated what proportion are immigrants. Conversions to Catholicism are said to be made at the rate of 2,000 a year, but no figures are given as to the numbers of those who leave Catholicism for Protestantism or Rationalism.

THE representatives of the late Rev. J. Deane Waite, rector of Manby, South Lincolnshire, advertise the sale of his "valuable effects," comprising rare books and furniture, 500 ounces of silver plate and old vintage ports. Verily it must be easier for a camel to enter the kingdom of heaven than for this man to have passed through the eye of a needle.

JOSEPH MEYER, the representative of Jesus Christ in the celebrated Oberammergau Passion Play, is advertising for lodgers. It is said that he has done no work since the assumption of the character of Christ, preferring, we suppose, to live like his prototype on the contributions of the faithful.

It seems doubtful, after all, whether the Rev. Mr. Harvey, of Bristol, will hold a public debate with Mr. Foote. The reverend gentleman wants to discuss Mr. Foote's afternoon lecture on "The New Bible" instead of a definite proposition, and he wishes to associate his friend, the Rev. E. A. Fuller, in the discussion, which is a very fantastic proposal. Mr. Harvey further objects to a charge for admission, although he proposes a collection at the doors to defray the costs. Mr. Harvey will pay his own expenses and expect Mr. Foote to do the same. In other words, Mr. Harvey is to walk from his house after tea, and Mr. Foote is to travel to Bristol and put up at an hotel. We suggest that if Mr. Harvey wants to debate on these terms he had better come to London instead of Mr. Foote going to Bristol.

PROTESTANTS in Austria complain of the new Sunday Law in so far that it also compels them to suspend business on the feasts

of Corpus Christi and the Assumption. They see no injustice in the Jews being compelled to have two holidays in one week.

THE London School Board have by a narrow majority of 22 to 21, refused to permit the Old Castle Street Playground to be open for Jewish Scholars on Sunday morning. The proposal was opposed by the Revs. G. M. Murphy, J. R. Diggle and T. Morse. Some effort should be made to exclude these sanctimonious sky-pilots from the board.

As education spreads it is more and more sought to employ the talents of laymen in religious work. Our watery contemporary the *Baptist* is violently agitated by a hot controversy as to whether lay preachers should receive payment. The appointed ministers are unanimous in declaring that all those who have another source of living should serve Christ for nothing, but the laymen ask why whenever a minister goes to another pulpit he charges two guineas for his services and offers nothing to the lay-brother who takes his place. It is a bad sign for the ministers when laymen want their share of the loaves and fishes.

THE Dean of Peterborough is very ready to condemn Socialistic agitators and land-laws reformers as deliberately dishonest. He says they "know that they are going with a lie in their right hand! they know that they are holding out expectations which can never be realised; they know that they are trading on the cupidity and the ignorance of their dupes." He forgets that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. He and his brethren live on the cupidity and the ignorance of dupes who grasp at dreams and lies much more monstrous in their nature than the hopes and promises of men who would abolish poverty in this present world.

KING JA JA is here on a visit. Is this potentate any relative of the equally savage and absolute old Jah, whose name he appears to have adopted in a reduplicated form?

THE Bible certifies that Jah created man in his own image. Science, which is equally infallible, certifies that man was at one time a sort of monkey. Christian harmonists will be delighted to perceive that the two accounts are not contradictory.

IN THE WRONG SHOW.

ONE Sunday a cow boy from the plains struck a Texas city, and after supper started out to see a variety show he had been told of. In about an hour he came back to the hotel.

"Hello, Jim!" said the clerk in surprise, "the show ain't out yet, is it?"

"No, but I am."

"What's the matter?"

"The duffer's put me out, that's all; and, by gravey, before I had time to pull my gun they clamped me, and two big policemen had the bracelets on me."

"What were you trying to do?"

"Nuthin'; only I went in for my rights, and got bounced out you see, clerky. I sled in without payin' a dang cent, and I thought I was playin' 'em sharp. I sat down just as a long-jawed man on the stage began to read out of a book, and I began gettin' ready for a chance to laugh. After the snoozer got done readin' I was goin' to encore him, but he stuck where he wuz, and just then the music-box in the corner tooted away and everybody in front of me stood up. That riled me mad. I begun to yell: 'Down in front, down in front, will you; set down in front!' and the next thing I knowed two fellers in store clothes collared me and shot me right into the claws of the policemen. I kicked, in course, but what could I do in a one-to-four crowd, and the Judge clean agin me?"

"Why, Jim, you got into a church instead of a show!"

"So they told me, and when I showed up what a darn fool I wuz they let me go, and told me I'd oughter get a sign and hang on to myself so's the cows couldn't eat me for grass."

SLATER TESTIMONIAL FUND.—Further subscriptions received:—M. Studdard, 2s.; E. Gilgard, 10s.; J. Thornes, 10s.; J. Watson, 2s. 6d.; G. Cook, 2s. 6d.; J. Laycock, 2s. 6d.; F. S. Northampton, £1; S. Mitchell, 5s.; E. Glendinning, 5s.; E. Kenney, 1s.; E. Moorhouse, 1s.; J. Boothroyd, 2s. 6d.; J. Dean, 2s.; W. Senior, 1s.; J. Lees, 1s.; L. Beaumont, 2s. 6d.; D. Woffenden, 1s.; Betty Sutcliff, 6d.; Moorhouse, 1s.; Raye, 2s.; R. Laburn, 2s. 6d.; Parr, 1s.; A. Friend, 1s.; R. Jessop, 2s. 6d.; T. Hey, 6d.; J. Field, 2s. 6d.; A. Armitage, 5s.; N. Jessop, 2s. 6d.; J. Wilkinson, 2s.; Wm. Taylor, 4s.; T. Stead, 5s.; H. Brook, 1s.; J. Crossland, 6d.; W. Lodge, 1s.; Elizabeth Holt, 6d.; Liverpool Branch of N. S. S., £1 5s.; David Jack, 5s.; D. Routledge, 2s. 6d.; J. Scott, 2s. 6d.; T. C. Baynes, 1s.; J. Wood, 1s.; J. Wilson, 1s.; E. Dobell, 1s.; J. Iberson, 1s.; T. Morton, 6d.; C. Dancer, 3d.; J. Wills, 3d.; G. Mortimore, 1s.; W. J. Ford 1s.; J. Swagman, £1; Mrs. Collier, 1s.; J. Standing, 6d. Intending subscribers please note that this fund will close on August 24th.—W. H. REYNOLDS, Treasurer, Camplin House, New Cross, S.E.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Our article in last week's *Freethinker* on "The Bible and Young Girls" is reprinted with some additions as a Tract under the title of "THE MAIDEN TRIBUTE TO JEHOVAH." Copies will be supplied at 6d. a hundred, or 7d. post free. One thousand for 4s. While the *Pall Mall Gazette* revelations are fresh, the wide distribution of this Tract will be a splendid blow at the Old Book.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

AUGUST 9, Milton Hall; 23 and 30, Hall of Science, London.
SEPTEMBER 13 and 20, Hall of Science, London.

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.
- J. E. R.—We advise you to stick to prose, which you handle very well. Your lines don't scan, and we doubt whether you would ever attain to proficiency in versification.
- BESSEMER.—We quite agree with you. The Lord never sends people what they cannot afford to pay for.
- W. G. EDEN.—We are extremely glad to see that Professor Beesley has been selected by the Westminster Liberal Association, and we shall be still better pleased to see him returned for the borough. Such a man would do infinitely more honor to a constituency than the flock of place-hunting lawyers and wealthy nobodies who are descending on the country.
- J. K. SYKES.—Always glad to hear from you, but please send any orders for the paper or other literature direct to Mr. Ramsey; otherwise you cause us unnecessary trouble.
- G. KITCHING.—You had better see first whether you can obtain a hall and on what terms, and then write us again.
- W. KIMBERLEY.—Mr. Foote is always ready to debate with a representative Christian, but he cannot undertake to discuss with anybody who happens to be full of the spirit.
- T. R. POCKLINGTON.—We shall be pleased to receive any papers you may send us.
- H. CASTLE.—Many thanks. Even at the risk of being wearisome, we must keep insisting on the necessity of heckling Parliamentary candidates on the Blasphemy Laws.
- DOCKYARD.—Sir H. Drummond Wolff's father, the Rev. Dr. Wolff, was a perverted Jew.
- F. YOUNG.—The notes to the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu" will give you the information you desire.
- W. BRODIE.—Matthew vi., 34; Luke vi., 20; Mark x., 21; Luke xviii., 22; Matthew v., 39, 40; Mark xvi., 17, 18.
- R. N.—Professor Wellhausen's recently-published "Prolegomena to the History of Israel" will supply you with evidence of the late date of the Jew-books. For the Antiquity of the Vedas, see Professor Max Müller's essay in the first book of his "Chips from a German Workshop;" for the Egyptian Book of the Dead, see the fifth volume of Bunsen's "Egypt's place in Universal History;" and for the Shoo King see Dr. J. Legge's introduction to the "Chinese Classics."
- H. M. LEAMINGTON.—Mr. E. Wilkins, Vulcan Inn, Adam Street, Cardiff, will doubtless be glad to see you as a Freethinker from Pontypool.
- A. F. BOAK writes: "It is very unfortunate that many people are frightened away from reading the able articles of Mr. Foote solely through the startling pictures that sometimes disfigure the top of the *Freethinker*." The circulation of this paper, which exceeds that of any other Freethought journal ever published in England, scarcely supports our correspondent's view.
- E. B. ROSE, Secretary of the Camberwell Branch of the N. S. S. writes: "I must take this opportunity of congratulating you on the Bible Sketch in this week's *Freethinker*. It is immense. I never enjoyed a heartier laugh in my life than I have to-day over it."
- C. A. BERRY suggests that the humorous Review of the Bible in our last week's number should be cut up into paragraphs, and the summary of each book be posted in the "sacred volume" in its proper place.
- P. DAVIS.—You are anxious to convert us to a belief in "the great engineer." You had better ask him to appoint a better representative.
- J. WIDDICOMBE.—Stepniak's new book, we believe, is published at 18s. Write again about the other matter when you have carried it a step farther.
- J. HART.—In civil marriage before a registrar the use of the symbolic ring is quite optional.
- J. AARON.—Thanks. Jokes are always welcome.
- CHRISTOPHER REID, 53 York Street, Portman Square, W., will be glad to communicate with any Freethinkers who wish to assist the candidature of Mr. Trower against Sir Thomas Chambers, a gentleman whose piety and bigotry are more fit for heaven than earth.
- W. COOKNEY, 1a Willow Street, Paul Street, Finsbury, E.C., will be happy to receive subscriptions towards the deficit of £4 on the Children's Excursion from the Hall of Science.
- MEMO.—W. R. Bradlaugh is not worth our trouble, nor yours. His opinions of the ancient philosophers are borrowed without knowledge or study. The statement that Socrates prostituted his wife, who was a notorious shrew, for gain, shows the grossest ignorance both of the life of that sage and of the customs of Athens.
- WALTER FOSTER.—Not up to the mark. You have not studied the laws of versification. Part II. of "Comic Bible Sketches" will be ready in September.
- C. S. P.—We cannot go into such private matters. When sky-pilots get into the police-courts they are fair game, but we do not spy into their houses.
- E. HALEY.—Stamps received. Glad to find you think our Summer Number the best yet, and "The Shadow of the Sword" the best you ever read. Mr. Symes's Tract can be had from our office post free for 8d. a hundred. Accept our wishes for your success in the New World.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Southend Standard—Paddington Mercury—Boston Investigator—Truth—Unitarian Herald—Catholic Times—Birmingham Daily Mail—Marylebone Independent—Western Daily Mercury—Willesden Herald—Great Thoughts—Manchester Evening News—Keighley News—Truthseeker—Liberal.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

THE winners of the August 1 Prizes will be announced next week.

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 September 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.

EDITORIAL.

MR. FOOTE has been overworking himself lately and is obliged to take a little rest from mental labor. The sixth number of "Crimes of Christianity" will therefore be delayed until next Thursday, after which it is hoped there will be no interruption in the regularity of the series. It would be easy to preserve the continuity of publication by hastily printing the number now due, but Mr. Foote and Mr. Wheeler are too conscientious workmen to do that, and too anxious to make the "Crimes of Christianity" a standard volume, creditable alike to themselves and the Freethought cause. General praise is expressed of the numbers already published, and the authors promise that no pains shall be spared to sustain the reputation their work has already acquired.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE August number of *Progress* is now ready. Mr. Foote contributes two articles; one on "Radicalism and the New Constituencies," and a long instalment of his "Prisoner for Blasphemy," containing many interesting details of his life in Holloway Gaol. Mr. Wheeler concludes his review of Dr. Pfeiderer's important work on "Paul and the Early Christian Church;" and the remarkably powerful and fascinating study of Heine by the late James Thomas (B.V.) is also brought to a close. Björnson's fine play, "A Gauntlet" is continued as far as the end of the first scene of the last act. Among the other contents are "Explosions in Coal Mines" by Dr. Aveling; "A Common Illusion" by E. N. Wells; a thrilling account of the old Liverpool slave-trade by S. Britton; a satirical Fragment of a Drama, dealing with the subject of social and political reform, by C. Every; and three pieces of verse, including a powerful new poem by John M. Harvey. Altogether the number is an especially good one, and will no doubt give great satisfaction to its readers. We are happy to state that the change in price has made no practical difference to the sale of *Progress*. The magazine has evidently a firm hold on its public.

MR. F. R. MORTIMER, a working man who has studied hard to fit himself for the Freethought platform, is on a lecturing tour through the Midlands and Yorkshire. Most of Mr. Mortimer's meetings will be held in the open air, and the expenses are borne by the National Secular Society. We hear that his audiences in the great Market Place, Nottingham, last Monday and Tuesday, were very large, and that his lectures have fluttered the holy doves of the town.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette*, in reviewing the new edition of Cobbett's "Rural Rides," refers to "his ruinous imprisonment for 'sedition,' which in 1810 was as useful for the muzzling of inconveniently progressive editors as 'blasphemy' and 'obscenity' are at present." Clearly the public mind is growing on the question of the liberty of the press, when papers like the *Pall Mall Gazette* begin to discover why such persons as Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Foote and Mrs. Besant are prosecuted for "blasphemy" and "obscenity."

WE have just received the fourth annual Report of the Bradford Secular Society. It shows a good record of work with small means, and we hope the Society will be better supported next winter. Complaint is made of the "miserable amount of the collections at the lectures," in consequence of which it was found necessary "to let the Society's rooms." We regret to hear this, but we must tell the Society it has only itself to blame. Its own experience, as well as that of other Societies, long ago proved that lectures cannot be conducted on the collection system; and there was a want of wisdom in persisting in an experiment that was demonstrated to be a failure.

UNDER the appropriate title "Dogma in Masquerade," the current number of the *Westminster Review* contains a merciless

exposure of the absurdities of the Rev. H. Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Many will think Mr. Drummond's imbecilities too abject for serious discussion. The writer concludes "If we are to revert to the theology which burned heretics while declaring that God foreordained they should be heretics; if we are to adopt the psychology which chained and scourged the madman; if we are to embrace the morality which declared the leper accursed, and deprived him of his possessions; if we are to return to the moral darkness of Calvinism and the ages of faith—then we may adopt Mr. Drummond's figment of natural law in a theological world, and bolster up myth with dogma, lawless premiss with lawless conclusion, degrading reason to the level of a beast of burden for superstition. But if there is a nobler fate in store for men, this latest emanation of chaos will pass to the limbo of all insanities."

A St. Louis clergyman finds that, on a recent Sunday, in that city, 10,000 people went to church, while 40,000 went to Buffalo Bill's show, 20,000 to base-ball games, 20,000 to beer gardens, and 5,000 to hear Bob Ingersoll.

MR. SAMUEL LAING, M.P., has just published a work on the revolution in religious and social ideas effected by modern science. After a long and careful examination of the miracles of the Bible he says in conclusion: "To sum up the matter, it appears that while the antecedent improbability of miracles has been enormously increased by the constant and concurrent proofs of the permanence of the laws of Nature, the evidence for them, when dispassionately examined, is altogether insufficient to establish even an ordinary fact."

ACCORDING to the *Freidenker*, a German Freethought newspaper, published at Milwaukee, Tourgenief, the Russian novelist, author of "Smoke," "A Virgin Soil," etc., was in youth an Hegelian, but ultimately became an Agnostic. He did not deny that life after death is possible, but declared openly that it did not attract him, but, on the contrary, seemed terrible. "What should I do through all eternity?" he used to say. "How could I fill up this incomprehensible abyss? Is my petty personality worthy of becoming eternal? How I could live without a body, I cannot imagine."

THE *Philosophical Inquirer* of Madras gives an account of the N. S. S. Conference at Birmingham, and prints separately in full Mr. Foote's speech at the evening meeting in the Birmingham Town Hall.

PROGRESS is being made on the Sunday Question in private quarters despite the interested opposition of the religionists. Last Sunday both the Grosvenor Gallery and the Piccadilly Institute of Water Colors were opened free by ticket from the Sunday Society, while the National Sunday League has had a still more striking success in the opening of the Alexander Palace, which has during the past month been visited on Sundays by upwards of one hundred thousand orderly persons.

MR. O. V. MORGAN, the Liberal candidate for Battersea, on being asked at a crowded meeting whether he would vote for the Affirmation Bill and the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, answered decidedly "Yes."

WE are pleased to see that Mr. John Bell has been heckling Mr. Leadam, the Liberal candidate for the Altrincham division of Cheshire on the subject of the Blasphemy Laws. Mr. Leadam's first answer being not quite satisfactory, Mr. Bell plainly said that "he should not vote for any candidate who would not vote for the repeal of those laws." Thereupon Mr. Leadam gave another answer to the effect that he was averse to persecution, that personal affronts on account of religion should be dealt with at common law, and that all expression of opinion should be free. The answer was loudly cheered.

OUR friend Mr. Cuerel, Secretary of the John Bright Club, has been sounding Mr. Lionel Cohen on the question of the Blasphemy Laws. This gentleman aspires to represent Paddington, in what particular interest is not very clear, but we suspect in his own. As to Mr. Justice Stephen's Bill, he protested he had never heard of it, having had "very little to do with heresy." We venture to predict that Paddington will have just as little to do with him, and that the next Parliament will know as much of him as he knows of Mr. Justice Stephen's Bill.

PROFESSOR SWING has been preaching against Ingersoll, and censuring him for talking about Blasphemy, a "crime which is as dead as Hercules, Memnon, and Orpheus." In reply to this nonsense, Medora Clark writes to the *Boston Investigator*, calling attention to Mr. Foote's infamous sentence. The lady pays Mr. Foote some handsome compliments, which we need not repeat; and asks Professor Swing what he means by saying that Blasphemy is a dead crime when such a man was recently sent to herd with felons for twelve months for being a "blasphemer."

A GENTLEMAN having asked a question in the *English Mechanic* as to how he could get at the numbers of those who have died since the time of Adam, received the following reply: "I

suggest that Mr. Fryer should turn his attention to something more scientific than the problem given. The existence of Adam is, to put it mildly, very doubtful, and the 6,000 year chronology is utterly discredited.—Wm. John Grey, F.C.S., Analytical Chemist, Newcastle-on-Tyne." Outspoken gentlemen like Mr. Grey serve the cause of Freethought immensely.

THE Hyde Park lectures we referred to last week have resulted in the enrolment of forty names as prospective members of a new Branch of the N. S. S. The conductors are searching for suitable premises for an indoor campaign during the winter, and have obtained a promise from Mr. Foote that he will come and help them as soon as they open their hall. Among the lecturers who have recently addressed large audiences in the Park are Mr. C. J. Hunt, Mr. P. H. Snelling, and Mr. W. J. Ramsey.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT.

THE following, by George Saxe, we believe, nicely hits off quacks and theologians:

"It was six men of Industan,
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant,
Though all of them were blind;
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The first approached the animal,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl,
"God bless me! but the elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Oh, what have we here?
So very round, and smooth, and sharp;
To me 'tis mighty clear
This marvel of an elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The third reached out his eager hand
And felt about the knee;
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain!" quoth he.
"This wonder of an elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The fourth approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hand,
Thus boldly up and spake,
"I see!" quoth he, "the elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Cried, "Even the blindest man
May tell what this resembles most,
Deny the truth who can;
'Tis clear as day, the elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The sixth, no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than seizing on the swinging tail,
That fell within his scope,
"I see!" quoth he, "the elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so those men of Industan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong;
Though each was partly in the right,
And all of them were wrong.

MORAL.

So apt in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean:
And prate about an elephant,
Not one of them has seen.

Note.—Theologians are far worse than these six blind men. They had all felt something, felt a part each of a real being. The theologians have no knowledge whatsoever of their God. Their disputes are all about fancies, and about fancies as unreasonable as can be conceived.

"THE GRAND OLD MAN" Cigars are so named because—like the Grand Old Man himself—they have never been equalled.—Thornes, Maker, Bradford, Yorks. All Liberal and Radical Clubs should try them.

NOTES ON THE NEW OLD TESTAMENT.

AN instance of the half-hearted courage of the Revisers occurs in 2 Samuel viii, 18. King James's translators having the notion that old King David went about with a copy of the Pentateuch under his arm, could not believe that his sons would usurp the priestly office in direct violation of the Levitical law. They accordingly told us that "David's sons were chief rulers." The Revisers properly alter this to "David's sons were priests," and most improperly put in the margin "or chief ministers." *Cohenim*, as every Hebraist knows, means "priests" and nothing else. Both Saul and David performed priestly functions (1 Samuel xiii., 9; 2 Samuel vi., 14, 18; xxiv., 25) and Manoah, the father of Samson, of the tribe of Dan, offered a sacrifice, which was visibly accepted. These and numerous other instances prove that the early Jews knew nothing of the Levitical law, which was not even acknowledged in the days of the prophets.

IN Kings x., 5, the Revisers have kept this fact concealed by retaining the phraseology concerning Solomon's "ascent by which he went unto the house of the Lord." They put in the margin the true version, which the Hebrew can only signify—viz., "his burnt-offering which he offered in the house of Jahveh." In 1 Kings viii., 4, the authorised version is followed, "the priests and the Levites," while in the parallel passage 1 Chron. v., 4, "the priests, the Levites," is given.

KING St. James's translators knowing that by Levitical law none but the high priest could enter the holy of holies, rendered 1 Sam. iii., 3, "And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep." The revisers give us the correct version, "and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was laid down to sleep in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was." The whole story shows the ark was neither more nor less than an idol, and Samuel acted as its guard.

IN 1 Sam. xiv., 18, the marginal reading from the Septuagint where Saul says "Bring hither the ephod, for he wore the ephod at that time before Israel," is doubtless correct, and exposes a deliberate forgery on the part of the later editors of the Hebrew text, in substituting the words "ark of God" for ephod, in order to conceal the fact that Saul performed priestly functions. Verse 41 of the same chapter, "Shew the right" or "give a perfect lot," indicates that the Urim and Thummim were used in divination.

IF the important substitution of Moses for Manasseh, Judges xviii., 30, reveals the significant fact that the descendants of Moses worshipped a graven image down to the time of the captivity, something is done to conceal the many instances of image worship by the substitution of the words teraphim, pillars, etc. (see Gen. xxxi. 19, 34; Ex. xxiii., 24; Deut. xvi., 22; 1 Sam. xix., 13). Hosea iii., 4 now reads "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and ephod or teraphim." This relinquishment of idolatry was evidently looked on as a misfortune. The teraphim were images of household gods, somewhat similar to the Roman Lares and Penates.

THE phrase "sons of God" is kept in Gen. vi., 2, and Job. i., 6, but in Ps. xxix., 1, "sons of God" or "the gods" is given as a marginal reading to "sons of the mighty." Gen. xxiii., 6, gives "a mighty prince" and puts "a prince of God" in the margin. The *Jewish World* says: "Consistency in such matters is not the strong point of the revisers, or we should in all probability have had, following the 'Largums,' a powerful wind in place of 'the spirit of God,' as the equivalent of *Ruach Elohim*" (Gen. i., 2).

EXOD. xv., 15, has as margin to "the mighty men of Moab," "rams." At 2 Kings xxiv., 15, the same term is rendered "chief men," with the margin "mighty," while at Ezek. xvii., 13, it is rendered "mighty" without any marginal alternative.

ACCORDING to the Rev. Robert Taylor, the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch read: "In the beginning the goat [*heezim*," not "*Elohim*"] created the heavens and the earth." The revisers have not only altered the scapegoat, that beautiful type of the Savior, into Azazel, the evil spirit, but they have altered "they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils" (Lev. xvii., 7) into "they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the he-goats," with the marginal reading "satyrs." 2 Chron. xi., 15, "he ordained him priests for the devils," is now "for the goats" or "satyrs." "Lucifer" is kicked, not out of heaven, but out of Isaiah xiv., 12, which now reads "How art thou fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the morning!" Satyrs are retained (Is. xiii., 21; xxxiv., 14), with the margin "he-goats." Deut. xxxii., 17 and Ps. cvi., 37, change "devils" into "demons," yet these are probably only the "other lords" referred to in Isaiah xxvi., 13.

"SATAN" is retained 1 Chron. xxi., 1, in Job. i., 6, with the marginal note "That is the Adversary," in Job ii., 1, 3, 4 and 6, and in Zech. iii., 1, but in the ferocious Ps. cix. the man after God's own heart no longer prays that Satan may stand at his

enemies' right hand, but only expresses a pious wish that "an adversary" or "an accuser" may be there.

IN the imprecatory Ps. cix., 18, David's pious wish, "As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones," is toned down into "He clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, and it came into his inward parts like water and like oil into his bones." The kindly wish, "Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow," remains unaltered.

ANOTHER instance where an evil spirit is mentioned in the Hebrew and concealed in translation is Is. xxxiv., 14, where "screech-owl" is changed into "night-monster." As with "Alukah" (Prov. xxx., 15), it should have been left untranslated. The Hebrew word is "Lilith," the evil spirit with whom, according to Jewish tradition, Adam consorted.

ISAIAH xxxiv., 15, changes "great owl" into "arrow-snake"; v. 13 changes "owls" into "ostriches"; and v. 11 for "owl" gives the marginal variation "bittern." "Bittern" (Is. xiv., 23, and xxxiv., 11; Zeph. ii., 14) is changed into "porcupine"; "swan" (Lev. xi., 18) is changed into "horned owl"; "cuckoo" (v. 16) into "sea mew"; "cormorant" (Is. xxxiv., 11) is changed into "pelican"; and "cockatrice" (Is. xi., 8; xiv., 29; lix., 5) into "basilisk."

THESE zoological changes are surpassed in Gen. xxxvi., 24, where "mules" are changed into "hot springs," and in 1 Kings x., 28, and 2 Chron. i., 16, where "linen yarn" has become "droves of horses." In Is. xix., 10, for "all that make sluices and ponds for fish" we are to read "all they that work for hire shall be grieved in soul."

STILL more curious is the alteration in Prov. xviii., 8, and xxvi., 22, where "The words of a talebearer are as wounds" is altered into "The words of a whisperer are as dainty morsels;" and in Job xvii., 6, where "and aforesome I was as a tabret" is now "and I am become an open abhorring."

CHRISTIAN CIVILISATION IN AFRICA.

A LARGE, strong man dressed in a uniform, and armed to the teeth, knocks at the door of a hut on the coast of Africa.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" asks a voice from the inside.

"In the name of civilisation open your door or I'll break it down for you, and fill you full of lead."

"But what do you want here?"

"My name is Christian Civilisation. Don't talk like a fool, you black brute; what do you suppose I want here but to civilise you, and make a reasonable human being out of you if it is possible."

"What are you going to do?"

"In the first place you must dress yourself like a white man. It's a shame and a disgrace the way you go about. From now on you must wear underclothing, a pair of pants, vest, coat, plug hat, and a pair of yellow gloves. I will furnish them to you at reasonable rates."

"What shall I do with them?"

"Wear them, of course. You didn't expect to eat them, did you? The first step in civilisation is in wearing proper clothes."

"But it is too hot here to wear such garments. I'm not used to them. I shall perish from the heat. Do you want to murder me?"

"Well if you do die, you will have the satisfaction of being a martyr to civilisation."

"You are very kind."

"Don't mention it. What do you do for a living, anyhow?"

"When I am hungry, I eat a banana. I eat, drink, or sleep, just as I feel like it."

"What horrible barbarity! You must settle down to some occupation, my friend. If you don't, I shall have to lock you up a vagrant."

"If I've got to follow some occupation, I think I'll start a coffee-house. I've got a good deal of coffee and sugar on hand."

"Oh, you have, have you? Why, you are not such a hopeless case as I thought you were. In the first place, you want to pay me fifty dollars."

"What for?"

"As an occupation tax, you ignorant heathen. Do you expect to get all the blessings of civilisation for nothing?"

"But I haven't got any money."

"That makes no difference. I'll take it out in coffee and sugar. If you don't pay up I'll put you in jail."

"What is jail?"

"Jail is a progressive word. You must be prepared to make some sacrifices for civilisation, you know."

"What a great thing Christian civilisation is!"

"You cannot possibly realise the benefits, but you will before I get through with you."

The unfortunate native took to the woods, and has not been seen since.—*Siftings*.

PROFANE JOKES.

God having in the beginning created man in his own image, man has ever since been returning the compliment.

A SUNDAY-school teacher in Albion, (N.Y.), asked her class the question: "What did Simon say?" "Thumbs up!" replied the children in chorus.

A LITTLE Blackheath girl had the whooping-cough, and when she recovered from it said she was glad she did not die while she had the whooping-cough, because "God would not like little coughing angels."

MARY, aged four (her kitten being dead): "Has pussy gone to heaven, papa?" Papa: "No, darling." Mary: "Why not?" Papa: "They don't want cats in heaven." Mary: "Would they scratch the angels?"

ONE of the converts at the Holiness Meeting went up to an old maid at church the other night and ask her if she was "ready for the bridegroom." The old maid informed him that she was ready now and had been for the past forty years.

A CERTAIN reverend drone, preaching in an exceedingly dull manner to a congregation not used to him, many of them slunk out of the church, one after another, before the sermon was near ended. "Truly," said a gentleman present, "this learned doctor has made a very moving discourse."

NOW READY.

RANDOLPH CHURCHILL:

Woodstock Bantam.

By G. W. FOOTE.

A searching review of the career of this scion of the pauper House of Marlborough; showing how he has veered like a weather-cock, always following the wind of self interest; how he has advanced himself by vituperating Mr. Gladstone and denouncing "atheism" and "sedition"; and how, being devoid of genius or principles, he has won the lead of the Tory party by mere use of slang and cheek.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Stitched in Neat Wrapper.

Radicals should circulate this pamphlet wholesale during the next few months.

Progressive Publishing Co., 23 Stonecutter Street.

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

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