

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

PRIZE CARTOON.



THE BRUMMAGEM CALF.

"And it came to pass . . . that he saw the calf and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot."—EXODUS xxxii., 19.

LET US PRAY.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has just reminded God Almighty that the General Elections are approaching. He tells the sleepy monarch of heaven of a few duties he ought to perform at this crisis. He does it "humbly," of course, but the hint is a pretty plain one nevertheless. We shall await with proper anxiety the result of this experiment. Meanwhile, we venture to examine his Grace's petition to the throne of Grace.

First of all, we cannot help noticing that it is delightfully vague. His Grace has one eye on God and the other on his own position. He therefore asks for all good things in general, and no good thing in particular. Any other course would give offence. Almost every measure that engages public attention is warmly canvassed, supported by some, opposed by others, and regarded with mixed feelings by a great many more. If the Lord were asked to interfere decisively in any particular direction, there would arise a hubbub such as the world has rarely witnessed since the Tower of Babel. The Archbishop knows this well enough, and as he does not wish to make enemies, he begs for no special favor, but requests the Lord to exercise

a general superintendence over our political struggles. He solicits the Almighty, so to speak, to act as everybody's backer, to hold the sponge and see fair play for all.

Still, his Grace could not refrain from putting in a good word for the Church, whose very existence is threatened by Radical agitators. But does Dr. Benson seriously think his prayer will in any way affect the question of Disestablishment? Mr. Gladstone's axe laid the Irish Church low, despite the opposition of the bishops and the prayers of the whole clergy; and some other Premier, if not Mr. Gladstone, will demolish the English Church in face of the same threats and entreaties. It is all very well praying to God when matters are undecided; it keeps up the great game of religion, and amuses the leisure of a few million of that species which, in Carlyle's opinion, these islands are stocked with. But of what use is it when a majority is once declared? You might as well try to effect an eclipse with a parasol. When a Liberal government, backed by an overwhelming public opinion, is resolved on disestablishing the Church, all the prayers in the world will not alter their decision, and we venture to say that God Almighty will not even be consulted.

The Archbishop informs God that England is a country for which he has "done so great things of old." Very

much of old, we fancy. When our affairs were in the Lord's hands, they were horribly muddled. We were ruled by kings, fooled by priests, and plundered by aristocrats. We were kept in ignorance and subjection. But since we began to manage our own business, we have grown richer, happier, healthier, more educated, and more intelligent. The Age of Reason, though brief as yet, has produced infinitely more good for the people than all the ages of faith. Latterly, indeed, the Lord himself seems to have perceived this; and seeing how much better we do without him than with him, he wisely leaves us to our own resources. Theist as he was, Carlyle could not help observing this remarkable fact. Mr. Froude said, on one occasion, that he could not believe in a God who does *nothing*. "He does nothing," groaned Carlyle, with a look of despair. Some of us see the fact, but are unable to deplore it. We perceive only another addition to the list of "Monarchs Retired From Business," and we rejoice that the Kingdom of God is giving place to the Republic of Man.

We might also ask why the Lord should do "such great things" for this land above all others. Are not all men supposed to be of the same family, and children of the same parent? Has not God, according to St. Paul, who merely echoed Plato and Plautus, made all the nations of one blood? Why then is England selected as a special favorite? We are no better, and perhaps no worse, than other countries, although we spend far more on bibles and tracts, churches and chapels, ministers and missionaries. It cannot be our superior virtue which makes us so precious in God's sight. What is it then? We defy Dr. Benson to answer. The Anglo-Israelites are the only people who can solve the riddle. Queen Victoria is the lineal heir of David, and we are descendants of the lost tribes. A very satisfactory explanation! Only it is contradicted by history and ethnology.

"Abolish all mean desire and unworthy motive; cleanse all thoughts, uplift all minds; let none be deceived through wilfulness or vain words." Such is the Archbishop's modest request. He asks the Almighty to make a new sort of human nature. There is none righteous, no not one, said the Psalmist; but Dr. Benson wants to see us *all* righteous. Perhaps he would reply that he does not ask for a continuous miracle, but just enough divine grace to tide us over the elections. But even that is a huge request. Whenever were the people brought to one mind and desire? And who can expect Mr. Gladstone and Lord Salisbury to embrace each other, Mr. Chamberlain to love the bishops, Mr. Bradlaugh to become pious, or Lord Randolph Churchill to talk common sense? Such a happy family as Dr. Benson prays for, if only for a week or two, was never yet seen, except perhaps in the Garden of Eden, where the lamb went with the lion, without being an inside passenger.

Suppose the Archbishop were to make a beginning himself. Surely a man who enjoys £15,000 a-year in a palace, while others die of starvation in garrets, has mean desires enough. Let Dr. Benson take the beam out of his own eye before he attends to the mote in his neighbor's. Whatever evil passions are excited in the approaching elections, the most ignorant and selfish voters will contrast favorably with an Archbishop who takes forty pounds a day for preaching Blessed be ye poor! Let us pray, says his Grace, and the clergy kneel; but the people outside the churches look through the windows and laugh at the farce. Presently they will insist on ending it, as an hypocrisy too gross for endurance, a blasphemy against Reason, and an insult to Humanity.

G. W. FOOTE.

RELIGION AND HYSTERIA.—II.

(Concluded from page 314.)

Not least among the many services rendered to humanity by modern medical science is that it has dispelled for ever the notion that epilepsy, hysteria and madness are the work of devils. It has proved the innocence of the thousands of women who suffered death at Christian hands on account of the Bible injunction "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Happily it is now almost impossible to realise the horrors connected with the belief in "possession" by devils, a belief distinctly countenanced in the New Testament and by the Church, which still keeps a form of "exorcism" among its canons. Of this we may be sure, the cruelties inflicted by witch-finders were but little com-

pared with the inner tortures of those who were looked on as sold to the Devil, and who themselves believed they had unwittingly entered into a contract whereby they would be eternally lost.

No one who has witnessed as I have the convulsive spasms and violent shocks of hystero-epilepsy will wonder that uncultured believers in the New Testament demoniacs should readily credit that only the Devil could provoke such a furious exasperation of all the forces of the body. This is how a Catholic Father describes the affliction of a nun he attempted to exorcise at Louviers, 1644:—

"On the day of Pentecost the same Dagon [the name of the supposed devil] kept up for four good hours the greatest rebellion to prevent the girl from communicating, and during all this time he made her suffer extraordinary convulsions, threw her to the ground several times, forced her to make a hundred leaps, a hundred courses round the church, made her push at people and strike them down."*

On this the worthy father reasons at length on the impossibility of it being anything else than the work of the Devil. Had he, instead of using the sign of the cross holy water, and prayers—all remnants of savage spells and incantationss—simply compressed the abdomen of the victim of hysteria, he would have found the paroxysms speedily cease, the ovary being the headquarters of the disease. In the year 1554 a number of Jewesses at the Orphan Hospital at Rome changed their religion. Their imaginations and feelings being excited, eighty of them were attacked with convulsions, and had the "gift of tongues" during their attacks. It was said of course that wicked Jews had sent the Devil into the bodies of these poor girls on account of their apostasy. In 1564 a girl in the Convent of Nazareth, at Cologne, which was notable for its extreme debauchery, imagined that she had communications with the Devil. All the other nuns were forthwith affected, had frightful convulsions, considered themselves possessed, and spoke of nothing but the eternal damnation to which they believed themselves doomed. In 1624 some of the "fast" young ladies of the Ursuline Convent of Loudon, determined to torment their more aged or "slow" companions by visiting them in the night in the assumed guise of devils. They succeeded too well. In a short time the whole of the sisters were attacked with convulsions. Their spiritual director, Urbain Grandier, was tried for sorcery and for having subjected the Ursulines to a magic spell. He was burnt, but the sisters continued to believe themselves under the dominion of Satan. The madness assumed its extreme forms. Besides exhibiting the usual convulsive symptoms, the nuns barked and mewed. Two priests, sent to exorcise the demons, lost what little reason they had, and died insane. The disease attacked the women in the town, and gradually extended through the district. Many such cases occurred within the convents, while outside thousands of women were burnt or drowned on the charge of witchcraft. After the witch mania had subsided, in France a great hysterical mania, known as that of the Convulsionnaires of St. Medard, arose out of the religious quarrels of the Jesuits and Jansenists. Pious young women, who went to pray at the grave of the Abbé Paris, exhibited the most extraordinary symptoms, and pretended the most remarkable cures of their diseases. From seven to eight hundred were affected with convulsions. Some leaped high in the air and turned heels over head; others barked and groaned, or mewed. These phenomena were deemed miraculous, and the cures are far better attested than any of those related in the Christian Gospels.

Hysterical convulsions were common in the early days of Methodism. John Wesley, in his journals, records numerous instances of men and women dropping to the ground under his preaching "as if struck by lightning." During a Methodist revival in Cornwall, four thousand people, it is computed, fell into convulsions. In the Kentucky revival (1800) it is related that no less than three thousand persons were seized with convulsions. The subjects often rolled over and over on the ground. Hysterical laughter was another modification. Instances of laughter were uncommon at first, when groans prevailed, but it grew until, in 1803, the "holy laugh" was introduced systematically as a part of religious worship. Sometimes half the congregation, apparently in the most devout spirit, were to be heard laughing aloud in the midst of a lively sermon. Of course this was soon discountenanced

* "La Pieté Affligée," p. 257. This is the curious work which Michelet calls an immortal book in the annals of human folly.

by the sky-pilots, or a laughing cultus might have been propagated. More painful to witness must have been the jerking mania, which characterised the revival in Tennessee. In some the spasms affected the whole body, but in others the head alone was affected; and in the words of an eye-witness, "It would be jerked from side to side so quickly that the features of the face could not be distinguished."*

It is a curious fact that whereas in former times these phenomena, stimulated by terrific pictures of an offended God and threatened torments of hell, were considered the work of the Devil, in the beginning of the present century they were regarded as a sign that the person so affected had "got religion." The record, indeed, of the revival kind of religion is a study in pathology—a long series of hysterical convulsions and agonies, finding vent in sighs, groans, tears and screams. In morbid appetite for indigestible dogmas, and in its predilection for imposture, we may trace further analogies between religion and hysteria.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

JAMES BIDDOE, 17 Stockwell Park Road, is ambitious to undertake our conversion, after having had a conference with his "pastor," who approves of his giving us "a good setting down." He begins this arduous achievement by putting a series of conundrums, such as "Who made the world if God did not?" and "Who came down from heaven to earth to die for us if God's Son did not?" James Biddoe surmises that "these are questions you cannot answer." True, we give them up; but there is an old proverb which says that a fool can ask more questions in five minutes than a wise man can answer in a lifetime.

"TAKE warning," says the irascible J. B., "for when my pen is once in use I care not how scathingly I use it." Be merciful O J. B., for how can a poor rush like the editor of the *Freethinker* stand against the whirlwind of your wrath. You ask us to "meat (*sic*) you in debate." We cry off. Another spell in Holloway Gaol would be a less terrible prospect.

J. B. asks us how we can account for the plagues in Egypt without God. We never tried to. The magicians of Egypt, when they saw the lice, cried, "This is the finger of God," and we quite agree with them. J. B. further remarks, with delicious humor, that one of our recent comic sketches was "not even truthful, as Lazarus was not called Joe." If J. B. will send us a copy of Lazarus's registration of birth, with any other authentic particulars of that resurrected worthy we shall be happy to publish it on our front page.

A BRITISH tourist once paid a visit to a mosque at Mecca, on the stone steps of which is an indentation which the Moslem guide explained was the print of Mahomet's foot. Said the Christian with a smile of incredulity, "Can you explain to me how Mahomet could have made that impression with his foot in the solid marble?" "The same way as your Christ committed his miracles," answered the guide.

SERIOUS anti-vaccination riots have taken place at Montreal. Some of the preachers out there are telling people that small-pox is a "punishment sent by God to humble pride and incline to penitence." The *New York Times* remarks that it is vain to urge sanitary truths upon people whose heads are filled with untruths which they regard as inspired wisdom. The Roman Catholic hierarchy ordered an immense religious procession of all their congregations at Montreal on Sunday last to implore the protection of the Virgin against the epidemic. The authorities forbade it as detrimental to the public interest.

DURING the service in Limavaddy Church, near Londonderry, the organist, Mr. John Cherry, suddenly stopped short in the midst of playing a hymn and died of heart disease. If a Freethinker died suddenly by a similar "visitation of God" during a Freethought lecture, how pious Christians would enlarge upon the solemn warning conveyed in so striking an instance of divine judgment.

SOME heartless wretch caught two cats, tied them by the tails, and flung them into the cellar of a church. They kept pretty quiet until about the middle of the sermon, when they began to complain, and the pastor sternly remarked, "Will the choir please wait until its services are required?" And the choir denied making any noise, and finally, after long search, the sexton found and removed the cats. And everybody is laughing at the choir; and the way the members thereof are mad at the pastor, goes ahead of the wrath of the maiden ladies who owned the cats.

* A common feature of these cases was *analgesia*, or deadened sensibility to pain. We are reminded that the chief test in witch-finding was the insertion of a pin, which, if borne without manifest pain, was considered a certain proof of witchcraft.

REV. MR. OAKLEY, of New York, says that America is the purest nation on the globe. Clergymen are sometimes almost as loose in their assertions regarding the present world as they are positive in regard to the world which is to come.

THREE Buddhist missionaries recently arrived in New York. We never regarded it as a city entirely beyond redemption.—*Philadelphia Call*.

THE *Chicago Tribune* reports that a camp-meeting held by Northern Methodists (colored) at Piney Hill, Rutherford County, was attacked by an armed body of Zion Methodists and fired into. The Northern Methodists fled in disorder, seven of them being wounded. The invaders then collected the effects of the routed party, piled them up, and made a bonfire of them.

THE *Cambria Daily Leader* (Swansea) comments on the dishonesty of a Christian body who took a public edifice in the town for Sunday and week night services. They paid for the gas on Sundays and engaged to do their own lighting on other evenings. But the authorities, hearing that their gas was surreptitiously used, had it turned off at the meter one night while the poor Christians were in the midst of their devotions or squabbings as the case may be. Whereupon, "lo and behold, the worshippers found that darkness covered the place, and gross darkness the people. The light of the soul failed to sufficiently illuminate the spacious building, and no other form of illumination being handy, the worshippers sorrowfully terminated their devotion, and groping their way out of the building, emerged into the flare of a friendly gas lamp, where they were confronted by the person in charge of the building, who is said to have used several expressions not to be found within the pages of the Book of Common Prayer." Our readers can point the moral.

THE Rev. Owen King, of Llantarnan, has announced his intention of quitting the Church and going over to Roman Catholicism. If the conversion of a Freethinker proves the truth of Christianity, the conversion of a clergyman to Romanism must prove the truth of the Romish creed. Protestants however, cannot see as far as this.

A CURE by the laying on of hands is reported. A lad's mother cured him of going to the cake basket and capturing all the frosting. It was all effected at one sitting.

MARY CATHERINE BICKNELL, who went insane and murdered her two young children, is evidently very religious. She said: "I have done it all for the best. I intended to do it all for the best, as I believed they would go to Heaven, where they would be better off." She also considered, however, that the Devil must have taken possession of her. Her theology did not preserve her from madness and murder.

DAVID BOYD, a Sunday-school teacher, has to pay £200 damages for a very heartless case of seduction under promise of marriage. The plaintiff attended his Sunday-school, and he used to see her home and read prayers to her dying father. After seducing her he refused to marry her, and attempted to throw her down and take further liberties with her by force. He disowned the child, but when an action was brought against him by the girl's father he confessed to the paternity and promised marriage again. He did this only to gain time and cause the action to fall through, as it did, from the decease of the father. The pious Sunday-school teacher is now in hiding somewhere about Belfast, and he has sold his farm and property to his sister to avoid seizure for damages.

A CLERGYMAN at Margate recently prayed "O Lord now that our summer visitors have departed, wilt thou take their place in our hearts?"

ACCORDING to the *Brighton Guardian* two clergyman have recently suddenly disappeared from that watering-place. One minister is wanted for tampering with the congregational finances. In the other case "allegations of fearful immorality are made."

TALMAGE knows all about hell. "Devils rush to the gate" when souls arrive. He also knows that there are thousands now in heaven who won salvation, and "at this very instant there are souls in the lost world mourning that they did not attend to it in time. O that they had done so! Hark to the howling of the damned! . . . Voltaire is there. . . All the rejectors of Jesus Christ are there. . . 'The smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and for ever.'" Beautiful doctrine! But, according to the Bible, Talmage's infallibility is out on one point. People are not in heaven or hell yet. They are not sent there till after the Judgment Day at the end of the world, which hasn't yet arrived. Still, Talmage must be right. He knows better than his Bible.

THE *Southern Cross* complains that both Victoria and New Zealand give shocking examples of irreligion. It deplores the expurgation of all religion save a thin Deism from the school book, the increase of Sunday railway traffic, the double-barrelled fusilade against Christianity by Judges Higinbotham and Williams and the toleration of the *Liberator* and Mr. Symes's anti-Christian lectures.

J. S. B., of Gedding Rectory, who writes in the *Church Times* against Disestablishment, should take note of Archbishop Benson's words, "Let none be deceived through wilfulness or vain words." He declares, but is quite unable to prove, that the Church of England was "self-established in Britain in the first century," and that it always refused to acknowledge Rome's supremacy. So far from this being true, Italians have been appointed bishops of English sees by the Pope. Among other things he alleges that no Act of Parliament is on record assigning property to the Church. He ought to know that Queen Anne's Bounty was constituted by Act of Parliament, and that between 1809 and 1829 Parliament voted altogether over a million to the Church. Moreover, it is by law that the tithes are assured to the parsons. But, says J. S. B., tithes are no tax upon landlords "who really own only nine-tenths of their estate, the other tenth having been the parson's from time immemorial." We don't think landlords will agree with the first part of this, and the second is certainly incorrect. Tithes were originally devoted not only to the parsons, but also to the relief of the poor.

NEARLY all the papers in noticing the Church Congress at Portsmouth, mention that John Pounds, the founder of ragged-schools, was a Portsmouth man, but they all omit to mention that he was a Unitarian.

THE Rev. W. Anderson, of King's Road Chapel, Reading, is not very scrupulous in regard to what he says of the heathen. In Pekin alone, he said, the number of exposed infants was about 4,000 a year, and before the carts went round in the morning to pick up the bodies of infants thrown into the streets, amounting to about 24 every night, dogs and swine were let loose upon them. We have no hesitation in pronouncing this statement absolutely false. Infanticide is as much against the law in China as in Christian England, where baby-farming, overlaying and neglect are responsible for a large share of infant mortality. These statements were invented by designing missionaries with a view to the collections. The careless inaccuracy of the preacher is shown by the arithmetical fact that 24 bodies per night would amount to 8,760 in a year, and not 4,000 only, as the missionaries make it.

IN his new volume on Prison Management Colonel Du Cane tells us that formerly in Reading Gaol the prisoners were required to improve their morals by Bible reading. One delinquent, to the delight of the authorities, entered so heartily into this arrangement that he undertook to learn the whole Bible by heart. Unfortunately, however, he had only got as far as Ephesians when his term expired. He left the building with tears in his eyes, and immediately stole a sheep to enable him to return and finish the inspired volume.

THE reverend editor of the *Christian Commonwealth* acknowledges that "real Nonconformity is in itself a proof of living intelligence." Well, our Nonconformity is exceedingly real, isn't it, good Christians? Why, then, do you send us to gaol as a reward for our "living intelligence?" Why do you retain statutes that treat our intelligence as crime? Is it impossible for Christians to follow the good teachings of their Lord and master as well as the bad ones? Can no Christian ever ungrudgingly grant equality at law to heretics? We don't venture to ask for sentiment, brotherhood, love, and so forth. We only require bare justice, and this we shall fight for till the organised hypocrisy called Christianity is forced to give it us.

THE new paper, *Religious Opinion*, which consists chiefly of wishy-washy extracts from the religious journals, quotes from the *New York Independent* an article on "The Church and the Individual," in which the most notable sentence is "There will be no churches at the judgment seat of Christ." We suspect there will be no churches long before the arrival of that oft-delayed event.

BECAUSE among the subjects of discussion at the Freethinkers' Congress, Antwerp, was the question, "Is there any fear of more religious wars in our epoch?" *Religious Opinion* says "it appears that the Freethinking Congress hopes to develop special gifts of prophecy." It appears, then, that *Religious Opinion* considers the question unsettled, and that it needs prophetic gifts to determine whether the religion which has caused more bloodshed than all others, will not yet give rise to more; so they attribute to Freethinkers their own folly of believing in "gifts of prophecy."

THE Bishop of Meath has been preaching against blasphemous familiarity with the Trinity. He complains that in many hymns "our Savior is treated with a familiarity which is simply shocking." The worst of presumed familiarity with God is that it breeds contempt for his ministers.

SPURGEON has been telling the bank clerks that "the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is sanctified common sense." That three are one is sanctified common sense! That a man by dying demolished all sin in those who believe, he was God, is sanctified common sense! Common sense evidently entirely changes its nature by being sanctified. Sanctified must mean "reversed."

THE Vicar of Clapham, Bedfordshire, threatens ruin to England

—"diminished population, abandoned fields, dismantled homesteads, mouldering mansions," and, worst of all, "churches unroofed and tottering with decay," if the Church is disestablished. He backs up this prophecy by referring to the Jews, who were prosperous in exact proportion to their adherence to their national religion. Yes, but Jewish history was written by the priests.

THE Salvation Army Life Guards, now perambulating the country, are described by the *Derbyshire Times* as entirely lacking in the manly bearing and physique of the real Life Guards, and as objects of pity. Among their attractions are real Hindoos and Chinese clad in native costume.

AT Leicester the "Army" received a very riotous reception. Several arrests were made. The Army draws the rough and low element together and then expects the police to keep order.

MR. E. WHITLEY, M.P., being a fossil Tory, believes that "free Secular education would be the downfall of old England." What Mr. Whitley means at bottom is that if Secular education obtained throughout England, there would be little chance of men like himself being sent to Parliament.

SOME time ago we wrote an article on the long list of parsons who were advertised as guaranteeing the efficacy of "Gordon's Extract." In return for our notice of this much-puffed commodity, the patentees now couple our paper with their "Extract." In several of the religious papers, including the *Rock*, they begin their long advertisement as follows: "A novel method of introduction—enlisting the clergy—attacked by the *Freethinker* for doing so." Further on they say: "Because clergymen have been supplied with free bottles, 'Gordon's Extract' has been attacked by the Atheistical journal, the *Freethinker*, this notoriously blasphemous publication having the brazen impudence to say that the commendation of clergymen is a disgrace to anything whatsoever. But the abuse of such an organ is an honor, where its praise would be infamy indeed."

GORDON AND Co. exaggerate. We never attacked their "Extract," which we know nothing about, and which is, no doubt, as good, or as bad, as the other extracts and essences so extensively advertised for the benefit of dyspeptic Christians. Nor did we attack the clergy for puffing it. On the contrary, we remarked that this new method of advertising opened up a new resource to needy sky-pilots, who wished to turn an honest penny to supplement a poor living, a meagre stipend, or scraggy collections. However, we will not quarrel with Messrs. Gordon and Co., at any rate while they go on advertising the *Freethinker* in connection with their Extract, especially while they do so in Christian journals that would not accept our advertisement on any terms.

THE Rev. W. G. Lawes, late of New Guinea, complains that missionary zeal is falling short of the necessities of the Church. The missions, he declares, are kept up by a few, while the many are indifferent. We have no doubt he is correct. People find there are more important questions than the religion of the inhabitants of New Guinea much nearer home, and in time they will care even less for sky-politics than they do for the religion of New Guinea.

THIS is how announcements are made from the pulpit of Crathie Church, in Scotland: "Dearly Beloved Brethren—Previously to singing the second hymn will you take notice that on and after Monday next the coach from Ballater to Balmoral will start five minutes earlier? Also that Sandy Macpherson has lost a colley dog, which answers to the name of 'Wallace'; anyone bringing the same to the head groom at the Castle will be rewarded. Also, that all copies of the sporting papers containing an account of the late great fight between Jack Massey and Cuddy Middings are to be returned to the Royal Free Library at once. We will now sing the second hymn."

THERE was a French bible printed in Paris, in 1538, by Anthony Bonnemere, wherein it was said: "The ashes of the golden calf, which Moses caused to be burned and mixed with the water that was drunk by the Israelites, stuck to the beards of such as had fallen down before it, by which they appeared with gilt beards, as a peculiar mark to distinguish those who had worshipped the calf." This idle story was actually interwoven with the thirty-second chapter of Exodus.

JOSEPH COOK'S "GEE-UP!"—Burdette says that a man passing the farm on which Rev. Joseph Cook is working this summer heard a deep, sonorous voice cry out, like a call of a prophet, "Abandon the direct progression to the straight thitherward, and deviate by inclinatory and aberrant dextrogyration into the dextral incidence." It was Ultimate America saying "gee" to his oxen.

MR. GEORGE SMITH has put forth a book entitled "A Short History of Christian Missions from Abraham and Paul to Carey, Livingstone and Duff." We wonder if Abraham's Christian Mission was in fighting against the five kings, in offering to sacrifice his son, or in discarding his concubine.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Oct. 11, Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town, N.W., at 7.30, "God's Mother."

OCTOBER 18, Wigan; 20, Walworth; 25, Sheffield.
NOVEMBER 1 and 8, Hall of Science, London; 15, Milton Hall, London; 22, Halifax; 29, Manchester.
DECEMBER 6, Plymouth; 13, Milton Hall, London; 20, Hall of Science, London; 27, Milton Hall, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. W. J. Ramsey, 23 Stonecutter Street, 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.—A. Lewis.

MAHOMET.—An Affirmation Bill is now necessary to admit Mr. Bradlaugh to the House of Commons, the Judges having decided that in the existing state of the law he is not entitled to swear or to affirm. INQUIRER asks: "Can a man or woman, having a religious belief, and of course believing in the efficacy of prayer, be considered intelligent?" It is a matter of opinion. A person may be wrong on one point and very intelligent on others. A man is hardly a fool for not agreeing on every point with his Freethinking neighbor. At the same time, while there are millions who profess to believe in prayer, there are very few who act on the profession. If a man does not believe that prayer will stop a fire, he does not really believe in prayer at all. See the last chapter of Mark.

M. HARMAN (Valley Falls, Kansas).—Sorry to hear you have been unwell. Pleased to exchange papers with you, but how could an exchange advertisement advantage either of us?

E. C. LAWS.—Your letter calling attention to a meeting on October 5 arrived after our last issue was published.

VOLTAIRE.—Your best plan would be to inquire of some second-hand bookseller.

H. ROTHERA.—You do good service by heckling candidates on the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws and the rights of Northampton.

A.—The *Suffolk Times and Mercury* for August 28 reports the case. If you send your address again we will forward it to you.

A. ANDRADE.—It is a pity Lazarus left no account of his experiences during his four days' return excursion to the other world.

J. H. ROGERS.—A patron of Church livings may not only bestow them on any ordained clergyman he pleases, but may sell them like any other property.—*Scrutin de Liste* is a method of voting not for any single member but for an entire list. It probably prevents the election of local nobodies.

W. J. HOLLOWAY.—Your lines are more forcible than elegant. Hardly up to publication standard.

J. SAUNDERS.—Thanks for the cuttings and suggestions. If the archbishop prayed for the creation of a new race of people it would doubtless be as efficacious as his present prayers.

H. P. BOWDEN.—Thanks for the cutting. A wiser man than Mr. Wise could not answer your question: "Why does not an almighty and all-good God prevent crime?"

J. WATSON.—Tracts sent. Thanks for the cutting.

C. WARD.—Thanks for cuttings.

MEMBER of the N. S. S. (Leicester), writes that the Christian who sent Mr. Ball a challenge to fight or wrestle is only too well known in the town, and is charitably supposed to be a lunatic.

F. WENHAM asks us to announce that a special meeting of Freethinkers will be held at the Three Legs Inn, Uxbridge, on Sunday, October 11, when Mr. G. Standing will deliver an address.

W. C. HART.—Scarcely up to the mark. Your MS. goes over some of the ground which was traversed in the Hundred Bible Questions we published some months ago.

J. P. MORRIS.—We will try to find room.

H. S. RUSSELL.—The joke has already appeared in a slightly different dress.

J. B. B.—Pleased to hear from you. Thanks for the paper.

H. ROWDEN.—An Atheist does not say there is no God; he simply says he knows of none. From your letter we judge that you could honestly join a Secular Society.

J. COOKSON.—We remember you quite well. Thanks.

H. COURTNEY.—A weekly contents-sheet shall be sent to Mr. Payne, 1 Peel Place, Silver Street, Notting Hill Gate. Our readers do us a service by getting newsagents to exhibit our contents-sheet.

W. SAMPSON.—We regret that you were kept waiting for our Churchill pamphlet. It was out of print for a few days, but we now have a fresh supply.

A WORKER.—So the Hackney Liberal and Radical Association thinks if Mr. Foote stood for the London School Board just now it would stamp the Radicalism of the borough with Atheism. Do they also think that every Christian who stands stamps it with Christianity? And if so, is this their notion of religious equality? If Mr. Foote's hands were not already too full he would stand independently for Hackney to teach some of the bigots a lesson.

THE Catalogue of the Progressive Publishing Company's works can be obtained at 28 Stonecutter Street.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Republican—Monroe's Ironclad Age—Winnowing Breeze—Bideford Gazette—Daylight—Truthseeker—Liberator—Christian Union—Wigan Observer—Barnsley Chronicle—Bristol Mercury—Boston Investigator—Sheldrake's Aldershot Gazette—Bedfordshire Standard—Burton Gazette—Girl's Own Paper—Leeds Mercury—Whitehaven Free Press—Yorkshire Post.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

The Prize for the best Religious Topical Sketch has been again awarded to F. Wilcockson.

The Prize for the best Comic Bible Sketch has been awarded to C. Taylor, 19 Trinity Street, Borough, S.E.

Highly commended.—H. Cowtan.

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 November 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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

SPLENDID audiences greeted Mr. Foote at Manchester last Sunday. In the evening the hall was terribly crowded, every inch of standing room being occupied, and only a space of about two feet square being available for the lecturer. Many ladies expressed regret that the lecture on "Woman's Worst Foe—the Bible" was not given in the afternoon, instead of in the morning, when they were kept at home by domestic duties. Mr. Foote has promised to give an afternoon lecture another time, on the general question of Woman, treating it historically, morally, socially and politically.

THIS evening (October 11) Mr. Foote lectures at Milton Hall, London, on the novel subject of "God's Mother." There ought to be a great rush of Christians to hear some news of this interesting female.

"BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS," or Part I. of the Bible Hand-Book for Freethinkers, edited by G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball, will be ready next week. Mr. Foote has written a special Preface to the work, and no pains have been spared to make it complete.

MR. W. W. COLLINS sails for Sydney at the end of this month. Before his departure he will be entertained at the Hall of Science, London, by the National Secular Society, and presented with an illuminated address. Wednesday evening, the 21st. inst., is the date fixed for this interesting meeting. Those who wish to be present at the supper should apply early for tickets to Mr. R. O. Smith, 142 Old Street, E.C.

ONE of the most notable of French Atheists is M. Paul Bert, the famous scientist. He has always shown the deepest interest in education, and he is regarded as a friend by all the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses in France. His volume, the "First Year of Scientific Knowledge," is used in nearly every school; five hundred thousand copies of it have been sold in three years. An English translation has just been published in London, and the *Echo* says it "should be introduced into every Board School in this country."

MR. JOHN SANDERSON, of Jarrow, informs us that last year Mr. Knight, general secretary of the Boiler-makers' Society, appealed to the members for contributions towards the testimonial to Mr. Broadhurst, whose attitude on the Sunday question is so flagrantly in opposition to the opinions of the working men he is supposed to represent. Out of two hundred lodges only eight responded, and a second appeal brought an answer from only three more. The total subscription from a Society of 30,000 members was £3 1s. 4d. Mr. Knight then asked for a levy of £15, which was refused by a considerable majority. We should imagine that these facts are sufficient to show Mr. Knight and Mr. Broadhurst, if they are open to conviction, that they entirely misrepresent the working classes on the Sunday question.

UNDER the heading "Secularism Militant," the *New York Weekly Herald* gives a good notice of the Freethinkers' Convention at Albany.

If occasionally a dissenting minister is found who defends the Church Establishment, there are some within the Church who admit its defects. The Rev. C. F. Gunton for instance, declared that the Church is so narrow that she has no right to the term "national," and he proposes by way of reform that "two at least" of the Creeds shall be "relegated to an appendix to the Prayer Book as interesting historical memorials."

A DISCUSSION in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* on "What keeps the Working Man from Church?" has elicited a pointed letter from "J. B.," who puts the matter pretty straight. The working classes, he says, know that they owe far more to science than to Christianity, and in every struggle in the past in which the working men have been interested they have found the clergy opposed to them. Moreover, they are beginning to think for themselves, and are fast finding out that the theory of Christianity has no solid foundation. They therefore are indifferent to religious matters, while taking an active and intelligent part in all the political and social movements of the day.

EVEN the Jews are progressing towards Freethought. The orthodox *Jewish Chronicle* tolerates a discussion on the "True Basis of Judaism," in which one of the disputants, Mr. Alfred Henriques, alleges that Judaism is a mixture of philosophy and unverified history. If the philosophy preponderates, Judaism becomes pure Theism; if the unverified history predominates, it becomes pure superstition. Divine interference in Egypt is set down as a myth.

ALTHOUGH the jury have found a verdict against Mr. Symes for not giving sureties before publishing the *Liberator*, they have awarded the smallest possible penalty, viz., £5 for each issue. Mr. Symes, however, hopes to quash this verdict on appeal. We wish him all success in his fight.

Health for October 2, has an interesting essay on "Faith Healing," by Dr. Andrew Wilson. He deals with several cases of alleged miraculous cures at Lourdes, and shows they are to be explained as well-known physiological processes.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* reports the late Earl of Shaftesbury as speaking thus of Atheism not long before his death: "But even more distressing is the propaganda of infidelity, which is carried on with a zeal and activity of which you have little idea. On all sides materialistic prints are circulated, Atheistic lectures are delivered and an infidel press is kept going. You would be surprised at the manifold manifestations of the Secularist propaganda. Why, even children are employed in the distribution of Atheistic tracts, and I have heard of cases in which boys of thirteen and fourteen have stood up to address children just leaving Sunday-school, assuring them with the utmost earnestness of conviction that there is no God. The propaganda lacks neither funds nor zeal, and that is one of the great evils against which we have to contend."

CURIOSLY, however, the noble Earl admitted that "We are better than ever we were; as a nation our standard of morality and of humanity is higher than ever I knew it." During the last thirty years, as his lordship allowed, Atheism has been spreading and religion declining. Still we are "better than ever"; so that "infidelity" is not such a bad thing after all.

WE are pleased to notice that the Buddhists of Japan have established the *Bup-po Zashi*, or *Buddhist Magazine*, in order to counteract the effect of Christian missionaries. We shall be happy if we can help the opposition in Japan as effectively as we have reason to know we do in India.

INTELLIGENT people nowadays prefer common sense to nonsense, and as Col. Ingersoll can talk more common sense in two hours than all the clergy in the country combined can preach in one year, the people flock to hear him. Ingersoll has knocked the bottom out of hell, and orthodoxy is below par. Freethought reigns and common sense is at a premium. The wailing sky-pilots and the hooting Salvation Army fools must soon fall into line or take to the woods.—*Pittsburgh Truth*.

CONSCIENCE AND RELIGION.

THE *Rock*, endorsing the views put forth by the Rev. J. L. Davies, M.A., in a volume of sermons and essays on "Social Questions," says that the modern doctrine of Evolution as applied to morals "empties the word 'duty' of all its force, and makes the appeal of conscience powerless." The reasoning of the *Rock* on this point is as follows:

"For if duty be nothing but a name for those habits which experience has shown to be most useful to Society, and conscience nothing more than an improved instinct inherited along with an improved organisation, it is obvious that duty is but a more or less enlightened public opinion, and also that just as the organisation may be still further improved by suitable surroundings, so also may the conscience. And, therefore, so far from the consistent Evolutionist being bound to obey either the call of duty or the voice of conscience, he is bound to distrust both, and to see if they may not be only echoes of the instincts of earlier ages requiring correction, thus clearly depriving both duty and conscience of all real authority."

The *Rock* considers that because conscience or the sense of duty is an inherited instinct representing more or less enlightened public opinion, and because this primitive instinct though useful and improveable is not infallible, therefore, unless the idea of a God be brought in, it has no real authority. This is curious reasoning. Conscience is one of the facts of human nature. It is an irrepressible and persistent force like love and hate and acquisitiveness and ambition and the other passions. Theories cannot kill it. Explanations cannot destroy its innate influence and its palpable authority. They can only guide or mislead it. Intellect, good or bad reasoning, information or misinfor-

mation, will only direct the action of the instinctive feeling into useful and appropriate channels, or divert it into mischievous ones. To suppose that conscience loses "all real authority" because it loses its alleged supernatural God-given authority or infallibility, is simply absurd, besides being in its personal applications a gross libel. Science, it is true, by explaining conscience as a development of the social sense seen in many gregarious animals, has dethroned this inward monitor or divine *δαίμων* from its position of supreme and unquestionable authority, and has rendered us valuable service in teaching us to "distrust" and examine its alleged celestial and unerring message. The conscience of the Thug bids him strangle and rob as many travellers as possible, and reproaches him on his death-bed with his inferiority to his forefathers in this respect. The conscience of Abraham bade him cut his son's throat. The conscience of Jephthah demanded the sacrifice of his daughter in fulfilment of his vow. The conscience of the Australian aborigine will torment him on his wife's death until he kills another woman to satisfy his sense of duty to the one he has lost. The conscience of the dying Inquisitor racked him with remorse as he recalled to mind the many heretics he had *spared*, and was only calmed by the recollection of the many victims he had resolutely burned and tortured for the glory of God. Conscience needs correction and guidance. The conscientious fanatic who has been taught by religion to trust his conscience as infallible, becomes a scourge to humanity. While the exciting delusions of Religion have thus perverted conscience to evil, prompting and soothing it with falsehood, Science has insisted on calm, earnest investigation of truth, and has shown the advantages of moderation, reason, wisdom, tolerance and freedom. Science relieves conscience from the shackles and the goads imposed by religious terrors, and establishes it in its rational influence and balanced authority. Only sheer stupidity, sheer prejudice, sheer inability to perceive or acknowledge facts, or else sheer mendacity, can maintain as the *Rock* does that if Evolution be accepted as applied to morals, "there is no such thing as duty and conscience," the only alternative in the eyes of this sapient exponent of religious opinion being that the theory of Evolution is untrue and that "the voice of conscience and the call of duty come to men from without," that is, from God. Reasoners of this kind might as well maintain that Nature, being but the act of God, would cease with the cessation of belief in God. They use the word "conscience" in a sense of their own to indicate some kind of loyal obedience to God, and then conclude that with the annihilation of belief in God this form of obedience to him must necessarily cease. They cannot see or own that conscience, honesty, truthfulness, patriotism, benevolence, philanthropy, chastity, and so forth, exist in a genuine form outside the theological fold, just as Roman Catholic bigots deny or discredit the existence of virtue outside the still narrower limits of the Romish fold. They cannot conceive that conscience exists independently of their own theological interpretation of it, or recognise that there are wide human aspects of duty and of virtue generally which in no wise depend on supernatural sanction.

The *Rock* says that "the great question,—The binding force of duty and conscience, whence comes it?—is of the greatest importance." As there is considerable truth in this view, some little account of conscience from the Secular and natural standpoint will not be altogether out of place. It may at least serve to correct some Christian errors and answer some Christian objections.

In the first place, it seems to me that a satisfactory analysis of the mind and a true classification and definition of its parts or faculties and emotions, is far from being achieved as yet. The pseudo-science of phrenology, honestly but mistakenly, though to some extent usefully, attempted this task; but its hasty guesses harmonise with preconceived notions rather than with biological facts. Possibly an accurate and morally-elucidative science of mind based on ascertained brain-structure may gradually arise in the future. At present the terms employed often lack precise definition and accurate classification. In dealing with conscience the first thing then should be to ascertain its recognised meaning.

Conscience is almost if not quite as difficult of ultimate analysis as love or poetry. For practical purposes it may be defined as the sense of right and wrong, the instinctive feeling which is gratified by that which is regarded as right-doing and pained by real or supposed wrong-doing.

Its fundamental tendency is expressed by the word "ought," and, if so ugly a compound could be allowed, it might, for clearness' sake be termed "oughtativeness."* It is a moral instinct, emotion and desire, like love or benevolence or veneration, rather than an intellectual judge or abitrator as is commonly assumed and as is implied in the derivation of the word from *con*, with, and *scio*, I know. But, as with benevolence and other instinctive feelings, intellectual perceptions and prepossessions and balancings are necessarily so inextricably mixed with it as to be practically inseparable. Whether, independently of this intellectual admixture, it is a primary or uncompounded impulse, is a debatable matter.

Religious people incline to the miserable and degrading error of regarding conscience as identical with fear of discovery and punishment. Their morality being swallowed up in their theology, they are apt to consider that all men would willingly indulge in crime and vice were it not for the fear of hell or of the hangman's whip. A sense of duty which is only a dread of vengeance on earth or in hell is no sense of duty at all, and the religious people who identify the two are the true unbelievers who deserve to be held up to social reprobation for the false, pernicious and degrading views they put forth, and endeavor to give effect to, with only too much success, where Atheists are concerned. A truthful inculcation of the actual facts would do far more towards keeping men moral and happy than any amount of obviously false, exaggerated or supernatural terrors or threatenings, which break down and leave the pupil utterly untrained in real morality. Pious people teach their children that without religion and God morality ceases, that without hope of heaven and fear of hell there is no reason why a man should not indulge in vice and wickedness to his heart's content; and then they wonder at the occasional downfall of their children thus betrayed by being trained in immorality and governed by means of falsehood. They deliberately teach their sons to go wrong in proportion as they discover the unreality and hypocrisy of the superstitions of the age; and when their teaching takes effect they blame the Freethought which has never been allowed to train the mind in true morality founded on the rock of fact.

W. P. BALL.

(To be concluded).

IS THERE A GOD?

If God there be who is the first cause absolute,
Then ev'rywhere, and ev'rything, this God must be;
That is—and, surely it is far beyond dispute—
If He be All, there nothing is that is not He.
How could the "All in All" beyond Himself step out,
Or shrink to less than His Great Self—Infinity?
If we be made by God, we are, beyond all doubt,
But part of Him—there is no *we*; but only He!
Our work must all be God's, if we, ourselves, be His;
For, if we "live in Him," 'tis He who works, not *we*;
The work of God's own work, all God's work truly is;
First Cause, for *last effect*, responsible must be!
Our deeds must therefore be all holy, good and just,
If we and they be part of God's Infinity;
But many of our deeds are bad, we therefore must,
As thinking men, conclude that *God there cannot be!*
If cause must have effect which is in turn a cause,
And each result had cause which was a past effect,
The mighty march ne'er had, nor will have, start, nor pause;
No past nor future gulf, *First Cause* nor *last effect*.

G. L. MACKENZIE.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* regards Positivists as quaffing poison from Circean chalices, and thinks that Professor Beesly must drink deep of these latter before he can utter his "screaming incantations." The *C. C.* considers it humiliating and mortifying to the intellect of the age that many of its greatest minds can abase themselves at the shrine of this Positivist cult, with quasi-worship of its founder, Comte, and of humanitarian saints. It adds one reflection applicable to Christians far more than to Positivists: "It is solemnly instructive to mark into what follies the cravings of the everlasting and universal religious instinct is forcing them." But Christians, while readily perceiving the "idiotic sophistries and Circean debasement of those who faintly imitate Christianity," are quite blind to the still more idiotic sophistries and immoralities of the original cult.

* "Ought" is derived from the word "owe." Similarly "duty" and "due" are from *dû*, the past participle of the French verb *devoir*, to owe. In fundamental significance as in derivation these words are alike. Our duty is what we *owe* to society.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOCIALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—With reference to the paragraph in "Acid Drops," in your issue of the 27th, concerning my letter to the *Dispatch* of the 20th, I crave permission to make a few remarks. Anyone reading the paragraph in question would be led to suppose that I used the words in the quotation without having the least proof for doing so. I am not in the habit of making assertions without proof, therefore I beg to state that you have "spent some of your time in attacking Socialism." In the *Freethinker* of Oct. 26, 1884, will be found an article headed "Christian Socialism," with the well-known signature, G. W. Foote, at the bottom. I am aware that you directed your attack at the Socialism of Christ; but I fail to see any difference in the Socialism of Christ and the Socialism of the present-day Socialist advocates. Both have a tendency to one end—the destruction of individual industry, or the maintenance of the bad and useless portion of our community at the expense of the good and useful. Space will not permit me to take a number of extracts from the article in question. Notwithstanding, to show that you have "spent time" in attacking Socialism, I may be permitted to quote the concluding part of your article: "However grand and attractive social schemes may appear, they must all be brought by reason to the test of utility. And let Freethinkers also be cautious. We have no objection to the fullest and frankest discussion of Socialism, but we object to coquetting with it. Flirting with so ambitious and far-reaching a theory is playing with fire. If Socialism be true, let us accept it; but let us do it with our eyes open, and not be carried away by cheap sentiment and plausible catchwords." Hoping, as an advocate of truth and fair play, you will find space for this letter. —I remain, sir, respectfully yours,

JOSHUA WIDDICOMBE.

Chudleigh, Sep. 27, 1885.

[Mr. Widdicombe misunderstands us. The passage he quotes is not an attack on Socialism, but simply a warning against accepting it without discussion, as flies dash at a treacle-pot. Further, in justice to Socialism, we may observe that it differs from the Communism of Jesus Christ in making work instead of idleness the basis of society. But while not attacking Socialism in this journal, which is devoted to quite other purposes, we have always given our readers to understand that we are not a Socialist.—ED.]

SLATER TESTIMONIAL FUND.—G. Hargreaves, 10s.; J. Fitzgerald, 1s.; B. Dawson, 1s.; Failsworth Branch N. S. S., 5s.; Jarrow Branch N. S. S., 10s.; W. Taylor, 2s.; J. F., per W. Hawkins, 2s.; Barnsley Branch N. S. S., 13s.; Leicester Branch N. S. S., 10s.; Hull Branch N. S. S., 5s.—W. H. Reynolds, Treasurer, Camplin House, New Cross, S.E.

HOW PREACHING AFFECTED THEM.—"An' was ye to church yesterday, Mrs. O'Raherty?"—"Sure, an' I wus."—"An' phawd did the praycher praych about?"—"Arrah, an, why does ye be askin' me sich a quistion whin ye wus there yersilf?"—"Sure an' I wus, but faith an' I lost so much slape the noight before and the praycher prayched so musically loike that I 'wint to slape."—"Arrah, troth, an' I done the same thing mesilf. An' sure that praycher would put the devil to slape wid his sing-song 'God is Good' talk an' sich stuff that ivery wan knows."—"Yor roight, ye are. Sure an' he talks as if some people belaves God isn't himsilf."—"Will ye come in the house an' have a few drops?"—"I will, thank ye, I don't fale well at all at all this mornin'."

A PAISLEY WEAVER IN ENGLAND.—A Paisley weaver returned from a trip to London. He was recounting his adventures, and was asked if he had been in any of the English Kirks. "Aye, I wis that: I wis in ane o' them, an' it wis enough." "How that?" "O'd man, it wis perfec' ridiculous the way they used me." "Did they ill-use you?" "Listen, and I'll tell ye a' about it. Weel, ye see, I gaed in, and I askit for a safe, and the man put me intae ane in the middle o' the kirk richt fornent the pulpit. It wis marked 'free,' and I saw a' the folk looking at me, I wis kin' o' angry tae see them glowering, but I said naething. In a wee, the session hoose door opens, and in comes a minister wi' a white shirt on, an' min' ye, the queer thing wis, he had *red gallowses*, and he rins up intae the pulpit and he looks doon at me, and he cries oot, 'Lord ha'e mercy on us.' Gosh, dy'e ken I got angry, but before I could say a word anither door opens and in comes anither ane, he had on a white shirt tae, but only he had *blue gallowses*, and he rins up intae anither pulpit, and looks doon at me and cries oot, 'Lord ha'e mercy on us.' Man, dy'e ken I could ha'e struck him on the nose, but there wis waur than that; a' the congregation got up and looked ower at me and cried oot, 'Lord ha'e mercy on us.' I could staun it nae langer, but I got up and cried oot, 'Lord ha'e mercy on us!!! Did ye never see a Paisley weaver afore?'"

"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.—ADVT.

PROFANE JOKES.

A RELIGIOUS skin-flint was praying very earnestly in a church gathering the other evening. In the fervor of his appeal he expressed a desire to be caught up into heaven, even as Elijah was. One of his listeners, a bluff looking old codger, after listening uneasily to the prayer, nudged his wife at this juncture, and in a tone of unqualified disgust, whispered "Hang me if the old rip ain't trying to save funeral expenses."

VESTMENTS!—(The new incumbent was disposed to be "High.")—Younger countryman: "I zay, Gerge, what wur that parson had acrost his shouders 'Sunday? 'Looked like some o' his wife's things." Elder Countryman: "'Ca-ant zay 'm zhever. I heered um zay it wur 'Stole.'" Younger Countryman: "Stole! Na, na; I wouldn't think that o' parson! More like some o' these 'ere new 'arvest dick'rations!"—*Punch*.

At a seance, a widow whose mother had recently died wished to communicate with the spirit of her husband. The connection being made, she said: "Do you see much of dear mamma in heaven, John?" "I never see her at all." "Is it possible, John, that even now you cannot learn to love mamma?" "I would be very glad to love the old lady," replied the angelic John, "if I had the ghost of a chance, but the trouble is, she isn't here."

"O, LOR', HIR 'IM AGAIN."—In the early days of Methodism in Scotland, a certain congregation (where there was but one rich man) desired to build a new chapel. A meeting was held for that purpose. The rich old Scotchman rose and said: "Brethren, we dinna need a new chapel; I'll give £5 for repairs." Just then a bit of plaster, falling from the ceiling, hit him on the head. Looking up and seeing how bad it was, he said: "Brethren, it's worse than I thought; I'll make it fifty pun'." "O, Lord," exclaimed a devoted brother, "hit 'im again!"

A PROXY minister in a country church, when he had reached his "twelfthly," became thirsty, and not finding any water on the shelf under the pulpit, called to a deacon: "Brother Brown, there's no water here." "Do you want some?" inquired the deacon. "Yes, I'm mighty dry." A glass was brought and the preacher proceeded to gulp it down. "Mr. Goodlove," whispered the deacon, waiting for the glass. "Well, what is it?" asked the preacher, stopping his libation. "Don't you think you'd better offer a little to your sermon?" The discourse was knocked out in the next round.

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