

2954

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.



Vol. VI.—No. 1.]

JANUARY 3, 1886.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.



THE PILLARS OF THE CHURCH;
OR, CHAMBERLAIN'S FIVE P'S.

LAUGHING, to teach the truth, what hinders? . . . Joking decides great things, stronger and better oft than earnest can.—HORACE (Milton).

CHRISTMAS BUNKUM.

LONDON newspapers do not generally report sermons, but on Boxing-day they fill up the aching void of their columns with the effusions of sky-pilots who "improve the occasion" the day before. The *Daily News* this year devoted a half of one of its large pages of small type to these clerical outpourings, some passages of which we venture to criticise.

The congregations, if we may judge by the reporter's gingerly and apologetic references, were not large. Walking ourselves in the Holloway Road at the evening church time, we paused for a few minutes outside one house of God and watched. The bell tolled dismally enough for the anniversary of the Crucifixion, but its obtrusive invitation was not very successful. How many souls entered the sacred edifice we know not, but not a single body walked in while we stood there. Christians were enjoying themselves at home, and celebrating the Nativity in a genial if not a very pious fashion.

According to report, Dean Church preached the morning sermon at St. Paul's. Among other truthful and interesting observations, he remarked that the little Bethlehem baby came into the midst of a corrupt and depraved world to show an example of perfect holiness. Yes, and the example was so excellent that the clergy despair of imitating it. They shun poverty, avoid living on the road, and object to subsisting on Providence unless it takes the shape of a fat living or a good stipend. All their care is to make the best of this miserable world—for themselves; and although Jesus Christ said it was impossible to serve God and Mammon, they prove that on this point he was greatly mistaken. We may also point out that "the corrupt and depraved world" of the year one of our era never existed save in the imagination or ingenuity of Christian apologists. There have been many more vicious periods than the one God Almighty chose to be born in, and some of these have been as remarkable for piety as for profligacy.

Dean Bradley preached at Westminster Abbey. Peace was proclaimed by herald angels nearly nineteen centuries ago, but "alas! the time seemed little nearer now than on the first Christmas morning." The fierce passions of nations had not been subdued, and "even the sense of justice toward

other communities had not been adequately developed by Christian teaching." These are remarkable admissions for a dean, but even a Church dignitary may have his lucid intervals of honesty.

At the Savoy the sermon was preached by the Rev. Henry White. This pulpiteer showed an extraordinary acquaintance with history. Among the lesser lights that have paled away since Christ was born he mentions "the wearying luxury of Babylon, and the gorgeous splendor of Nineveh," which involves a novel chronology. Blowing the Christian trumpet more lustily as he proceeded, Mr. White declared that "Even the exquisite culture of Greece, and the mighty power of Rome scarcely breathed a word or raised a hand to help or bless humanity." The force of audacity could no farther go. Most of our modern reforms have consisted in substituting the jurisprudence of Rome for the laws of Christianity; and every scholar knows that the Renaissance, or new birth of civilisation after the long night of the Dark Ages, was simply a recurrence to the literature and art of Greece. When Mr. White asserts that "it was left for the beneficent reign of Christ to inaugurate homes of sacred affection, hospitals for the sick, refuges for the orphan, places for the weary and outworn" we reply that he is romancing. We also declare, in our turn, that Christianity does not alleviate a tithe of the misery it causes.

The Rev. E. Sheppard, who preached at St. James's Palace, was equally original. He found the best teaching in the manger of Bethlehem, where we suppose Jesus Christ delivered a sermon of which Mr. Sheppard has a private report; and he affirmed what nobody would dispute, that without Jesus Christ there never would have been any Christmas.

That eminent Nonconformist, the Rev. Newman Hall, whose conjugal infelicities have been published to the world, was struck by the fact that Jesus began his career as a baby, instead of being born old. He also discovered that this remarkable fact "gives dignity to maternity." We presume the Rev. Newman Hall has never read Socrates' rebuke of his sons for incivility to their shrewish mother, or heard of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi. Buddha's love and veneration for his mother is perhaps a little out of Mr. Hall's way, but he might have read in Long's translation of Marcus Aurelius how the great Pagan emperor learnt from his mother "piety, beneficence and abstinence, not only from evil deeds, but from evil thoughts; and further, simplicity in my way of living, far removed from the habits of the rich."

Cardinal Manning's sermon chiefly consisted in "a learned theological disquisition on the mystery of the Incarnation," which was evidently too much for the reporter. Among his intelligible remarks were these—that "the home in Bethlehem was the most perfect home the world ever saw," and that "the Incarnation placed all men on one great level." The latter is singularly rich coming from a Cardinal, and the former must have been drawn from recondite sources. Our gospel gives us no account whatever of Joseph's establishment, although, if we may judge from the reply Jesus gave his mother at the age of twelve, it was probably disturbed, like other homes, by occasional altercations.

Dr. Parker's place at the City Temple was taken by Miss Von Finkelstein, who gave an account of Christmas at Bethlehem. In the city of the Nativity the Christian community is the smallest of all, but it is the most intellectual. Its superior intelligence, however, does not seem to be accompanied with any moral advantage. Greeks, Armenians and Catholics celebrate Christmas at the same time, and "as questions of precedence and privilege are apt to arise between the different sects, quarrels and fighting are not infrequent incidents of the festival, and order is kept by a guard of Turkish troops." Such is the outcome of the gospel of goodwill in the very city where its founder was born. Christians fighting, and "infidels" keeping the peace!

G. W. FOOTE.

In the reign of George II., the see of York falling vacant, his Majesty being at a loss for a fit person to appoint to the exalted office, asked the opinion of the Rev. Dr. Mountain, who had raised himself by his remarkably facetious temper from being the son of a beggar to the see of Durham. The doctor wittily replied, "Hadst thou faith as a grain of mustard seed, thou wouldst say to this Mountain, be thou removed and cast into the See." His Majesty laughed heartily, and forthwith conferred the preferment on the facetious doctor.

JEWISH SACRIFICES.

"I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live: And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the Lord."—Ezek. xx., 25, 26.

In an article in the current number of *Progress* I have brought together a variety of evidence proving that the Jews were at one time in a state now only found among savages. That article could have been strengthened had I dwelt upon the prominence given to the doctrine of sacrifice in Jewish belief. In the above passage the Lord tells Ezekiel that he, the Lord, is responsible for the institution of the usage of passing their children through the fire. That by this phrase was signified no mere lustral purification by means of fire, such as walking rapidly over red-hot iron, or some practice of a character similar to the ordeals of the Middle Ages, seems manifest from the other passages dealing with this horrid custom. Indeed, Ezekiel goes on to say, in a succeeding chapter, "When they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into the sanctuary to profane it" (xxiii., 36).

That there was a party in Israel who considered human sacrifice a part of their religion is evident also from Jeremiah, who says: "They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind" (xix., 5). These strong asseverations were evidently called forth by assertions made by persons addicted to such practices, and, as we have seen, those persons had the support of Ezekiel, who, in contradiction to the statements of Jeremiah, contended that Jahveh gave them up to pollution, even as he hardened the heart of Pharaoh that they might know that he was the Lord.

To arrive at the truth in regard to the question whether human sacrifice was at one time a portion of the Jewish religion, or whether it was, as the orthodox generally assert, simply a corruption copied from the surrounding heathen nations, it is necessary to bear in mind that every portion of the Jewish law is of later date than the prophets. The book of the law was only found in the time of King Josiah, who opposed this very practice (2 Kings xxiii., 10), and there is no evidence of its existence before that date. There is reason to believe that the priestly code of Leviticus is later still, dating only from the time of Ezra. Instead of reflecting the ideas of the age of Moses, it reflects those of almost a thousand years later. It is therefore only in the historical books that we can expect to find traces of what the actual religion of Israel was. There is ample evidence that human sacrifice formed a conspicuous element. Ahaz, King of Judah, "burnt his children in the fire" (2 Chron. xxviii., 3); Manasseh, King of Judah, was guilty of the same atrocity (2 Chron. xxxiii., 6); Jeremiah denounces the children of Judah for having "built the high place of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire" (vii., 31); Micah remonstrates against both animal and human sacrifice—"Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams; shall I give my first-born for my transgression; the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (vi., 7). In the well-known story of Abraham and Isaac, as in the Greek story of Iphigenia, and the Roman one of Valeria Luperca, we have an account of the transition to a less barbarous stage in the substitution of animal for human sacrifice. It was natural that this legend should be ascribed to the time of the father of the faithful, but there is, as we have seen, abundant evidence of the practice existing long subsequent to the time of Abraham, who was by no means surprised at and in no way demurred to the divine command, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee unto the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Genesis xxii., 2). Anyone who at the present day should exhibit a faith like unto that of the patriarchal saint would be in jeopardy of finding himself within the walls of a criminal lunatic asylum.

That human sacrifices lasted long after the time of Abraham we have an instance in the case of Jephthah, who vowed that if Jahveh would deliver the children of Ammon into his hand he would offer up for a burnt offering whatsoever came forth from his house to meet him upon his

return from his expedition (Judges xi, 30, 31.) In order to tone this down the authorised version reads "whatsoever" instead of "whosoever" which is supplied in the margin of the Revised Version. Despite the emphatic statement that Jephthah did with her according to his vow, it has been alleged that because his daughter petitioned to be allowed to bewail her virginity for two months, she was only condemned to a life of celibacy. This is preposterous. Jahveh, unlike Jesus, has no partiality for the unmarried state. He liked a real sacrifice of blood. To lament childlessness was a common ancient custom, and even the Greek and Latin poets have represented their heroines who were similarly doomed to an early death, such as Antigone, Polyxena and Iphigenia, as actually lamenting in a very similar manner their virginity or unmarried condition. There is no single instance in the Old Testament of a woman being set apart as a virgin, though, as we have seen, there are numerous indications of human sacrifices.

J. M. WHEELER.

CHRISTIANITY AMONG AFRICANS.

"Terra malos homines nunc educat atque pusillos:
"Ergo Deus quicumque aspexit, ridet et odit."

—Juvenal, Satira xv., 70.

It was at Bathurst, Gambia, where I first came into contact with the Ethiopian, and inhaled a concentrated "bouquet d'Afrique." No sooner had the steamer cast anchor, than we were surrounded by small boats, containing cadaverous-looking white men, who rushed on deck, clamoring for brandy and soda, champagne, and other drinks most appreciated in the tropics. Among the first arrivals was the missionary boat, whose occupants were in search of delicacies fresh from Europe. It had been reported to the zealots of Exeter Hall, that on the opposite shores of the Gambia there dwelled heathens walking in utter darkness, whom the ministers of the gospel could not approach for want of a boat. The much-desired skiff arrived. It never crossed the river (parsons are such bad sailors; then there are the sharks), but was solely employed in boarding the mail steamers with the object stated above, and on pleasure trips. I met eager crowds discussing the events of the day. There had been an outbreak of small-pox, and the doctors (two I believe) were busy vaccinating. At the same time Bishop Beckles held a confirmation among the native Christians. A sable Chesterfield, in a white cravat, evidently the leader of the flock, from whom I sought information, told me that the bishop laid his hands on their heads and vaccinated them, thus mistaking one ceremony for the other. At Sierra Leone, the Gomorrah of the west coast, where I spent some time, I made the most extraordinary discoveries. I quote from my note books.

Walking along the Pademba Road on a Sunday morning smoking a cheroot, when the bells of the numerous churches and chapels were summoning sable Christians to worship Yahveh, the successor of Mumbo-Jumbo, I met a comely black lady, dressed in silks, accompanied by her little daughter, a lovely creature, not more than twelve years old. Both carried a Prayer-book and Bible. I began the conversation, and among other things, paid a well-deserved compliment to the charming daughter. This put the mother on the scent. She asked, "You like Tittee?" "Very much indeed." "You take 'um (her)—make country wife?" As a married man I felt rather fidgetty—"the flesh is weak"—but not being of as amorous a disposition as David, Solomon, and other biblical scoundrels, I overcame the temptation in the wilderness. She there and then tried to barter away her innocent daughter for an immoral purpose, stipulating £20 in cash, or £25 in goods. (Appropos, white girls are cheaper in London, according to the *Pall Mall Gazette* tariff.) I was horror-struck. The same evening I consulted Captain —, an old coaster, who laughed a good deal at my scruples, telling me that he always bought a young girl—a child, when he went to trade on the coast. After abusing the innocent creatures he left them (some *encientes*), and returned to his wife in Liverpool. I visited the family in England, and went to church with them. I did not feel in the least surprised when Mr. Stead, the immaculate editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, made known to the world that fellow Christians in London purchase little girls for the purpose of violating them. An aristocrat told me that those poor girls were

only "mudlarks." Oh! horror! Most of the white trader in Africa have country wives, on whom they lavish more money than on their legitimate spouses in England. Mr. —, of Cameroons, a man of considerable means, let his wife die in an English workhouse. I knew the rascal well.

The immorality in Sierra Leone is truly appalling, "tout comme chez nous." Every other house may be designated a lupanar. And the drink, just the same as in England. I saw a poor negro hanged for murdering a man whom he owed a grudge. The crime was committed under the influence of drink, "trade rum," a deleterious fluid, prepared by Christians in England and Hamburg. I tasted a spoonful of the poisonous dram, real fire-water. It burnt my throat. The chaplain stood on the scaffold, and moaned out the silly and sickening litany of the dying. Then followed a short speech, "by way of prolonging the agony," wherein he laid stress upon the evils arising from drunkenness which had brought this poor creature to the scaffold. Strange to say, he never inveighed against the *Christian scoundrels* in England who send out that terrible poison called trade rum. Poor parson! Would it be believed? The reverend gentleman died a few years after this memorable event, from the effects of *too much* brandy and soda. I knew him. He was a good man. I speak *seriously*. Only the drink! the drink!

"They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase,
Soil our addition." —Hamlet, Act i., scene 4.

Shortly before his death, he gave me to understand that he despaired of converting negroes into good Christians.

CHAS. KROLL LAPORTE.

(To be concluded.)

ACID DROPS.

It is time that a little more attention was given to the education question. The denominational schools take close upon two millions of public money over which the public have not the slightest control, and now the new London School Board have passed a resolution not to erect any new schools without first inquiring if the denominational schools in the neighborhood have any seats unoccupied. The priest and parson are thus to have the first chance of educating the poor, however inefficient their teaching may be.

THE Christian Policemen's Association appears to flourish by help of the usual Christian means. Inspector Marsh, who is a "Christian Policeman," pays for another person's summons against a policeman whom the injured person could not identify, the said obnoxious policeman having been previously discharged by the magistrate because illegally arrested by his superiors. Christian Inspector Marsh "did not think" men were forced to join the Police-constables' Christian Association, but he owned that they "might be advised to join." He also knew that a number of constables had recently been dismissed from the force, but, strangely enough, he "could not tell why." Sergeant Henry, another "Christian Policeman," declined to say how many policemen had left the division lately. He admitted that the constables had been "asked to join" by their superior officer, but he said they were not forced to join. Of course not! Who would dare to suspect Christian policemen of tyranny and persecution?

CHRISTIAN Policemen, we suppose, read a celebrated passage from the Sermon on the Mount thus: If any take thy helmet, give him thy belt also—the buckle end of it, and as heavily as possible. Christian soldiers, in the British Army at least, read it thus: If the enemy take thy bullets without budging, give him the bayonet also.

OUR compositor, or his aide de camp., managed to pass a "goak" in our recent issue by printing (p. 402, line 35) "Adam bruted" for adumbrated. This is not so bad as the version of the Bible which dropped the *c*, and made 1 Cor. xv., 52, read: "In the twinkling of an eye at the last trump we shall be *hanged*." Is. xlv., 8, has also been made to read, "Is there a God beside me?" We have ourselves seen "the method of creation" instead of "the method of cremation," and "the meeting will be hell" for "the meeting will be held." The Lord sought to "kill Moses" has been changed into "kill horses."

IN a Christmas article the *New York Herald* printed in italics: "Hark the *Herald* angels sing." When Rénan was announced to lecture on "The Influence of Rome on the Formation of Christianity," it got set up as "The Influence of Rum on the Fluctuation of Humanity."

THE Bible is awfully monotonous as a whole. There are exceptional passages. But in general the writers are infinitely too serious. They never laugh; they have no more sense of humor than

the most dry-as-dust Puritan; they are almost always joking, but never consciously; they tell a story of pots and kettles as seriously and solemnly as they would recount the terrors of an earthquake; they relate the slaughter of 50,000 men just as they do the capture of horses and cattle; they tell of a birth or a wedding as they do of deaths and funerals, etc. There are slight exceptions here and there; but too insignificant to be urged against my criticism. The writers have no sense of proportion, no literary chiaroscuro, no perspective; their thoughts are all on a level, and height and depth have no meaning for them.—*Joseph Symes.*

THE Salvation Army has obtained about 200,000 signatures to a demand for the prompt release of Rebecca Jarret and Mr. Stead, upon the ground that "any errors which, in the pursuit of the noble object in view, have been committed, have been unintentional and utterly insignificant as compared with the good which has been achieved in the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act." The petition, which was presented at the Home Office, is from a mile and a quarter to a mile and a half in length, and weighs about five hundredweight. Outside the Salvation Army, three large petitions, embodying a further 150,000 signatures, have been completed, and are to be forthwith presented. The various Christian agencies by which these petitions have been got up have been loud and incessant in denouncing the way in which justice has been "dragged through the mire" by the sentences on these poor martyred child-stealers. Abduction of a poor man's child and deliberately planned indecent assault are at worst in the eyes of these fanatics only unintentional and utterly insignificant errors! Personally they evidently regard religious crimes as acts of heroism, and the repression of such deeds by law as tyrannical interference with their religious prerogatives.

JOSEPH CRADDOCK, another active worker in the Salvation Army, has been sent to gaol for a month for stealing a coat while visiting as a missionary.

THE woman Herriman, who stands charged at the North Staffordshire Assizes with the wilful murder of a niece three years of age, whom she is accused of having systematically ill-used, beaten, and deprived of food and water, is a member of the Salvation Army, and was most regular in attention at the barracks while neglecting the child.

THE "Army of Christians" at Dalston is inviting subscriptions. One of its objects is to build Hospitals for Incurables. Quite a Friendly Society.

SOME members of the Committee of a Secular Society south of the Thames, have just learnt with great surprise that Adam and Eve were naked in the Garden of Eden. They scarcely suspected such an indelicacy in a book like the Bible, and they are astonished to find, on inquiry, that artists have always been in the habit of painting the first couple in a state of nudity. This eye-opener has led them to inspect the National Gallery, South Kensington, and the British Museum, where they have discovered a number of statues and paintings of the human form divine without a shirt or a petticoat. They complained to the authorities about these naked horrors, and were only laughed at for their pains. Since then they have visited the Gaiety and other "leg" theatres, and after witnessing the lavish display of female charms, they signed a round robin to the Lord Chamberlain, which has not even been acknowledged. They have also sent protests to Pears and Cleaver, the great soap manufacturers, against the indecent posters they exhibit all over London. Up to the present, however, their crusade against the doctrine that men are born without clothes has met with very little success; but they intend to persevere in their project.

SWIFT defined nice people as people with nasty ideas; but he was a fool, who knew nothing of human nature.

THE *Christian World*, writing on "The Gospel of the Infancy," says of the early Apocryphal Gospels: "They retailed a number of ridiculous and even repulsive miracles attributed to the child Jesus." Such legends, however, could only grow if there was a demand for them among a credulous people, and although the *C. W.* says the narratives of Matthew and Luke display a contrast like that of a living primrose to a wax flower, we cannot see that the stories of the birth of Jesus from a virgin, of his being taken by the Devil and set on a pinnacle of a temple, of his casting devils into pigs and cursing a fig-tree for not bearing when "the season was not yet," are one whit less ridiculous and repulsive than those in "The Gospel of the Infancy."

"A CONSERVATIVE PEER" writes to the *Morning Post* complaining that a Conservative pictorial print has the audacity to bring one of the most solemn passages of Scripture history into ridicule to serve the purpose of party politics. Probably the fellow peers of this pious nobleman are laughing at him for being over scrupulous.

FROM the third to the tenth of January Jahveh's ears are to be assailed with "a week of prayer." No doubt the old one will take a heavier nap than usual to avoid the infliction.

FREEDOM has yet a strenuous battle to fight in Australia. Although one jury has differed as to convicting Mr. Symes of keeping a disorderly house by lecturing on Sunday, another may prove more subservient to the "powers that be" since it is they who have put the odious old law in motion. Another proof of this is given in the fact that the Custom House authorities have seized certain books sent from the *Truthseeker* Office, New York. The books objected to are the "Trial of D. M. Bennett," and the bound volumes of "The *Truthseeker* Tracts." The tracts in the volumes which are objected to are an "Open Letter to Jesus Christ," and "Sinful Saints and Sensual Shepherds."

THE Rev. John Hammond, who preaches at Houghton-le-Skerne, has been stealing gloves from a shopkeeper at Stockton-on-Tees. When apprehended he of course denied the charge, but five pairs of the gloves he had stolen were found in his coat pocket. After this the man of God admitted taking the gloves but indignantly repudiated any felonious intent. The officer who apprehended him said he was not sober. The magistrate remanded the reverend culprit in order that an inquiry might be made as to his sanity. Drunkard, thief, or lunatic, as the case may be, he is a representative ornament of the holy church that sends him and others, as bad or worse, to be spiritual guides to those whose tithes, or gloves, or wives they are only too ready to steal.

IN certain quarters it is a generally-received axiom that only Atheists commit suicide. There must be considerable sprinkling of Atheists among the clergy, for we continually notice such cases as that of the Rev. William Hutton, who the day before Christmas failed to make his appearance at prayers, having elected to appear before his Maker with his brains blown out.

THE GLASGOW PROSECUTION.

WE are still awaiting the final news from Glasgow. Next week we hope to announce that the Ferguson case has been definitely settled on the favorable lines we mentioned in our last number. Meanwhile we learn that the *Freethinker* is not only sold openly in Mr. Ferguson's shop, but exposed as usual on the bookstall in the Secular Hall. The general impression among the Glasgow friends is that they will not be troubled again. We do not care to shout before we are out of the wood, but we fancy the feelings of some of the weak-kneed brethren who trembled, vanished, or did worse, in the hour of need, must be far from enviable. It has always appeared to us that the best way to deal with danger is to confront it. No battles are ever won by the half-hearted.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED:—W. J. Ford, 2s. 6d.; A. Shaw, 1s.; E. Barlow, 1s.; H. Chadwick, 1s.; J. Whitely, 1s.; F. Vernon, 6d.; C. Needham, 1s.; J. Morton, 6d.; W. Washington, 2d.; Mark Nixon, 2s. 6d. From Lancaster, per Mr. Tom Taylor:—James Helme, 2s.; William Garth, 1s.; Robert Johnson, 1s.; Robert Middlefell, 1s.; Joseph Hoyle, 1s.; John Ralph 6l.; Tom Taylor, 6d.; Mrs. Taylor, 6d.; Joseph Edmonson, 1s.—Andrew Jamieson, 2s. 6d.; B. Ellis, 1s.; A. J. Kite, 1s.; W. Bennett, 6d.; G. Kingsnorth, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Bennett, 6l.; Z. Wady, 6d.; F. A. Vallis, 1s.; J. W. Dowling, 1s.; J. S. Inliff (?), 6d.; E. Jesse, 6d.; Mr. Phelps, 6d.; C. Sturman, 6d.; O. Kingsnorth, 6d.; H. B. Filer, 6d.; A. Rice, 6d.; J. B. London, 6d.; W. Benson, 6d.; J. C. Parsley, 6d.; J. W. Parsley, 1s.; T. C. H., 6d.; W. Williams, 6d.; W. Scott, 6d.

LYING SPIRITS.

FALSE Heralds ye, and "Lying Spirits" all!
To sing: "Goodwill to men, and Peace on Earth;"
The hybrid monster, born in brutal stall,
Did not bring Peace, but Discord with his birth!

False Heralds ye, and "Lying Spirits" all!
Your "Tidings of great joy" were false as hell!
For, sorrow overshadowed, like a pall,
Where'er the echo of your "tidings" fell.

False Heralds ye, and "Lying Spirits" all!
Your "Prince of Peace" gave Discord newer life!
Your song was sweet; but, his refrain was gall;
Ye sang of Peace; but, he, of cruel strife.

False Heralds ye, and "Lying Spirits" all!
Your lauded Christ hath filled the earth with tears,
Made tyrants rise, and bleeding victims fall;
Stripped joy from Life, and curtained Death with fears

False Heralds ye, and "Lying Spirits" all!
Your Christmas morn is one to be abhorred!
E'en Christ, himself, hath proved ye liars all;
He said: "I bring not peace; I bring a sword!"

G. L. MACKENZIE.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTES' ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Jan. 3, Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town, at 7.30, "The Eye of Faith."

JANUARY 10, Hall of Science, London; 17, Huddersfield; 24, Liverpool; 31, Hall of Science, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. W. J. Ramsey, 28 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.—R. S. T.

W. EDNER.—It appears to us a storm in a teapot. The rector of Fal-mouth is likely to enjoy his £1,700 a year while the parishioners are such ninnies as to fancy his services are requisite at a burial. What did it matter to the corpse?

H. S. RUSSELL.—Herbert Spencer's works are published by Williams and Norgate, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. The first volume of "Principles of Sociology" is 16 shillings.—"Bible Romances" will be bound up in a volume by-and-bye, but an Index will have to be prepared first.

A YOUNG FREETHINKER.—There is no proof that there ever was a Tower of Babel. On the contrary it seems likely that the myth of the confusion of tongues arose from the Hebrew word *Balel* signifying *confusion*. The Egyptian, Accadian, Chinese and Sankrit records all prove there were diversities of language prior to the time alleged. Max Müller's "Introduction to the Science of Language" is an authority upon the subject.

A STUDENT.—The idea may be utilised.

H. P. MAXWELL.—Your verse is hardly up to the level of your subject, and you write in no particular stanza. Some of your lines rhyme and some do not.

J. F. HENLEY.—Glad to learn that you intend to persevere with the Branch. We are always glad to assist.

A. BLOOMFIELD.—The kind-hearted Christian who told you that we ought to be burnt alive, might wait, as probably he will have to, till the sweet by-and-bye. Even then he may be disappointed, for hell is cooling down fast, and may possess an agreeable climate by the time we get there. Whatever punishment the bigots desire for us they are welcome to inflict provided they come one at a time to the front door.

H. SANDERSON informs us that the Bolton Unity of Odd Fellows requires no profession of religious faith in its lodges. The Secretary is Mr. J. Ogden, 66 Tiverton Street, Ardwick, Manchester.

W. CABELL.—Voltaire's suggestion that Jesus was born on Christmas day because John was conceived in September, at which time only the sovereign sacrificer entered the temple, is ingenious, but without proof.

ANTI-HUMBURG writes in favor of a London Freethought Friendly Society.—The story of the old woman who routed a disciple of Mr. Bradlaugh at Northampton is a very ancient one.

THE conclusion of "A Modern Saint" is unavoidably crowded out this week. It will appear in our next.

T. THOMSON.—If any further corrections are needed in the Glasgow list they must be sent us in a plain handwriting. The inaccuracies are no fault of ours.

FRIEND OF TRUTH.—Shall appear.

L. JOHNSON.—Mr. Foote has not forgotten his old promise to write on the question—"Was Carlyle a Christian?" He has been waiting for the complete evidence to be before the world. His intention is to deal with the matter before long in *Progress*.

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current number. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

A CATALOGUE of the Progressive Publishing Company's Works can be obtained at 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Lucifer—Boston Investigator—Truthseeker—Liberator—Rationalist—Chiel—Papers for the Times—Chat.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

THE announcement of the winners will appear 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 February 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.

THERE was a larger audience at Milton Hall last Sunday evening than might have been expected, considering the holiday season and the weather. Judging by the laughter and applause, Mr. Foote's lecture gave great satisfaction. One critic devoted several minutes to proving two of the lecturer's points, but not

being possessed of a sense of humor, he could not share the audience's amusement at his blunder.

THIS evening (January 3) Mr. Foote will lecture again in the same Hall on a new subject—"The Eye of Faith."

PART II. of Comic Bible Sketches will be ready next week. There has been an unexpected delay through the Christmas holidays. The fresh instalment of "Crimes of Christianity" has also been delayed, but it will be ready next week likewise. It will comprise two numbers on the Inquisition.

WE venture to pronounce the new number of *Progress*, which begins a new volume, the brightest ever issued. It contains something for all tastes. The editor's article on the Irish Question will probably give rise to a good deal of discussion. In beginning the new year we invite those Freethinkers who do not take *Progress* to give it a trial. Unless we are much mistaken, they will find it worth continuing.

M. YVES GUYOT's article in the *Nineteenth Century* on "The New French Chamber" gives a very gratifying account of the prospects of the Church. "Young men," he says, "who formerly entered the priesthood either to escape from field labor or to 'better their condition,' now become teachers. This occupation offers many inducements to them—a security which the clerical career no longer affords, and the possibility of advantageous marriages. In spite of all its efforts the Church of France is doomed to extinction through lack of priests."

THE same thing is happening in England. Every year it becomes more a matter of complaint that young men of ability will not take holy orders. As this continues the pulpit will be degraded in public estimation, for by-and-bye the preacher will know a great deal less than his congregation. Even at present he is frequently below the level of many whom he presumes to instruct.

WITH respect to Paris, M. Guyot says that not four per cent of its population go to mass on Sundays. Even in provincial towns the men are rarely churchgoers. Unfortunately, however, too many of them let the priest befool the women and children. Yet there is a grain of comfort in the fact that the women of France are awakening of themselves in the new daylight.

THE French have taken another wise step in seeing that the hospitals, which are supported by grants of public money, are not used for the propagation of Catholicism by clerical agents, under the guise of Sisters of Mercy. As most of the London hospitals still only employ nurses of some of the Anglican Sisterhoods, Nonconformists should see that their subscriptions to hospital funds go to institutions that are provided with secular nurses.

THE *New York Sun* declares that almost all the Jews in New York are infidels. Saturday being the busiest commercial day in that city, the synagogues are deserted, and to the Jews "Judaism and Christianity are both childish superstitions." The advanced character of the American Jews comes out amusingly in a report of a Rabbinical Conference, at which Rabbi Moses declared: "Revelation is not a Jewish idea. It leads into the domain of mysticism." Dr. Weil: "If Judaism is not a revealed religion, what is it?" A Voice: "Give it up!"

OUR CHRISTMAS PICTURES.

THE pen is mightier than the sword. And in some respects the pencil is even mightier than the pen. It depicts strikingly to the eye at a glance that which pages of labored writing would fail to convey. Hence the great value of the pictorial art as a moral agency. Like all good and useful things, it can be abused, but rightly applied it becomes an invaluable aid to the philosopher who would teach his fellows truth and wisdom by agreeable, effective and natural methods. The artist's pencil, with its graphic realisations of self-convicted absurdities and atrocities, is henceforth a Freethought weapon, and the *Freethinker* has rendered no mean service to the cause of truth by resolutely upholding, and practically securing the right of using that promising weapon. In the future the artist will help Freethought as in the past he has helped religion. Already politics and social thought are influenced by the sketches, cartoons and caricatures of the comic papers to an extent often ignored even by those thoughtful social philosophers who would prefer to make people's ballads rather than their laws. The time is coming—nay, has now commenced—when the falsehoods and vagaries of religion will be fairly and fully exposed to the fun and satire of the Freethought artist, who will rise in dignity and skill and point with the progress of the movement he has at heart, and the growing success (chiefly measured as yet by the approving smiles of

delighted friends and the satisfaction of his own conscience), which attends his pictorial arguments and propagandist satire.

Such being my views and hopes of Freethought art, the reader will not be surprised to hear that I am much pleased with the amusing illustrations in the Christmas Number of the *Freethinker*. There has been room for improvement and the improvement is being effected. Our pictures—for I may sufficiently identify myself with the *Freethinker* to speak of them in this way—are in many respects the best yet issued. The artistic execution is good, and in some cases, as in Mr. Mackenzie's "God in a Cloud," really excellent; and the fun and satire are mostly so natural and genial that even sound Christians on viewing the pictures are betrayed into momentary laughter at the mysteries and assertions of their religion. To some little extent at least they are disillusioned and set free, and by joyous and friendly means which can hardly then be remembered with bitterness or unbrotherly hatred. A correspondent who clearly recognises this characteristic speaks of some of the drawings as "a disillusion and a snare." He says: "They open one's eyes to the matter-of-fact side of subjects that have hitherto been held in too much reverence; but their peculiarly treacherous ensnaring character consists in this—they do not repel at first sight; they have a 'high art' look which invites inspection, and the observer with religious scruples finds after he has allowed himself to closely examine them that he is *caught*—completely sold—whereat I, the trappist in the corner, demurely grin and can scarcely repress an unmannerly chuckle."

Mr. F. Wilcockson, who is one of "our" artists, and who writes with a generous absence of professional jealousy not quite universal in the world of art and culture, writes thus: "The Christmas Number is splendid. Paul Bellevue's sketches are, as usual, brimful of fun. For drawing, I think Mr. G. L. Mackenzie's picture the best. Mr. E. Clare has hit off the fashionable curate to a 't,' with a smirk of self-satisfaction." "The Bag of Sins" shows the artistic touch, but the artist unfortunately does not work with the clear, definite, and thoroughly black lines needed for producing a clear picture by the photo-zinc process.

Mr. G. L. Mackenzie's representation of "God in a Cloud" is capitably conceived and superbly drawn. The large original from which our picture was reduced by photography looks like a finely-executed steel engraving; but the reduction in size, and the eating away by acid of the zinc on which the photographed picture is thus engraved by the new photo-zinc process, has necessarily taken away some of the fineness of touch—a remark which, in justice to the artists, it must be remembered, applies more or less to all the pictures. Moses peering intently into the cloud is a thoroughly real and typical human being, a genuine Jewish sheik of the desert, if ever there were such Hebrew nomads. The cloud, with its slight indications of human features, and its attitude, sitting upon the stool which the artist has politely supposed to be offered it as it "stood," while it, or the Lord within it, "talked with Moses," is a very happy piece of pictorial humor, inoffensive and amusing, yet forcible and effective to minds capable of thought. If Christians would not depict or realise the scene thus, how else would they draw it or imagine it so as to make the inspired narrative seem credible and the alleged occurrence a reality? The religious myth or falsehood is effectually dissolved into smiles and laughter by such a picture.

Mr. F. Wilcockson's pictures display marked artistic merit and a good standard of taste; for his humor is genial and amiable, and this geniality, like Ingersoll's, is both useful and admirable. His realisation of incident and his grouping and characterisation of figures show, to my mind, the eye of the true artist and the conscientious work of the faithful student and observer. His portraiture of living persons—a tolerable test for accuracy of eye and delicacy of touch—have been very successful; and his representations of characters in scriptural scenes are equally executed in that spirit of loyalty to truth and nature which is the best foundation for even the wildest caricature. His "Baby God" is a real lusty, smiling, crowing infant, who pulls the Yankee magus by his nanny-goat beard with true infantile gusto and irresponsibility. Poor bewildered and neglected Joseph, consoling himself as best he can with his pipe in the corner, displays the most evident dissatis-

faction, if not disgust, with the whole affair; he seems to be growing dilapidated both in mind and in person under the burden of his domestic troubles. The plump motherly nurse, the slant-eyed stolid-faced Chinaman, and the thick-lipped, conceited, genteel negro page, are equally interesting as natural and well-delineated figures. The baby-god's feeding-bottle and the infant's rattle, and the other precious gifts intended for the delectation or comfort of babbling omnipotence, are of course exaggerated in size to bring them into a suitable and appropriate prominence; but what reasonable, and therefore convertible, Christian can object to so natural a piece of fun, or do otherwise than smile at it?

I may mention in justice to Mr. Wilcockson that his drawings of "The Deluge" and "Ezekiel Besieging a Tile" were designed by him for the single-column size, and that the thick, bold lines of these pictures would then have been refined by reduction to half their present thickness. I may also mention that in drawings founded on rough sketches or suggestions I have sent him, he has, with a delicate sense of justice, placed my initials on the picture as well as his own; but it is only fair to him to add that in such cases very little of mine beyond the primitive idea usually appears. I think the chief use of my sketches, when I attempt them, is to show him what *not* to do.

W. P. BALL.

THE DEVIL'S EXCURSION.

The Devil came out of hell one day,
Out of blazing hell came he,
Leaving the damned that around him lay
In the waves of the burning sea,
Where never a breath of mercy may
Fall like the dew of a summer's day
On the ages of agony.

Oh! he was a weary of seeing the woe,
Awary of hearing the cries
Of women and children burning below,
Wherever he turned his eyes;
For the Lord had damned them for ever, he knew—
Had damned them, mothers and infants too,
Had damned them from the skies.

Where he and his own elected ones
Were having a jubilation,
Sitting upon their golden thrones
And singing about salvation—
Singing in happy nasal tones,
Enjoying the far-off dismal groans
That arose from the nether nation.

Oh, blithe, and glad was old Nickie Ben,
Escaping awhile from his dungeon,
Walking the earth 'mid its myriad men
Whom he, like a priest might sponge on,
Might torture with mortal sorrow, and when
Mortality failed, have their souls in his den,
Served-up devilled for luncheon.

For, devilled on earth, and devilled in hell
Is the doom that the Lord hath spoken,
And the Devil, who devils us all, knows well
What that sentence will betoken.
So he walks the world with his purpose fell,
Knowing he'll gather us all pell mell,
When the silver cord is broken.

The bells were ringing the Sabbath morn,
And Sootie listened the ringing,
Thinking it strange in a world forlorn
To hear so merry a singing;
And his tail Satanic he curved with scorn,
For he knew that men who to hope were born
No longer to hope were clinging.

And the joy that the bells flung through the air
Fell sad as death on their hearing,
For every heart was racked with care
And dread of damnation nearing—
Every heart was racked so rare
With sorrow and terror, and blank despair,
And weeping, and wailing, and fearing.

The poor were crying in vain for bread,
And the priests for gold were crying;
The people who listened to what they said,
Knew that the priests were lying.
The tyrant, whose hands with blood were red
The mitre placed on the bishop's head,
With blood his blessing bringing.

Creeds and frauds of a bygone age
Held all the thrones of power—
Usurping the people's heritage,
Blighting humanity's flower.
And the toiler robbed of his hard-won wage
Stood cursing in unavailing rage
The spirit of every hour.

This saw the Devil as round he strayed,
And it quieted half his mirth.
Quoth he, "My friends, I am sore afraid
Damnation begins at birth.
Nor need you at my black hell be dismayed,
For 'tis but the ghost of the hell you have made
For yourselves and your fellows on earth."

And he turned and hurried him home again
To the hell of the Lord's own lighting,
Leaving the hell that is made by men
As a wrong for men's own righting.
And ever since then his sorrowful ken
Looks back to the earth from his direful den,
All woe save the world's woe slighting.

M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHRISTIANITY AS A BENEFACTOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Ball's article, detailing the services of Christianity in eliminating the unfit, while not devoid of merit as a piece of sarcasm, is not very convincing as a piece of serious argument. Let us look at his instances. (1) Christianity, he says, by enjoining celibacy and asceticism, has weeded out the other-worldly. Yes, but it was Christianity itself which engendered the other-worldliness.¹ The very persons who extinguished themselves by becoming monks and nuns would, but for Christianity, have proved desirable citizens.² Their other-worldliness was not always the dreamer's greed for a fool's paradise, but rather aspirations for human welfare,³ which Christ pronounced hopeless in this world. (2) Christianity cuts off conflicting sects by internecine religious wars and persecution. Again, it is Christianity that has engendered the sects, the wars and the persecution.⁴ Moreover, the process is a slow one, since sectarian hatred does not eliminate the priests' who foment it. Persecution has been most relentless against the very sects which sought to make Christianity concern itself rather with conduct than with creed.⁵ (3) Christianity, says Mr. Ball, crushed out rival delusions, such as idolatry, and by bringing the evils of credulity to a head, rendered their diagnosis and cure the easier. My opinion is that under Roman rule the Pagan idolatries were finding their level in the minds of all sensible men. They were at any rate less noxious than Christianity,⁶ which gave new life to all superstition, whose suicide, even according to Mr. Ball, is so dilatory a process that he is doing his best to help forward the consummation. The argument that disease is beneficial because it removes the unfit only,⁷ reminds us that disease itself makes the unfit,⁸ and attacks not them only, but those who, but for the disease, might be the most worthy of preservation. Let us not, then, praise the disorder, but do our best to mitigate its ravages.

LUCIANUS.

A REPLY.

¹ I DENY this. Christianity no more engendered the other-worldliness than consumption engendered the weakness on which it preys and which it finally destroys. I distinguish between disease and susceptibility or tendency to disease. If no actual disease intervenes the unchecked constitutional weakness or susceptibility to disease is apt to increase. The English, weeded out by the consumption which prevails in our rigorous and changeable climate, are hardy enough to settle in almost any climate. The islanders of the South Pacific, whose mild and equable climate has prevented a similar weeding out and consequent physical evolution by the instrumentality of lung diseases can hardly survive in any other climate than their own. Christianity has been doing for the moral nature of Europeans what consumption has been doing for the lungs and frames of Englishmen.

² Some would. In the elimination of credulity, as of other bad qualities, there is much destruction of otherwise good material. But this has been inevitable; and a balance, often very slight, in favor of general progress by the necessary path is all that evolution works by, and all that can be expected.

³ To say that their "other-worldliness" was sometimes "aspirations for human welfare" is too much like saying that their other-worldliness was this-worldliness. A thing must not be identified with its logical opposite; otherwise all reasoning is at an end. The other-worldliness that seeks human welfare is simply not other-worldliness, except so far as it allows itself to be misled from its actual object by the mad dreams of credulity.

⁴ Exactly. These are the necessary weapons by which Christianity has done its work as butcher and scavenger in one.

⁵ But the priests and nuns, so far as they were really credulous and religious, were eliminated by celibacy, asceticism, madness⁵ and martyrdom.

⁶ Persecution does not injure the comparatively indifferent who outwardly conform, and who even benefit relatively by the distractions and burdens under which the credulous persecutors and persecuted alike suffer. Evolution mostly proceeds by the slow movement of the mass rather than by the leaps and bounds of the exceptional specimens.

⁷ And therefore less efficacious in doing the temporarily evil but permanently beneficial work of eliminating credulity and the superstitious tendency generally.

⁸ "Only" should be "chiefly." No one contends that "only" the unfit are removed in the destructive processes which constitute the negative side of natural selection. It is only upon the undoubted tendency to the removal of the unfit that the argument for natural selection rests.

⁹ This is only true in a secondary and temporary sense. The primary truth is that the susceptibility or weakness invites or provokes the disease, and so gets itself eliminated. The tendency of disease is to remove those who are susceptible to it, till only the disease-proof are left. Universally speaking, disease hardens and strengthens the race by removing the inferior stock. Temporarily and individually—and this is the aspect which we can all readily perceive—disease undoubtedly weakens and injures. But its permanent effect on a race is different. It is not consumption that has made the weak lungs of the Polynesians, but rather its absence.

W. P. BALL.

REVIEW.

Our Corner. January. Freethought Publishing Co.—Mr. Bradlaugh opens with a short article on the New Parliament. Mrs. Besant's active pen is absent from the present number. J. M. Wheeler writes with knowledge and taste on Edwin Arnold's "Song Celestial." "D.'s" scholarly article on the Old Testament is the first instalment of an essay. John Robertson's article will interest those who can understand it, but it will be "caviare to the general." Mrs. Bonner continues her useful "Chats on Chemistry."

A BIBLE LESSON.

(From the Sydney "Bulletin.")

We have noticed that the pious lesson-books for children are sad stuff. We are desirous on our side to instruct the young in that which is good, beautiful and true, and, therefore, we feel constrained to try our hand at a little Biblical lesson for the young. We will entitle the first of the series:—

SAMSON.

Samson, dear little ones, was the son of Manoah. He did not learn this until some time after his birth. But he bore up. Samson was noted for two things:—First, for his strength, and second, for the difficulty he had in keeping his hair on. One day Samson went to war and slew 5,000 of his enemies with the jawbone of an ass. He could have had other weapons, but he preferred the jawbone. There was a rumor in those days, too, that Samson took the jawbone without the ass's permission. This would be very wrong, if true, and would shock the little boy at Manly very much. Samson married Delilah. Directly they were married she cut off all his hair. When scolded by Samson she cried, and said at home she had always been used to a pillow. To console her, Samson went out and slew a lion. He took from the lion's inside a swarm of bees, and brought the honey home, and both did eat thereof. In those days bees built their nests in the insides of lions. We don't know why, or how. But they did. Samson subsequently took a dislike to a house in Gaza and pulled it down. The house was full of people—and bricks. All the people and bricks fell on Samson, and he died. Intestate. He had nothing to leave but his hair, and that had been cut off. So that, dear little boys and girls, is all you (or anyone) need know about Samson. You are not obliged to call him Mr. Samson. There were no misters in those days. We don't know why.

"PA," said Bobby, who had been allowed to sit up a little after dinner with the distinct understanding that he was to ask no foolish questions, "can God do everything?" "Yes." "Can he make a two-foot rule with only one end to it?" "Put that boy to bed."

WHEN Dr. Laurence Lockhart, minister of Inchinnin, succeeded to the estate of Milton Lockhart, Dr. Gillan was appointed his parochial successor. Some time afterwards, Dr. Lockhart, communicating with him, expressed a hope that the MSS. and sermons he had left in an attic chamber were kept free from damp. The humorist answered laconically: "The MSS. are quite dry, especially the sermons."

"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.

ONE of the illiterate who "had a call to preach," recently set his congregation on the broad grin, at the close of a hammer-and-tongs sermon, by requesting them to "sing the Sockdologer!"

A LADY leaving home was thus addressed by her little boy:—"Mamma, will you remember and buy me a penny whistle? And let it be a religious one, so that I can use it on Sunday."

THE editor of the *Texas Siftings* finds himself unable to answer all the questions of his young son Alex. Says the boy, "Pa, why does God make it rain?" "To make the corn grow, my child." "But why does he let it rain on the streets?" "Go to the Devil."

"WHAT was it that David said to Solomon, just before he gave up the ghost?" asked a Sunday school teacher of his class. A boy with an anxious expression of countenance raises up his hand. "What did David say?" "Tom Jones ran a pin into me clear up to the head, and it's there yet."

A LAWYER and a parson were talking about which way the wind was. The former said "We go by the court-house vane." "And we," replied the parson, "go by the church vane." "Well," said the lawyer, "in the matter of wind that is the best authority." And the parson went home to cogitate.

A BRIGHT little Miss was given a warm cookie by a neighbor. Though contrary to her custom, the mother allowed the child to eat it. Shortly the little girl exclaimed: "Mamma, let me go and get another cookie; I know Mrs. — will give me one." "No, dear, it will make you sick." "Will I die and go to heaven?" "Yes." "Well, Mrs. — (her Sunday-school teacher) says heaven is a beautiful place." "You don't want to go to heaven and leave papa and mamma, do you?" "Well, mamma, you got a cookie, too, and come with me to heaven."

CHRISTMAS 3d.] NUMBER [3d. OF THE "Freethinker"

ILLUSTRATIONS:

- Satan's Adventures. (Fourteen sketches) By PAUL BELLEVUE.
- The Transfiguration.
- The Deluge! By F. WILCOCKSON.
- The Baby God. By F. WILCOCKSON.
- A Corpse Reviver. By F. WILCOCKSON.
- God in a Cloud. By G. L. MACKENZIE.
- Our Rector. (A series). By E. CLARE.
- A Bag of Sins. Happy Eliza! Etc. Etc.

ARTICLES:

- The Star of Bethlehem. By G. W. FOOTE.
- God as a Barber. By W. P. BALL.
- A Bethlehem Scandal.
- Discovery of Noah's Ark. By J. M. WHEELER.
- Jehovah's Election Address. By SCOFFER.
- The Archbishop's Prayer for the General Election.
- A Modern Judas. By A. B. MOSS.
- Going to Church. By G. STANDRING.
- Mrs. Brown on the Bible.
- Rib Ticklers. Etc. Etc.

TO FREETHINKERS, Etc.
A TRIAL SOLICITED. BEST STYLE, FIT AND VALUE.

H. HAMPTON,
TAILOR, 14 Gt. Castle Street, W.
A FEW DOORS FROM REGENT CIRCUS.

RUBBER STAMPS.

- National Secular Society Monogram 1 0
- Any two-letter Monogram 1 0
- Name in full 1 4
- Postage to any part of England 2d. extra. Agents Wanted.

IRETON AND CO,
92 GRACECHURCH ST., E.C.



IN THE PRESS.

Prisoner for Blasphemy.

By G. W. FOOTE.

Containing a full account of his Prosecutions and Imprisonment.

A volume which every Freethinker will prize, and which will be invaluable to the future historian of our age.

Cheap Edition, in Paper Covers ... 1s. 6d.
Superior Edition, in Cloth 2s. 6d.

Ready on January 10.

PART II. OF

Comic Bible Sketches

48 Pages. In Handsome Wrapper.

Price Fourpence.

REDUCED IN PRICE!

- The Darwinian Theory ... 3d.
- The Origin of Man ... 3d.
- Monkeys, Apes and Men ... 3d.
- The Three bound in cloth as—
- Darwin Made Easy 1s.

The best popular expositions of Darwin in the market.

By DR. EDWARD AVELING,
(Fellow of London University)

CRIMES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY

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

In parts of 16 pp. Price One Penny each:—
I. Christ to Constantine—II. Constantine to Jovian—III. Athanasius to Hypatia—IV. Monkery—V. Pious Frauds—VI. Pious Frauds (concluded)—VII. The Rise of the Papacy—VIII. The Crimes of the Popes—IX. Ignorance, Vices and Quarrels of the Early Clergy—X. The Jew Hunt—XI. The Jew Hunt (concluded)—XII. The Crusades.—XIII. The Crusades (concluded)—XIV. Witchcraft.

Ready Next Week.

PART XV.—THE INQUISITION.

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

"Shows Christianity to be the greatest criminal the earth has ever cumbered with."—*Ironical Age*.
"The two authors of this work (which is well described by the title) are doing a good work in England in exposing the prevailing religion. In this work new cases of Christian cruelty are unearthed and new authors cited as authorities. We wish every English-reading Christian could have a copy."—*New York Truthseeker*.

"A most useful addition to the Freethought Library."—*National Reformer*.

"The evidence against the culprit, Christianity, is led with forensic skill."—*Secular Review*.
"The brochure now before us is a most serviceable and effective compendium of the overwhelming historic testimony against the Christian Church from its origin to the Dark Ages. . . . The bulk of the work is beyond cavil; and if it be complained that the spirit of the writers is too determinedly hostile to Christianity, the answer is that they always speak from cited evidence."—*Our Corner*.

NOW READY.

VOL. I., including Parts I. to IX.
Price One Shilling.

144 pp. Bound in handsome wrapper.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

Bible Contradictions.

Being PART I. of a

BIBLE HANDBOOK FOR FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS.

EDITED BY

G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball,

WITH A

Special Introduction by G. W. Foote.

STITCHED IN WRAPPER.

PRICE FOURPENCE.

"Bible Contradictions" is a convenient and useful arrangement of the gross contradictory passages in the inspired book. The passages of holy writ are arranged in parallel columns. The conclusion of the reader is that God has a very short memory. The pamphlet would be of great use to the ministers."—*Ironical Age*.

Price Sixpence.

PROGRESS

A Monthly Magazine,

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

The JANUARY NUMBER contains—

- The Irish Question. By G. W. Foote.
- Mr. Gladstone and the Bible. By Edward Aveling.
- Five Millions Slain. By S. Britton.
- Old-World Stories. By E. N. W.
- American Humorists: Artemus Ward. By George Standring.
- Were the Jews Savages? By J. M. Wheeler.
- Green Leaves from an Old Tree. By E. V. Wa:d.
- The Caravan. (From Théophile Gautier).
- Reviews, Gossip, etc.

MR. FOOTE'S WORKS.

- Arrows of Freethought 0 6
- Theological Essays, including all the theological pamphlets now in print. Cloth ... 2 0
- Blasphemy No Crime 0 1
- Mill's Christ. Being an exhaustive examination and exposure of John Stuart Mill's panegyric on Christ in his Essay on Theism 0 2
- The Folly of Prayer. New edition; with fresh Introduction 0 1
- Atheism and Morality. New edition; fresh Introduction 0 1
- Secularism the True Philosophy of Life. An Exposition and a Defence. (In Wrapper)... 0 4
- Atheism and Suicide 0 1
- The God Christians Swear By 0 2
- Was Jesus Insane? 0 1
- Brown's Story; or, The Dying Infidel. 16pp. 0 1
- Law and Gospel. Letters to Lord Coleridge, Judge North, Gaoler Harcourt, and Lawyer Giffard 0 1
- The Shadow of the Sword. An Essay on War 0 2
- Jonah's Excursion to Nineveh. With twenty-four illustrations 0 2

BIBLE ROMANCES (1d. each).

- 1 The Creation Story
- 2 Noah's Flood
- 3 Eve and the Apple
- 4 The Bible Devil
- 5 The Ten Plagues
- 6 Jonah and the Whale
- 7 The Wandering Jews
- 8 The Tower of Babel
- 9 Balaam's Ass
- 10 God's Thieves in Canaan
- 11 Cain and Abel
- 12 Lot's Wife

FIRST SERIES, bound in elegant wrapper, ONE SHILLING.

- 13 Daniel and the Lions
- 14 The Jew Judges
- 15 St. John's Nightmares
- 16 A Virgin Mother
- 17 God in a Box
- 18 Bully Samson
- 19 Gospel Ghosts
- 20 A Rising God
- 21 The Bible Menagerie
- 22 The Crucifixion

SECOND SERIES, bound in elegant wrapper, NINEPENCE.

"For regular go-a-head propagandist work we know of no literature likely to be so effective as Mr. Foote's series of little pamphlets entitled *Bible Romances*."—*Secular Review*.

MIRACLES OF CHEAPNESS.

- Paine's "Age of Reason" 0 6
- Paine's "Complete Theological Works," including "Age of Reason" 1 0
- Ditto, in cloth 1 6

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

Thwaites' Liver Pills.

Are acknowledged to be the best Family Medicine in the World by the many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after you had read it you might say it was only advertising puff; but I ask One Trial of the LIVER PILLS; if not better than any you have tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. I recommend them for INDIGESTION, LOSS OF APPETITE, DIZZINESS, BILIOUSNESS, CONSTIPATION, NERVOUSNESS, PALPITATION OF THE HEART, PILES, ETC., all of which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what we call a sluggish Liver. Try some of the LIVER PILLS as soon as you can, as they are PURE HERB PILLS, and may be used at any time by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking cold. Prepared only by GEORGE THWAITES, 2 Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees. Sold at 1s. 1d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post at 1s. or 2s. Penny Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

"LIVER PILLS, 2s. 6d. each, on vulcanite; upper or lower set, £1. Best quality, on vulcanite, 4s. a touch, upper or lower set, £2. No extras. Completed in four hours when required. Best teeth on Platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18-carat gold, 15s. Painless extraction daily with gas, 6s.; without 1s.; stopping, 2s. 6d.—MR. STANTON, B.D., 128 Strand, London. Hours nine to eight.

J. WORSTER, WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANT, "Duke of Ormand" Princes Street, Westminster, The "National Reformer," "Freethinker," and other Freethought Journals at the bar.

Printed and Published by G. W. Foote, 28 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.