FREETHINKER. THE

FOOTE. EDITED BY

Sub-Editor-J. M. WHERLER.

Vol. VI.—No. 4]

JANUARY 24, 1886.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

SKETCH .- No. 147. COMIC BIBLE



BIBLE BEAUTY. 65-90. AGE

"And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee."—Genesis XII., 11—13. [A comparison of Genesis xvii., 17, with Genesis xii., 4, will show that Sarah was between 65 and 90 years of age. Acts vii., 4, would make Sarah over 125.]

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

A PROTESTANT PECKSNIFF.

Some very curious revelations have been made at Liverpool recently. There has been an official examination into the management of the Royal Liver Friendly Society, and we should say that if other affairs are worked on the same principle, it is high time that the public insisted on having a few Freethinkers on the directorate of every such associaa few Freethinkers on the directorate of every such association, for the sake of common honesty and veracity. Our purpose, however, is not to preach a homily on the morals of trade, although the Christian world seems greatly in need of one. We intend to deal with the revelations of this inquiry only so far as they throw light upon the morality of Christian journals.

The Royal Liver Friendly Society was of course obliged to advertise, and it did so with royal munificence. Some

papers were paid the ordinary mercantile price, but others were paid excessive rates in return for eulogiums, or, more plainly, puffs; and it appears that these laudations were prepared at the Society's office, where the kind of thing wanted for the money was most accurately known. Besides paying large sums for these "leg-ups," the Society took several thousand copies of the papers in which they appeared.

With the ordinary newspapers we shall not trouble ourselves. Those who know what a farce the "free press'

of England is, and how subservient to commercialism, will not be surprised to learn that it was easy enough for the society to purchase these incorruptible guardians of English liberty. But there were two journals mentioned in the inquiry which deserve a special castigation, namely the Catholic Times and the Protestant Standard, both of them devoted to the service of the God of righteousness, and both of them evidently striving for the wages of

Let us take the Catholic Times first. Mr. Taunton, the Society's late chief secretary, stated in cross-examination that he "fancied he had seen a proof of a leading article from the Catholic Times office come to the Society's office." After further evidence in the same direction, the Inspector (the Hon. E. Lyulph Stanley) said "he had very little doubt but those articles were written in the Liver office."

Mr. Taunton appears to have brought in the Catholic Times in a moment of religious spleen. After expressly stating that "large amounts were paid for advertisements in return for laudatory notices," he instanced the cases of some local journals, and added "There was also the Protestant Standard." Whereupon Mr. French Q.C., the Society's counsel, ejaculated "A religious newspaper!" Here the Inspector interjected "Is that surprising?" Mr. Taunton, who is probably a Protestant seems to have felt Taunton, who is probably a Protestant, seems to have felt jealous for the honor of his sect, and as it was too late to clear their reputation he hit upon the happy thought that he might at least show their religious rivals to be as bad;

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so he blurted out "You ought to include the Catholic Times." What a delicious bit of comedy for the Freethinking spectator! Go it, gentlemen, go it; six one, and half-adozen the other.

According to Mr. Taunton's evidence, and the Society's books, the *Protestant Standard* inserted the Liver balance sheet eight times at £6 each, with a further plum in the shape of 2,000 copies of the paper, taken perhaps at the trade, but for all we know, at the retail price. No doubt it was thought a safe thing to do. Who could foresee that the transaction would ever he exposed to the daylight? Of course there was a copy of the Bible in the office, but how could a poor fellow light upon "Be sure your sin will find you out" in such a desperate hurry? You might as well expect him to find a needle in a haystack.

Now the Protestant Standard, besides being rabidly Orange, and disposed to send all Catholics, especially Irish ones, to Hades before their time, is peculiarly pious and miraculously meral. It affects a style which is a mixture of Malachi and Jeremiah, alternately cursing and wailing. Reading it you would fancy that if the world were regulated by the Protestant Standard, it might perhaps be insufferably dull and priggish, but it would certainly be good and respectable. But religious sects are terribly apt to have an esoteric as well as an exoteric side. According to outward profession, they are the people and morality will die with them; but according to the principles that guide their practice, they are just like the rest of the wicked world, only a little more so.

Above all the Protestant Standard has been a loud abuser of Atheism, which it regards as leading straight to Sodom and Gomorrah. It has vehemently denounced Mr. Bradlaugh through his long parliamentary struggle, and prophesied the ruin, not only of the Constitution but of society, if an Atheist were once admitted within the sacred walls of Saint Stephen's; while its views as to the deserts of "blasphemers" had better be imagined than described.

Yet here is this Protestant Pecksniff dabbling behind the scenes in what we venture to think a good deal worse than theft or burglary. The man who steals one's watch or purse, or creeps into one's house at night after the plate, matches himself against society, and pays the forfeit when he loses. He violates no confidence and betrays no trust. But the man who sets up as a public monitor, and uses his influence to gull the public for a contemptible share in the plunder, is a coward as well as a rogue. He gains our confidence to violate it, and betrayal of trust is the very essence of his crime. Detecting a burglar is only like finding a viper; you suppress him and forget him. But the more respectable scoundrels, who defraud us under a mask of piety or morality, give a bitterness to our memory and weaken our faith in human nature. If the editor of the Freethinker deserved twelve months' imprisonment for ridiculing what he disbelieves, how many years' penal servitude does the responsible manager of the Protestant Standard deserve for helping to gull the public? We shrink from the calculation; but if the Christian theory of the Great Assize be true, it will be accurately worked out by a rigorous judge, against whose sentence there is no court of criminal appeal.

G. W. FOOTE.

The annual Children's Party went off with great eclat at the London Hall of Science on the 14th inst. Hundreds of youngsters of all sizes were kept in high spirits and swinging enjoyment by a few devoted children of a larger growth, while the galleries were crowded with the little ones' relatives. Buns, cakes, oranges, milk and lemonade disappeared surprisingly, and the supply kept pace with the demand as though J. C. were working provision miracles behind the scenes. Mr. Fowler, who acts as chief M.C. on these occasions, must have reduced his weight by several pounds, judging from the way he perspired. Fortunately he has a voice and a presence that keep the wild swarm in something like order for the races. The rest of the Committee were as busy as bees, and Miss Bradlaugh distributed the prizes. Then ensued a terrific scene. Drums, tamborines, and other instruments of torture gave forth no uncertain sound, and the present writer beat a hasty retreat. Children are angels, of course; but how they do like a row!

What many consider the most valuable relic in Italy is the sword Balaam wished he had had in his hand when the ass spoke. It is the glory of a convent at Albano.—New York Truthseeker.

CHRISTIANITY AND TORTURE.

History being what it is, the record of man's development from savagery, contains many passages not to be read by any sensitive nature without a shudder. Perhaps the most horrible item is that of torture inflicted in the name of justice. The student of history finds it everywhere in the annals of ecclesiasticism, nor can be judge of many questions without having it before his mind. Did the Jews make a practice of crucifying Christian children at their Paschal feast? Did thousands of women fly through the air and have commerce with Satan? The testimony to the reality of such things is overwhelming. Its worthlessness as evidence is only recognised when we remember that it was given under torture, which was well described by La Bruyere as a device to destroy the weak innocent, and save the robust guilty.

Among both Greeks and Romans the deceitful and dangerous experiment of the criminal question, as the use of torture for the interrogation of criminals was termed, was admitted rather than approved. Torture was reserved only for slaves. Gibbon says: "The annals of tyranny from the reign of Tiberius to Domitian circumstantially relate the executions of many innocent victims; but, as long as the faintest remembrance was kept alive of the national freedom and honor, the last hours of a Roman were secure

from the danger of ignominious torture."*

Constantine, the brutal establisher of Christianity, introduced torture to Roman citizens for crimes of state. Although he abolished crucifixion of slaves, he employed such remedies as pouring boiling lead down the throat as the proper treatment of those who stole virgins. As the Christian theories of the depravity of human nature, the vileness of the body, the sin of unbelief, and the doom of everlasting torments upon unbelievers became predominant, and the clergy acquired power, the employment of torture spread. No treatment was considered too severe for those for whom God reserved perpetual torture. It is a damning fact that the barbarian nations who were subdued to Christianity were more merciful in their punishments before the introduction of that divine religion. In France and Germany torture was never applied to freemen until ecclesiastical tribunals replaced the earlier heathen justice. In Italy and Spain, the chief seats of religion, were invented the most horrible instruments of torture.

In 1252, when Pope Innocent IV. issued his bull De Extirpando, with its elaborate instructions for the guidance of the Inquisition, he ordered the civil magistrates of Italy to extort from all heretics by torture, not merely a confession of their own guilt, but an accusation of all others who might share their heresy. The system of the Inquisition was such as to render resort to torture inevitable. Its proceedings were secret. No advocate might appear before the tribunal. No witness was confronted with the accused, who was carefully kept in ignorance of the exact charges against him, and of the evidence upon which they were based. He was presumed to be guilty, and his judges bent all their energies to force him to confess. In the words of Dean Milman, "No falsehood was too false, no craft too crafty, no trick too base, for this calm, systematic moral torture which was to wring further confession against himself, denunciation against others."† From this to the rack and estrapade the step was easily taken, and was not long delayed. In 1301, we find even Philip the Fair protesting against the cruelty of the Inquisition, and inter-fering to protect his subjects from the refinements of torture to which, on simple suspicion of heresy, they were exposed. Yet when, soon after, the same monarch, in conjunction with Pope Clement V., resolved on the destruction of the Templars, he made the Inquisition his facile instrument for drawing forth the confessions which warranted him in seizing their property. In England, at the same time, the Archbishop of York proposed to Edward II. to torture the unfortunate Templars. Although Sir John Fortescue, Chief Justice of Henry VI.'s Court of King's Bench, in his book in praise of English laws, warmly denounces the law of torture as alien to the spirit of English law, it was nevertheless often resorted to for state and religious offences. Henry VIII. and Mary both used the rack vigorously. So did Elizabeth.

^{* &}quot;Decline and Fall," chap. xvii.
† "History of Latin Christianity," Vol. VI., p. 312.

Dr. Lingard, in a note to his History of England, thus describes the rack:

"The rack was a large open frame of oak, raised three feet from the ground. The prisoner was laid under it, on his back, on the floor; his wrists and ankles were attached by cords to two rollers at the ends of the frame; these were moved by levers in opposite directions till the body rose to a level with the frame. Questions were then put; and, if the answers did not prove satisfactory, the sufferer was stretched more and more till the bones started from their sockets."*

In theory there was a general prescription that no permanent injury was to be done to the victim. In practice this was little heeded. The meek Jesuit, Del Rio, in his instructions to Inquisitors, quietly observes that the flesh should not be wounded nor the bones broken, but that torture could scarcely be properly administered without more or less dislocation of the joints.† Of the horrible refinements of cruelty used in the questioning of those supposed to be instruments of Satan, some instances are given in No. XIV. of "Crimes of Christianity," dealing with Witchcraft.

In 1628, in the case of Felton, who assassinated the Duke of Buckingham, Laud, then Bishop of London, suggested the employment of torture, whereupon Felton boldly observed that he did not know but that in his agony he might name his lordship as an accomplice. The judges in that case unanimously agreed that torture could not be employed to elicit confession, and the last instance of its employment for that purpose in this country was in 1640, when John Arabon and was agreemented of being conwhen John Archer, a glover, was suspected of being concerned in a riotous attack on Archbishop Laud's palace at Lambeth. The Long Parliament abated this with other nuisances, but in their treatment of James Naylor for the crime of blasphemy they showed that it was not Christianity that had mitigated their barbarity. The peine forte et dure, by which weights of iron could be piled upon a prisoner, who refused to plead, until he was crushed to death, was not abolished till the reign of George III.

Against the cruelty which distinguished judicial procedure and punishment during the time when the Church was predominant, no protests were heard from the Christian camp. It was in Christian communities where the truths of the blessed gospel were received with unquestioned veneration that the administration of torture was systematised with a cold-blooded ferocity unknown to the legislation of heathen nations. It was the sceptics, Montaigne and Beccaria, who first attacked the judicial use of torture, and to Voltaire more than to any other man it is owing that the barbarity fell into universal disrepute.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

A Mormon woman, who committed perjury recently in a trial at Salt Lake, excused herself to an acquaintance on the ground that she "only lied to the Gentile's God and not to the Mormon's God" in swearing falsely. The difference between the Mormon God and the Gentile God is expressed in a celebrated Mormon Hymn—

"The God that others worship is not the God for me;
He has no parts or passions, and cannot hear or see;
My God can love and think, and act always so free,
Oh that's the God, Oh that's the God for me."

A BILL for the suppression of polygamy among the Mormons has been carried by the United States Senate by a majority of 38 to 7. It places Mormon church property in the hands of trustees nominated by the President of the United States; polygamy is forbidden, and the women of Utah are deprived of the franchise. It was only against the last clause that the gallant minority stood out. The people who are most anxious to have God in the Constitution are the very ones who will not permit the Mormons to carry out God's ordinance of polygamy.

THE Religious Tract Society advertise "Funds Urgently Needed." That is no new thing with a religious society; but the bulk of the publications of the society in question are published at sufficiently high prices, and if they don't pay it must be because there is little demand for their goods.

One of our readers in Bermondsey is favored every Sunday by tract distributors, who leave something at his house for the benefit of his immortal soul. The last of their leavings is an old

sermon (recently reprinted) of Mr. Spurgeon's, preached in 1858, in which he refers to the "cursing obscenity of Tom Paine" and the "leering and scowling" of Voltaire. After these flowers of Christian charity the Baptist Boanerges soars into the regions of prophecy. "I believe," he says, "I shall live to see the last Secularist buried." Spurgeon evidently believes that, like the beloved disciple, he will tarry till Jesus comes again. Even then he will not see the last Secularist buried, for there will be a big host of them whenever the Lord puts in an appearance. What we fancy Spurgeon will see if he lives long enough is the burial of the last Christian—the last but one of course; unless he imitates Moses, takes part in his but one of course; unless he imitates Moses, takes part in his own funeral, and afterwards writes the obituary.

Another burial scandal is agitating the local mind at Chelmsford. After arranging for a burial in Trinity Church cemetery, this being the only burial ground in the parish, the rector made his sexton lock the gates. The funeral party had to cross a field, but after sundry difficulties they succeeded in entering. The grave of the deceased, who was a Wesleyan, was purposely dug at a considerable distance from the other graves, which is a converge of pain to the relatives. source of pain to the relatives.

On Christmas Day, 490 of the Protestant paupers at Homerton workhouse wandered about the wards instead of attending divine service, and the following Sunday there were 389 who refused to go to the chapel. The clerk said that according to clause 124 of the Consolidated Orders paupers were bound to attend a place of worship, and the only exemptions from this rule were in the cases of infirm, sick, lunatics, children, and those who objected to attend within the house; but these last could claim to attend church outside under the supervision of a competent officer. Any persons not exempted as above could be treated as disorderly persons if they refused to attend a place of worship, and be punished accordingly. "Blessed be ye poor!"

A Symposium on Disestablishment v. Church Reform is being A SYMPOSIUM on Disestablishment v. Church Reform is being carried on in the Woolwich Gazette between clergymen and Nonconformist ministers. The Rev. Brooke Lambert, Vicar of Greenwich (who of course prefers Reform to Disestablishment), confesses that for the last ten years the National Church Reform Union, to which he belongs, has been vigorously at work circulating pamphlets "to which no one would give attention." Why this pother now? Simply because the clericals know that reform is the only alternative to disendowment.

ONE of the first and most important items of Church Reform One of the first and most important items of Church Reform induced by the extension of the Franchise is a bill for the provision of free seats in churches, which will be brought before the House of Lords by the Bishop of Peterborough. If passed, it is said, the bill will ensure a large number of free seats in thirteen thousand churches. In early times, however, all seats were free in all churches. The Bishop hopes for a much increased attendance if there are free seats. Blessed are they who expect little, for they shall not be disappointed. Many of the clergy are opposed to the measure, which they say will throw the expenses of repairs of the church, etc., upon the offertory, which is little likely to bear the strain. is little likely to bear the strain.

One of the broadest men in the Church of England, Canon Shuttleworth, refuses to budge beyond the ghost story. Although he signed the memorial in favor of the Church being widened to include as far as possible the whole Christian thought of the nation, he now declares: "I could accept no plan of Church Reform which did not recognize the Incorrection on the besis of Reform which did not recognise the Incarnation as the basis of the Church."

THE Church Review says of the memorial signed by Broad Church and Nonconformist ministers that all that is lacking are "the signatures of Mr. Bradlaugh and the editor of the Freethinker."

Some say that Sir M. Hicks-Beach's attempt to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh being sworn was all a farce, and that the Government are very glad not to be saddled with another difficulty. This, are very glad not to be saddled with another difficulty. This, however, is not the true reason of his success, which is entirely due to the week of prayer indulged in by all Christians before the calling together of Parliament. It is amusing to note the comments of the religious press upon Mr. Bradlaugh's oath-taking. The Tablet howls at the judicial blindness of the Speaker, and declares that an Atheist cannot take an oath, and that "the single result of the Speaker's action is that there has been a public and tolerated violation in the House of Commons of the command, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.'" The Rock says that Sir M. Hicks-Beach "deserves the thanks of all who respect religion and reverence the sacred name" for subwho respect religion and reverence the sacred name "for subjecting himself to the Speaker's snubbing. The Record fairly howls at the "calamity" and "deplorable occurrence," and declares: "It is an insult not only to religion, but to every Christian man, woman and child in the kingdom, from the Queen on her throne to the youngest ragamuffin in our ragged schools, that a scoffing contemner of the worship and existence of Jehovah should sit among our legislators, helping to carry, and able to initiate laws which we shall all be bound to obey."

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD got his peerage for baiting Bradlaugh and prosecuting Atheists. Probably if he had not been elevated to the House of Lords he would have found it very difficult to get returned again to the House of Commons. It now appears that provision is to be made for poor old Newdegate, whom Giffard and his pious but cautious friends egged into playing the part of common informer against the member for Northampton. The failure of that enterprise nearly brought the old gentleman into the bankruptcy court, all the Tory circulars for subscriptions on his behalf having been dreadfully abortive. Finally, poor Newdegate was obliged to retire from politics, as his old constituency would have no more to do with him, and it was utterly impossible for him to obtain another seat. In this extremity the Queen and Lord Salisbury come to his relief. It appears that the unfortunate common informer is to be pitchforked into the Privy Council, which is the highest seat of decorous dulness and well-paid do-nothingism.

THOMAS SAXBY, a member of the Maidstone branch of the Salvation Army, has been sentenced to twelve months' hard labor for breaking into St. Peter's Church, Ightham, and stealing several Bibles and hymn-books. His pious devotion has been heavily rewarded.

A SALVATION ARMY poster used at New London runs thus: "Hallo! who is this? Why, Kansas Jack, the saved desperado, who will swoop down on us and lasso as many of the devil's braves as possible. But who is this fellow? Captain Walsh, the converted minstrel, who will speak, play and sing for the glory of God and the good of your soul. The best thing out. Take it all in."

A QUESTION.

If everything that happens is God's will,
Both good and ill,
Then say wherein
Rests man's responsibility? Though sin
Go hand in hand with him through ways of shame,
Is man to blame?

If everything that happens is God's will,
Both good and ill,
What credit hath
That man who ever shuns the evil path,
And treads with feet that do not hesitate
The true and straight?

GERTRUDE ALGER.

The evil influence of Roman Catholicism and of the celibacy it enforces on its priests is strikingly shown in France, where, as the famous French statistician, M. Bertillon, has shown, the clerical teachers of schools are accused of "four times as many crimes, and twelve times as many misdemeanors" as the married teachers of the country.

The conversion of the Baltic Christians to orthodox Russian Christianity is slackening. A deputation of converted peasants addressed itself recently to the Orthodox Archbishop at Riga, and complained that they and their brethren had not yet obtained the lands which they had expected to get as a reward for their conversion.

SEVERAL hop growers at Beddingdon, in Kent, refuse to pay the rector his extraordinary tithe of 18s. an acre. The public teacher of Christianity has shown practically his idea of Christianity by seizing 47 sheep off one of the farms, and these will (1).V.) be sold by auction. The rector should preface the sale with a gushing sermon on some such text as "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor," or "If any take thy cloak give him thy coat also." Pretty sentiment done to death would be a cheap counteractant to the harshness of religious robbery, only people might think the mixture a palpable evidence of the grossest hypocrisy.

A PUBLICATION entitled "What do Catholics Really Believe?" edited by W. H. Anderdon, of the Society of Jesus, has been sent to us. Among many curious statements, it says that the Church was "the same a thousand years ago, and so it will be found a thousand years hence, if the world lasts so long." Exactly a thousand years ago the Church, by its highest representative, Pope Stephen VI., sprinkled the land with holy water as a sure protection against the plague of locusts. Do they believe in this now? A thousand years ago there was no belief in the infallibility of the Pope, for Formosus was appointed head of the holy see, although he had been formally excommunicated by his predecessor, John VIII., and in turn all his ordinations were declared invalid.* A thousand years ago the Greek and Roman Churches began quarrelling about the procession of the Holy Ghost, and they have not settled that little matter up to date, authough both profess to have the Holy Ghost on their side.

Another clergyman has committed suicide. The Rev. J. A. L. Sutton was found lying in a pool of blood and with an open

razor by his side, in his bedroom at Brixton. Although physically strong he gave way to fits of despondency.

In France a man named Francois Paul, after helping to drown his wife and his three children, resolved to survive them in order to bury them in consecrated ground. Observe the great value of the religious instinct. The poor creatures might otherwise have been buried in common earth, and then what would have become of their poor immortal souls?

The Saturday Review, noticing Mr. F. Peek's paper on the Salvation Army, in the Contemporary Review, gives the following as extracts from the Little Soldier: "Emma, five years old, hopes you will pray for her unconverted parents.—Sarah, who is six, is very uneasy about mother, and seeks some token father is turning his heart to God, and is trying to soften his heart and stop him smoking." What a nice school for cant for the little soldiers!

A "Mrs. Walker" advertises in the Medium as Clairvoyant Business and Physical Medium. Is she the relict of the late lamented Hookey?

An old couple named Steinberg, at Indianopolis, were so pious that they permitted themselves to die by suffocation from coal gas because they would not lift a hand on the Sabbath to adjust the stove-pipe, which had fallen. Such fanaticism is the result of teaching theological dogmas instead of common-sense.

THE Rev. S. Pearson, of Liverpool, has made the wonderful discovery that benevolence did not exist in the world before Christianity. Perhaps he will be good enough to tell us who invented the word philanthropy, and how it was that the translator of the Vulgate found the fine Latin word caritas ready to his hand when translating Corinthians into the Roman vernacular?

MR. PEARSON also refers to the ancient Romans going to see "gladiators torn to pieces by beasts." We suppose there would have been no harm in seeing the beasts torn by gladiators. At any rate, that is what is done now in the bull-rings of Christian Spain, after nineteen centuries of the blessed gospel.

In praising their own religion, Christians commonly ignore all good from other sources. In the Christmas number of the Christian Commonwealth we thus read of "a culture in the humanities which you owe entirely to Jesus," as if no pagan and infidel writers had any share in the fair humanities and culture of our race! On another page we read that the "religion of Christ" is the "only religion which wears the morning star of hope" and "the only religion which says to man 'take courage." Such absolutely false statements can only proceed from a shocking ignorance, a wilful blindness, a thorough steeping of the whole mind in delusion and falsehood, or the highly respectable but thoroughly contemptible knavery of interested charlatans.

The same Christian journal selects the following as one of its moral paragraphs: "He who foresees calamities suffers them twice over." This is good Christianity, for it agrees with Christ's teaching that we must take no thought for the morrow and must rely entirely upon Providence. But it is frightfully false in its statement of fact and frightfully mischievous in its guidance of conduct. He who foresees calamities avoids them, is the practical and useful fact upon which civilisation and happiness are built. The man who foresees starvation grows corn to prevent it, and he neither suffers hunger in reality or in imagination.

The Rev. "Sam" Jones, a popular American preacher, recently said that the Lord will see that his children are provided for, even if he has to put the angels on half rations. As the Rev. "Sam" has so intimate a knowledge of the Lord's commissariat arrangements, perhaps he will explain why God lets millions of his children die in famines in China and India. Do the angels take only one meal a day on such occasions and send their remaining provender down below? We suspect that the angels must live on thistles, and that hence their self-denial so of little use except to creatures of their own or cognate species. We knew from the story of Balaam and his donkey that asses and angels readily recognise and understand each other.

At the beginning of the present century all Christians were rigorously excluded from the mosques except in the case of the mosque at Tunis, where a Christian workman was allowed to enter on all-fours to repair the clock, "because," as the sheik said to his co-religionists who objected, "in case of repairs, is it not true, O true believers, that a donkey enters this holy place carrying stones on his back; and is it not true that one who does not believe in the true religion is an ass, and the son of an ass? Therefore, O brothers, let this man go in as a donkey."

THE man who is ignorant of the geography of his own country is perfectly familiar with that of heaven and the other place.

^{*} See "Crimes of Christianity" (Crimes of the Popes), p. 119.

[&]quot;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.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, Jan. 24, Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool; at 11, "An Hour in Heaven;" 3, "The Eye of Faith;" 7, "Gladstone on Genesis."

Thursday, Jan. 28, Hackney Workmen's Club, at 8.15, "What shall we do with Ireland?"

ANUARY 31. Hall of Science, London.

MARCH 7, Hall of Science, London; 14, Milton Hall; 28, Hall of Science, London.
FEBRUARY 4, Walworth; 7, Brighton; 14, Milton Hall; 21, Man-

CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerken-

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Olerkenwell 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.

SOALE 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.

RECRIVED WITH THANKS.—W. Webber, C. B., A Recruit.

MR. W. T. LEEKEY complains of an agent of the Christian Evidence Society taking away from children copies of the Freethinker which he had given them for their parents. It would be well not to give the papers to those liable to be cajoled by the party referred to. We have not seen the gentleman's twopence.

OLD CHESHIRE WHEELWRIGHT.—If you send your address the pamphlets shall be forwarded.

phlets shall be forwarded.
W. J. BARNES.—Sir Isaac Newton, in his "Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse," p. 130 (1733), treats the week

phecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, p. 150 (1755), treats the work of Daniel as seven years.

F. CLAYDON.—Sorry to hear of your accident, but glad to see from your letter you are in good spirits.

J. COLE.—We are much pleased to hear that the last time we inserted a notice for the Bethnal Green Branch N. S. S. we were the means of securing you seven new members.

Securing you seven new memoers.

C. W. Scarr.—The Lords swearing simply means their taking the oath.—Thomas Paine died as he lived, an enemy to Christianity. The story of his death-bed recantation is a pious fraud. He states in his will that he retains the religious views he had published.

C. BOURCHIER.—Thanks for your sympathy. Sorry we cannot adopt the suggestion. Freethinker is better printed as one word than as two.

JOSEPH AND POTIPHAR.—Too broad for our pages. Try a Christian paper.
A. Coulman.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

A. COLLMAN.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

J. Kino.—As you will see from the "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu," that work was known at least in substance at the dawn of the revival of letters in the Christian world, and the story of Pandera was known to Celsus in the second century. There are several versions of the work. We do not know the one which the Russian Jows say was written by inspiration by a great Rabbi called Baal Shem. In Fuerst's "Bibliotheca Judaica" a Toldoth Joshu is ascribed to F. F. Engelsberger (of Bohemia), of whom there is an account in the Free-thinker for April 26, 1885.

W. L. Pierpoint.—We know of no such works for children. Greg's "Greed of Christendom," two vols., 12s.

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.

desired in the current number. Otherwise the topy 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.—Carlisle Journal—Midland Free Press—Truthseeker—Boston Investigator—Manchester Guardian—Referee—Weekly Dispatch—Whitstable Times—Woolwich Gazette—Shields Gazette.

"FREETHINKER" PRIZES.

We offer another PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best Comic Bible Sketch, and a PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best Religious Topical Sketch suitable for reproduction; the competition to close on 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 breader than our ordinary single or double column.

broader than our ordinary single or double column.

SUGAR PLUMS,

With an eye to its next annual report, and above all to its subscription list, the Christian Evidence Society has engaged the London Hall of Science for four Thursday evening lectures, which we dare say will result in the usual number of conversions. As the lecturers who represent the C. E. S. on these occasions are often stale and prosy, Mr. Foote has resolved to give them something fresh to talk about. Accordingly he has engaged to deliver two lectures before theirs on Feb. 11 and 18 on the question, "Is Christianity True?" The first evening will be devoted to "Its Documents" and the second to "Its Doctrines." On March 25 and April 1, Mr. Foote will reply to the C. E. S. course of lectures, which he will be obliged to attend for that purpose.

Mr. Foote does not intend to oppose the lecturers at the time unless they should presume too much on the fact, in which case he might feel obliged to give them a taste of his quality.

THE Rationalist of Auckland. New Zealand, which under the able editorship of "Ivo" strikes earnestly and strongly for Freethought, heartily recommends Mr. Foote's "Shadow of the Sword" not only to Rationalists but to local editorial swash-

It is refreshing to find the Daily News, while denouncing the immorality of war, and especially such fighting as the great powers are stimulating in the cock-pit of South-Eastern Europe, admits that "Christianity has not yet done much to alter it." But why "yet"? Surely eighteen centuries is a good long spell. Christianity won't have another eighteen centuries to try in.

Messrs Kegan Paul, Trench and Co. are about to issue a work entitled "The Fathers of Jesus." It has nothing to do with the rivalry between Joseph and the Holy Ghost, or the discrepancies in the accounts of Jesus's ancestry, but is concerned with the Jewish Rabbis from whom much of his doctrine has been taken.

A PUBLIC discussion on "Were the Gospels written previous to the year 90?" will take place at the Monarch Coffee House Lecture Hall, Bethnal Green Road, on Monday, January 25, at 8,30. Admission is free. The disputants are Mr. W. J. Ramsey and Mr. Chandler. The former is well known, and the latter is described to us as "a courteous and intelligent Christian."

WE are delighted to hear that Mr. R. S. Smith, a well-known member of the Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse Branch of the N. S. S., has been returned to the Devonport School Board at the top of the poll, with 500 votes over the next on the list. Considering that Mr. Smith was bitterly opposed by the bigots, he has achieved a striking and quite unexpected victory.

MR. SMITH is a notorious Freethinker. He not only makes no concealment of his opinions, but advertises them fearlessly. It is doubtful whether this policy has in any way injured his business, and it certainly has not injured his reputation. From personal knowledge of Mr. Smith we are confident that he will make an excellent working member of the Board, and we trust that the next elections will give him a Freethinking colleague.

The letter of Mr. Rossiter to the Weekly Dispatch has been followed by an excellent one from Mr. J. de Fraine on "Artisan Atheism." Friends who see that no attack is made upon Freethought without a rejoinder do a real service. The newspapers are finding out that the party cannot be overlooked.

Our enterprising New York contemporary, the *Truthseeker*, commences its sketches with the new year. One sketch represents Liberty attacked by the reptiles of Theology, and another shows the priest stealing the peasant's purse while directing his attention to the clouds. Other illustrations are given, representing the exterior and interior of "The Virgin," an instrument of torture employed by the Inquisitors.

One of the wittiest of the Rev. Robert Taylor's discourses entitled "Raising the Devil" has been some time out of print. It is now being reprinted and will be ready next week.

THE Manchester Sunday Chronicle has an interesting and fairspoken article on Mr. Bradlaugh and the oath question under the heading "Swear ye not at all."

Mr. FOOTE will lecture next Thursday evening (the 28th inst.) at the Hackney Workmen's Club, Haggerston Road, on "What shall we do with Ireland?" Chair taken at 8.15.

CHAINED TO THE CHURCH.

When I was a young and innocent child my mother took me one fine Sunday afternoon to church, and, in the presence of a number of admiring ladies, had me "sprinkled," by which operation I was made "a child of God." In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost "I was baptised," and forthwith admitted as a member of the Church of Christ.

And now I find that, do what I will, I cannot sever my connexion with the Church to which I was inextricably bound—by no desire of my own—by the performance of baptism. For observe what Canon Trevor says: "There is no overt act short of suicide by which a baptised person can separate himself from the communion of the national Church." Unless therefore, I put a bullet through my head, throw myself into the river, or starve or poison myself, I am chained to the Church for ever.

How sincerely sorry I am no words can express. By day and night I groan under the burden of my fate.

times I am almost persuaded in my grief to exclaim: "Oh, Canon Trevor, Canon Trevor, my punishment is almost greater than I can bear!" If by one desperate assault on this carnal body of mine I could put an end to my perplexities and miseries, without by such act of felo de se severing my connexion with my Freethinking friends, I would do it. But I am afraid I can't. Therefore as a member—a reluctant member—of the National Church, I have earnestly inquired of the learned divines to explain to me, in as clear a manner as they can, consistent with their profession, what I am expected to believe, and what sort of moral principles are to guide my conduct, so that I may not be perpetually soliloquizing with fingers on my throat—"To be, or not to be?"

Up to the present I understand that I am to believe that right at the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. That "the beginning" was not at the beginning of God, because he never began, nor the beginning of time, because time always was—but a moment—a "mere tick or two" before both. I am to believe that when God made the world, it was void—that is, empty enough to start with, and that God filled it up with dirt afterwards. That on the fourth day he stuck a great sun in the heavens, which he allowed to revolve round and round the earth until it was converted into a sort of roast apple-dumpling. After this there was a great display of fireworks. A host of electric sparks flew up and stuck on the ceiling of heaven, which same sparks have since been called stars, and are wickedly and erroneously described as of great magnitude by modern astronomers. That God then began to manufacture all sorts of living creatures, from a sprat to a whale, and from a calf to a Christian. Then I learn that the first man and first woman were caretakers to a Zoological Garden, in which there were many rare specimens of wild, uncaged beasts—without even the regulation muzzle. That on the first day God took Adam and Eve into the orchard, and told them that they might eat of all the trees save one, but in the day they ate of that they would surely die. That the fruit they were forbidden to eat imparted the knowledge of good and evil, and that, as they did not know before they had eaten of it what evil was, thay thought there could be no harm in taking just one "leetle bite." Further, they were encouraged in their belief by a certain talking serpent from the menagerie, who informed them that they would not suffer death on the day they ate of the fruit, but, on the contrary, that they would become like unto the gods, and know the difference between good and evil. That Adam and Eve ate of the fruit and became like unto the gods, and were condemned for it; the man to be an agricultural laborer for the rest of his life-which was rather a long one-the woman to be a fruitful breeder of sinners.

From the best information accessible from the learned divines with whom I have yet conferred, I find that these are among the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, and that further I must believe that four thousand years after this comedy in the Garden of Eden a baby deity was born in Bethlehem, or Nazareth, who came to save the world. It has been profoundly impressed upon me that if I consider that an infinite God could never have been born of woman, grow from babyhood into manhood, increase in wisdom and understanding, and perform some good, some bad, and some indifferent actions, it is only because I allow a stubborn and perverse reason to conquer and subdue the true prompting of the heart.

I am assured that this deity ultimately died to blot out my sins, but that he didn't do it if I cannot bring myself to believe it. It has been enforced upon me with much vigor, that when this deity died he ascended into heaven and sat on his father's right hand—not having a father, but being himself his own father, and his alleged father not having a hand to sit upon.

These things I am gravely informed I must believe, lest I should be cast out of the Church from which I cannot sever my connection by any act short of suicide; but it has been privately intimated to me by the aforesaid divines that if I, after careful consideration, find that I cannot possibly believe these things, they will regard it as a favor if I will display such reticence, prudence and tact as not to allow anybody to know of my unbelief, in which case I am confidently assured that I shall be numbered "among the elect."

ABTHUR B. Moss.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIANITY AMONG AFRICANS.—II.

THE next Sunday I went again to Pademba Road in search of adventures. This time I got more than I bargained for. At a considerable distance from a Methodist chapel I fancied I heard cat-calls. On approaching the sacred edifice (a large iron shed) I stood still and listened. The congregation were bawling a hymn in chorus, the female voices largely predominating. The voices of negro women are shrill, and decidedly offensive—to musical ears. I entered. The people were all negroes, with the exception of the man in the pulpit, whose appearance reminded me of the semiidiotic beings one meets with in the streets of London on Sundays preaching and bawling. These men and their followers make day hideous. They are an intolerable nuisance encouraged by a government of hypocrites. The preacher whined about the meek and lowly Jesus, expatiating upon the sufferings of this interesting young proletaire. At the conclusion of the sermon some negro women set up a scream. I thought they had the cramp, or their minds had become affected by the stifling heat (120 in the shade). Nothing of the kind. They were only "chasing Jesus." Shouts arose: "Me see 'um! Me feel 'um! Me catch 'um!" (i.e., him). Then more screams. A sickening feeling overcame me, and I left the Christian rabble—
"catching Jesus." After divine service in the evening
I strolled down Oxford Street, and entered a drinking-bar
kept by a European. His black wife introduced me to
several of the sable heavities who like herealf had interested. several of the sable beauties, who, like herself, had just returned from church. I treated them to gin, which they drank like water, "tout comme chez nous." Some became so excited as to get hold of me, exclaiming, "Gin and Jesus! Ah, massa, you love Jesus? Jesus love you!" Then came indecent proposals. Religion and lechery go hand in hand (Genesis i., 28 and 31; the only command widely obeyed by Christians of all denominations). Last year I met a gentleman from Sierra Leone. I reminded him of the disgusting scene, and asked how matters stood. "Worse than ever. Gin and Jesus is still their watchword." The heathen and Mohammedan women are chaste. They do not sell their children to white men for immoral purposes. Europeans are to blame for a state of immorality that has no parallel in any part of the world. Mr. ——, a colored no parallel in any part of the world. Mr. —, a colored gentleman, a missionary and a diplomatic agent, one of the cleverest men I ever met, invited me to his residence up river. I arrived late at night, owing to a fearful tornado that nearly swamped our boat. Groping my way to the dwelling in the dark, female voices—always welcome—attracted my attention. I listened a moment, and could distinguish the voice of my reverend friend, singing in chorus with the syrens an indecent song in negro patois. I burst in upon them. There stood his reverence, among four naked negro girls, dancing the African calanda, or can-can. He was not quite sober, and remarked, on feeling my wet clothes, "Get a change of linen. Rose will help you. Have a drink, and join us!" This man had a beautiful wife in England, who moved in the best society. If he had remained a heathen he might have died a respectable

The heathens of the interior are sober and chaste. They become debauched under Christian influence. Wherever the English colonise they introduce newspapers, the rumbottle, the Bible, syphilis and the gallows. Captain Cook—poor fellow!—was killed at Otahaiti, because on a former voyage his sailors had communicated a loathsome disease to the natives, many of whom perished miserably, no remedy being known against that terrible complaint. I have seen plenty of it in Africa. I heard Manghonié, a Mohammedan friend, say of a converted (perverted) negro, "He be bad man. He drinks, swears and goes with Christians." A well-deserved compliment. Millions are spent annually in sending out idlers in black to convert the heathen. Convert the heathen! The hypocrites! I call it robbing English savages in the back slums on whom all the money should be spent in order to regenerate them. I discussed these matters with the late Charles Dickens. He told me: "No English printer would dare to publish your ideas." What would he have said if he had lived to read the Pall Mall Gazette revelations, compared to which my utterances are comparatively innocent. Christians have introduced swearing and the oath. "A negro will swear false for a glass of rum." This is a well-known dictum. Many such cases have come under my notice. One often hears disgusting expressions and curses founded on Christian ideas,

the outcome of Bible reading, for that vile book is spotted with curses. A Devil wrote it. No respectable god would own the contents. It will hardly be believed when I state that slavery still exists in these obscure Christian colonies. The white man who purchases a little girl from its mother is told that he may flog her into obedience (!) "but not break um teeth and bones!" These transactions are tacitly sanctioned by the law, whose officers often make such purchases. If the chattel sold happens to be a male the vendor is criminally prosecuted. The colonial newspapers frequently record such cases. It must not be forgotten that the light (!) of Christianity has shone over this colony nearly one century, and behold the result! The negroes are ten times worse than they were before Christians tampered with The only respectable members of society are heathens and Mohammedans. The latter will become the real regenerators of Africa. All honour to their missionaries, who tramp from Mecca, found mosques, schools, and homes for the destitute; all of which are self-supporting. Christians call Mohammed a pseudo-prophet. The question arises which of them was the biggest humbug? I call Jesus a coward, a hypocrite, and an impostor. His religion has deluged the world with blood. It was a mauvais quart d'heure for humanity when the Holy Ghost begat that ugly specimen (Isaiah lii., 14). CHAS. KROLL LAPORTE.

MATTHEW HAMONT.

Or the glorious army of martyrs who in the past have sacrificed their liberty or their lives for Freethought, the majority must remain for ever obscure and unknown. Occasionally, however, we can rescue from oblivion the name of some courageous thinker whose Freethought is known only by the representations, or more probably the misrepresentations, of the orthodox, ever ready to identify opposition to their dogmas with all that is detestable. Such a name is that of Matthew Hamont, or Hammond, of whom Dr. R. Crakanthorp, in his "Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ" (cap. xxxiii., § 17), writes:

"Anno 21 Elizabethæ, Hamontis quidam, homo Arianus inso-Panno 21 Elizabethæ, Hamontis quidam, nomo Arianus insolenti amentia, Christo et Evangelio maledicebat. Christum Deum esse negabat. Norwici in cineres exustus, justissimas et acerbissimas suæ blasphemiæ poenas luit.—In the 21st year of Elizabeth, one Hamont, an Arian, with insolent madness, spoke against Christ and the Gospel. He denied that Christ was God. He was burnt to ashes at Norwich, most justly and bitterly suffering the punishment due to his blasphemy."

So far the worthy Christian divine. In the Chronicles of Hollinshed and Stowe further particulars are given. transcribe from "The Annales of Maister Iohn Stow, under date 1579, p. 685; 1615:

"Mathew Hamont of Hitharset, by his trade a plough wright, three miles from Norwich, was covented before the B[ishop] of Norwich, for y he denied Christ to be our Saviour. At the time of his appearance it was objected, y he had published these barreign following. heresies following:
"That the New Testament and Gospell of Christ are but meere
"That the New Testament and Gospell of Christ are but meere

"That the New Testament and Gospell of Christ are but meere foolishnesse, a storie of men, or rather a meere fable.

"Item, that man is restored to grace by the meere mercie of God, without the means of Christ's blood, death and passion.

"Item, that Christ is not God, nor the Saviour of the world, but a meere man, a sinfull man, and an abominable Idoll.

"Item, that all they that worship him are abominable Idolaters: And that Christ did not rise againe from death to life by the power of his godhead, neither that he did ascend into heaven.

"Item, that the holy ghost is not God, neither that there is any such holy ghost.

"Item, that baptisme is not necessarie in the Church of God, neither the use of the Sacrament of the body and blood of

neither the use of the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. For the which heresies he was condemned in the consistorie and sentence was read against him by y B. of Norwich, the 14 of Aprill, and thereupon delivered to the Sheriffes of Norwich, and because he spake words of blasphemy against ye queen's majesty and others of her counsel, he was by the Recorder master Sergeant Windham, and the maior sir Robert Wood of Norwich condemned to less both his carres, which were out off Norwich, condemned to lose both his eares, which were cut off the 13 of May in the market place of Norwich, where he confirmed his blasphemous speeches against our Saviour Jesus Christ, for the which on the twentieth of May hee was brent [burnt] in the castle ditch of Norwich."

Stowe further informs us, under date 1583, that

"On the seventeenth day of Septem., Iohn Lewes, who named himself Abdoit, an obstinate heretike, denying the Godhead of Christ, and holding other detestable heresies (much like his predecessor, Mathew Hamond), was burned at Norwich."

These particulars suffice to show that Hamont at least held opinions very much in advance of the Arianism of his time. Probably Lewes was a friend or disciple. Can any Norwich antiquary or other person give us further particulars of these early heretics whose bones were charred in confirmation of the glorious truths of the blessed gospel?

J. M. W.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SPIRITUALISTIC FRAUDS-AN EXPOSURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Although I do not think that any of your readers are in danger of being converted to the "immortal truths of spiritualism," the following letter might amuse, if not enlighten, them. It was addressed to my mother by a medium well known in spiritualistic circles, in the beginning of this month. The chief point of interest centres in the fact that the person to whom it was addressed died last March. Leaving out several passages of no interest to outsiders, it runs as follows:-

"Dear Mrs. —,—It is a long time scince i herd from you and I have made severell changes, I here a voys saying to me

and I have made severell changes, I here a voys saying to me write to Mrs.

"I was four years West, I am now back to my native state, and heving a good practis with good health and Power. I hav a doughter that is with me a good healer. I often think of my good friends in England and of your kindness. it is posible that my doughter and myself may take a trip to England in the coming year. it has always benefetted me and I am shur it will add to her magnetic power, and I shall meet ould friends which are very dear to me. What would the prospect be for us a time in Liverpool.

"I see that you are to take a deseded stand surported by an

in Liverpool.

"I see that you are to take a deseded stand surported by an advans class of sperets that will open wide the door for progress and truth, and that you will be supplide with power.

"If you will send me a lock of your hair and age with two leding symptens I will examine you and send you directions that will benefit you. Send me a spiritual paper sometimes. And may heaven's best gifts be thine for an important change is near for you, but all will be clear. from your friend,"——

The binduess mentioned in the beginning of this extraordinary.

The kindness mentioned in the beginning of this extraordinary letter consisted in being duped out of not a few guineas, that, I believe, being the price which this well-informed lady charges for a "sitting." I enclose the original for your satisfaction, which please return.—Yours truly,

A FRIEND OF TRUTH.

THE FERGUSON DEFENCE FUND.

WE have received the following further subscriptions:—M. Badcock, 2s.; W. Walters, 6d.; G. Turvey, 2s. 6d.

The Glasgow Committee desire us to acknowledge the following subscriptions:—James Whyte, 5s.; A Friend, 2s. 6d.; A. Neilsan, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Whyte, 2s. 6d.; A Friend, 2s. 6d.; R. Whyte (second subscription), 2s.; D. Stone, 2s.: James Whyte (second subscription), 2s.

OBITUARY.

On Saturday, 16th inst., the remains of our late member, Mrs. E. Rowlands (Chatham Branch N. S. S.), were conveyed to their last resting-place in Gillingham Cemetery, followed by a goodly number of Secularists. On reaching the cemetery gates, Mr. R. Forder, Secretary N. S. S., headed the procession and conducted the burial in accordance with the Secular Burial Service, which was very impressive.—F. J. BOORMAN, Hon. Sec.

We regret to record the death of James Skelton, of 2 Richard Street, late Secretary of the Jarrow Branch of the N. S. S., aged 53 years, after a few days' illness. He was a genial, good friend, husband and father. We all sincerely mourn his early death. Interred at Jarrow Cemetery on the 20th.—H. SANDERSON.

A THEOLOGICAL CONUNDRUM.—Light travels 180,000 miles per second. Now, if it takes 50,000 years for light to come to us from the furthest star, then this star must have been "created" 50,000 years. Did God "make the stars to shine on the earth" 50,000 years. 45,000 years before there was any earth to shine upon? Oh, superstition!

If "the heavens declares the glory of God," what must the telescope declare? Here is a conundrum for Sunday schools. To the naked eye the heavens show only 6,000 stars; but the telescope reveals 20,000,000. If 6,000 suns is an advertisement of glory, surely 20,000,000 suns is a much greater advertisement; but this publicity only becomes possible by reason of the telescope. Which is the inspired man: he who says the ocean is a wonderful body of water, or he who invents the ship that carries human beings to the uttermost parts of the sea?

PROFANE JOKES.

What prophet had a parent addicted to liquor?—Hosea. His father was Beeri.
Why is a muscular Christian no Christian

at all?—Because he is a muscle man (Mussul-

at all?—Because he is a muscle man (Mussulman).

"Moches, why don't our minister have burnt-offerings of meat for God, like Moses and Aaron used to do? Is it because meat is so dear, as you tell father?"

"Some wretched being," says the New York Graphic, "claims that euchre was played in old times because the Levite passed and the Samaritan assisted when the poor man couldn't go it alone."

It is said that a ship that recently sailed from Boston to Western Africa carried 132,000 gallons of rum and three missionaries. They must be going to convert the heathen on the American plan.

The following epigram was made when Dr. Goodenough, Bishop of Carlisle, was one day appointed to preach before the House of Peers:

ers:
"'Tis well enough that Goodenough Before the Lords should preach; For sure enough they're bad enough He undertakes to teach."

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"G. W. Foote editor of the London Freethinker has taken Mr. Mill to task in his usual vigorous style."—Truthseeker (New York).

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