

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.



RAMPANT RELIGION.

A CHARITABLE PRIEST.

CANON WILBERFORCE is a conspicuous priest of the religion of charity. He has a vigorous personality, a good voice, and a certain kind of eloquence, which serve him in good stead on orthodox platforms, where people never look for logic, but merely expect a stirring appeal to their passions and prejudices. Several months ago he lectured through the country on "The Trinity of Evil," and seeing an advertisement of his lectures being published in book-form by the well-known religious firm of Hodder and Stoughton, we resolved to review it. Indeed a line to that effect appears on the *Freethinker* contents-bill. But on sending to the pious publishers we found that although the book was advertised as "now ready" it was *not* ready. We must therefore postpone our notice of Canon Wilberforce's remarks on Freethought, and confine ourselves, in the present article, to a few comments on the marvellous way in which he illustrates the thirteenth of Corinthians.

His Trinity of Evil are Infidelity, Impurity, and Intemperance. What a noble charity towards unbelievers is displayed in this classification. It reminds one of the category in Revelation of persons who shall have their part in the lake which burneth with brimstone and fire—unbelievers, murderers, whoremongers, and liars. But what else can be expected from a Christian priest?

"Calumny," as Lecky says, "is the weapon which dogmatism has always used against conscience." Priests always make faith in their dogmas a high virtue. Consequently unbelief is a kind of vice springing from a bad heart; and so drunkards, adulterers and sceptics, all belong to one fraternity. That is the doctrine which is sounded forth from thousands of pulpits. Statistics disprove it, magistrates know it to be false, prison officials are aware of its absurdity, and the very police will tell you it is contradicted by their experience. But what has a Christian, and above all a parson, to do with facts? Faith is the very essence of his creed, and if a man cannot believe without evidence, or even against it, he is merely a slave of that carnal mind which is at enmity with God.

The very word Infidelity, with all its sinister associations, is an epitome of Christian bigotry. It really means *unfaithfulness*, and when a man is called an *infidel*, it is implied that he not only disbelieves the current religious dogmas, but is an habitual liar and thief, who is ready to sacrifice even his friends and relatives at any moment to his own selfish desires, with as much ease as, according to an old saying, an Indian would fire the world to cook his eggs. How absurd this notion is may be seen from the fact that Freethinkers are liable to social ostracism, political disabilities, and even imprisonment. Why should selfish men and women confront these dangers? Why should people without a sense of justice or honor deliberately incur the world's resentment, and risk comfort, success, liberty, and

even life, for the sake of asserting opinions which they could so easily conceal? Does it not, as a matter of fact, require more heroism to face these things than to echo the conventional shibboleths and earn the rewards of Society, Church, and State?

Canon Wilberforce is only imitating his priestly predecessors. Ever since Christianity was established in power all who questioned its doctrines have been wicked men; and when nothing was known against them, it was piously invented, on the principle that if they were not criminals they ought to be, and that any lie was honorable if it redounded to the glory of the Church. Mention the names of Paine, Voltaire, and what an expression of horror appears on the faces of the orthodox. They have not, probably, read a line of those great men's writings, or heard any true account of their lives. It is enough that they were *infidels*; and being so, they of course were wretches.

A few days ago we had a curious illustration of this Christian habit in a journey from Newcastle to York. By an extraordinary accident there were no less than three Atheists in one compartment, all coming from and going to different places. One of these was a finely-built man of fifty, with a bold honest Yorkshire face, a pair of clear merry eyes, and an imperturbable temper. He had travelled considerably, and he told the company of the various religions he had seen in his wanderings. His only daughter was also a great traveller, as well as a great student, and her knowledge and experience had made her a pure Atheist. This information gave great offence to a pious gentleman in the opposite corner, who eyed the good-tempered Freethinker as though he were a murderer at large. As the conversation proceeded, the Christian's bigotry grew warmer. "Do you mean to say," he inquired with a withering look, "you don't believe that our Savior rose from the dead?" "Well," replied the Freethinker, "I don't care to take personal cases because it might lead to ill feeling; what I say is, I don't believe any man ever rose from the dead—if he *was* dead, mind you." He then proceeded to tell us a little story. "Sir," said the irate Christian, burying his face behind his paper, "I don't believe a word you say." Soon afterwards the train stopped at York, and the pious gentleman rushed out with his luggage as though he were escaping from the Devil.

How is Canon Wilberforce superior to that man? He is infected with the same prejudice. He takes the same foolish view of Freethought and Freethinkers. And he regards it, in defiance of history, experience, and common sense, as the most natural thing in the world to talk of *infidelity*, which is simply unbelief, as a glaring vice. That is pure and simple bigotry.

G. W. FOOTE.

EARLY FREETHOUGHT MARTYRS.

TURNING to the Rev. F. Blomefield's "History of Norfolk" in the hope of finding further particulars of Matthew Hamond, the wheelwright of Hitherset, who was burnt to death at Norwich, May 20, 1579, for denying that Christ was God, and teaching that the Gospels were fables (see *Freethinker*, p. 31), I was rewarded, not by discovering anything further concerning that bold blasphemer save that he was previously fined £100 for speaking against the Queen, but by noting the names of other early martyrs done to death about that time. John Lewes is mentioned with the same particulars as in Stow, and with the additional note that he "died obstinately without Repentance or any Speeche," and further, that in 1587, Peter Cole, of Ipswich, tanner, was also burnt to death in the castle ditch "for those abominable blasphemies," and in 1588, Francis Knight or Ket, of Windham, Master of Arts, "was burned at the same place for the like heresies." This Ket was a relative of the famous rebel Robert Ket, whose rising in Norfolk is so graphically described in the fifth volume of Froude's History (pp. 205—215). Blomefield says: "This family having now produced three arch rebels and one blasphemer, who all met with their deserved ends; and had not some of this crew been made publick examples of, these wicked tenants would in all appearance, under the

notion of having all things common, soon have raised such rebellion as might have endangered both Church and State" (*History of Norfolk*, vol. ii., p. 208; 1739).

Strype, in his *Annals of the Reformation* (vol. iii., bk. ii., chap. xvii.) says this Francis Ket "seems to have been a minister." Bishop Scambler, he says, summoned to his court this heretic, "whose opinions," he continues, "were found so vile and horrible concerning Christ, that the bishop was forced to condemn him for a stubborn heretic." The bishop acquainted the lord treasurer with what he had done in a letter dated Oct. 7, 1588, viz., "That he had lately condemned for heresy Francis Ket, M.A., whose blasphemous opinions he had thought good to acquaint his honor with; and referring to his wisdom the speedy execution of, he being so dangerous a person." Stow says he was burnt for "divers detestable opinions against Christ our Savior," but what those detestable opinions were is left to our conjecture. Strype could not find the letter of the bishop wherein they were specified, but supposes they were "perhaps so vile and wicked, that it was thought best to stifle and burn the paper."

It is quite possible there were other Freethought martyrs at that period whose names, like those of many of the Anabaptists then put to death, cannot now be recovered. Ephraim Pagitt, in his *Heresiography* (p. 132; 1647), says of the Anti-Trinitarians: "These heretics have been heretofore burnt among us, as Anno 1611. March 18,* Bartholomew Legate, an obstinate Arian, was burnt at Smithfield; he refused all favor, contemned ecclesiastical government. And in the month of April following, one Edward Wightman was burnt at Lichfield for the same heresy." Lamy in his *Histoire du Socinianisme* gives the name of Paul Casaubon as punished with death in England about the same time, but I have been unable to find any particulars, unless he be the Spanish Arian who, as Fuller informs us, was condemned to death, but was suffered to linger out his life in Newgate, where he ended the same.

Fuller, in his *Church History* (Bk. X., section 4), gives details of the case of Bartholomew Legate, who, it appears, was a comely person of about forty years of age, of a bold spirit, confident carriage, excellently skilled in the Scriptures and of unblameable life. But "the poison of Heretical Doctrine is never more dangerous than when served up in clean cups and washed dishes." He was thrown into prison on a charge of heresy and lay there for some time. Fuller tells us "King James caused this Legate often to be brought to him and seriously dealt with him to endeavor his confession." With a desire to entrap him into a confession he asked him whether he did not pray to Jesus Christ. Legate answered "that indeed he had prayed to Christ in the days of his ignorance, but not for these last seven years." Whereupon the king in anger spurned at him with his foot, saying: "Away, base fellow! It shall never be said that one stayeth in my presence that hath never prayed to our Savior for seven years together."

Legate was tried before the Bishops of London, Ely, Coventry and Lichfield, and Rochester, and the Dean of St. Paul's. Being convicted, he was handed over to the secular power; and King James, by a warrant, given in Baron Somers' Tracts (Vol. II., p. 400), ordered him to be burnt with fire in West Smithfield. Fuller says: "Vast was the conflux of people about him. Never did a scare-fire at midnight summon more hands to quench it than this at noonday did eyes to behold it. At last, refusing all mercy, he was burned to ashes. And so we leave him, the first that for a long time suffered death in that manner, and oh! that he might be the last to deserve it."

In the very next month Edward Wightman, of Burton-on-Trent, having been convicted before Richard Neale, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, was burnt for what Fuller calls "far worse opinions (if worse might be) than Legate maintained. Mary Magdalen, indeed, was once possessed with seven devils, but ten several heresies were laid to Wightman's charge, viz., those of Ebion, Cerinthus, Valentinian, Arius, Macedonius, Simon Magus, Manes,

* This should be 1612. The bishop's order consigning him to the secular power for punishment bears date March 3, 1611. But it was the practice then to consider January, February and the greater part of March as belonging to the previous year.

Manichæus, Photinus, and of the Anabaptists." This jumble of extinct and incompatible heresies is taken from the warrant of King James, and is perhaps to be ascribed to the learning of that modern Solomon, who, unsatisfied with this enumeration of poor Wightman's ten heresies, adds "and of other heretical, execrable and unheard-of opinions, by the Instinct of Satan by him excogitated and holden." Owing to the choice assortment of heresies ascribed to him, Wightman, being the last heretic burnt in England, has been claimed by the Quakers and Baptists as well as by the Unitarians.

J. M. WHEELER.

JOSHUA THE COMMANDER.

AFTER the death of Moses, Joshua, the son of Nun, was nominated by the Lord to the position of President and Commander-in-Chief of the Jewish Republic, and the children of Israel being unenfranchised, he received the appointment without the trouble and expense of an election.

Without delay the successor of Moses proceeded to business. Receiving instructions from the Lord—the Boss of the Upper House—he brought forward a Radical measure for the appropriation of the land, "from the wilderness of this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea towards the going down of the sun" (Joshua i., 4). The Hittites, having apparently no representation in the Jewish House, the bill was carried without opposition.

With greater dispatch than that which characterises the enforcement of modern enactments, Joshua gave instructions to his officers to have the men in readiness within three days to pass over the river Jordan and take possession of the land by force. Being a sort of revolutionary Socialist, Joshua thought that the Israelites were entitled to a fair share of the good things of the earth; and what was meant by a *fair share*, he claimed to settle at the point the sword.

Before commencing operations, like a true general, Joshua sent a couple of spies to view the land—probably to gauge its dimensions, or to test its quality—and when these Jewish spies arrived they found most appropriate lodgings at a harlot's house. With her they entered into a secret covenant. In return for betraying her country into the hands of the Israelites, she and her family on the day of general slaughter were to be preserved alive. Sealing this contract with an oath, the spies returned and had an early interview with the Commander-in-Chief, who, without delay, gave the order to the Israelites to march on to the river Jordan and await further instructions.

From time to time Joshua received telegraphic communications of encouragement from Jahveh, which he faithfully conveyed to his pious and murderous gang of followers. Arriving at the river a most extraordinary event was witnessed. The priest brought the ark down to the river and were about to proceed across—probably on the ark—but the moment the feet of the priests touched the water it rushed furiously away in the opposite direction and stood "up upon an heap" (Joshua iii., 16) like a brick wall, and, with a consideration quite becoming such holy water, allowed the Israelites to pass over on dry land.

How the feet of the priests could produce such a magical effect I do not propose to inquire, though some wicked infidels, sunk to the lowest depths of depravity by the study of Freethought literature, have had the temerity to suggest that the priests' feet were probably so begrimed with dirt that the water instinctively withdrew lest it should become contaminated and rendered undrinkable for ever after. To some of the children of Israel the division of the water that they might walk through on dry land was merely a repetition of a performance which they had beheld at the Red Sea, some time previously, and which followed as a result of a mysterious flourish of the rod of Moses; but to the large majority of them it was doubtless such an occurrence as was perfectly unparalleled during their life-time. Yet it does not appear to have astonished them much; and as for Joshua, he was so used to such performances, that he regarded it as a mere matter of course.

Having performed a delicate surgical operation upon the males among the Israelites at the express command of

Jahveh, orders were given for the soldiers to surround the walls of Jericho. This being done, the priests with one accord, at a given signal, blew their noses—I mean their trumpets—the people shouting the while, and the walls and the city "fell down flat" as pancakes, and the Israelites, rushing upon their enemies, "destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword" (Joshua vi., 21). Nay; stop—not all, for Joshua remembered the harlot, and generously rewarded her for her treachery.

As for Jericho, the houses were pillaged and the city destroyed by fire; and Joshua needlessly informs us that "only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they were put into the treasury of the house of the Lord" (Joshua vi., 24).

Joshua was a man of versatile talents. Besides being an author and a general, he sometimes varied his occupation by becoming an amateur executioner. Thus, with the aid of his pious swashbucklers, having slain all the inhabitants of Ai, Joshua hanged the king thereof to a tree "until eventide," as a punishment for having gallantly defended himself and his people from the doughty champions of the "army of the living God."

When the kings of the surrounding country heard of Joshua's achievements at Jericho and Ai, they had a conference, and unanimously came to the conclusion that they must "arrange matters" with the Jewish commander if they and their people were to live in peace. Presenting themselves to Joshua in the guise of ambassadors, they told him that they came from a far-off country, and besought him to make a covenant with them that they might live on terms of friendship. Joshua at once promised to do so, and sealed the covenant with an oath; but when he found that he had been deceived, that the pretended ambassadors did not come, as they said, from a far-off country, but were kings on the hills and by the valleys by the side of the Jordan, he revoked his part of the agreement, but consented to allow these people to remain unmolested on condition that they became the slaves of the children of Israel.

To these terms the unfortunate kings and their people had reluctantly to submit. But five other kings, prominent among whom was the king of Jerusalem, greatly exasperated at this arrangement, called forth their people and marched against the Israelites, and doubtless would have conquered them, but for the timely interference of the Lord, who, at the command of Joshua, held the sun and the moon still while the Israelites continued the frightful butchery.

So far as the sun is concerned it was an easy matter to command it to stand still, and it was bound to obey because so far as this earth is concerned it does not move. But with regard to the moon, that was an altogether different matter. Modern theologians, with great faith and very little knowledge of astronomy, now declare that it was not the sun that stood still but the earth; but even in this regard there is a slight difficulty. The earth is spinning along in space at the rate of more than a thousand miles an hour. A train running at the rate of sixty miles an hour will cover eighty-eight feet, in a second; if it were to come in collision with a stationary or even a moving body where would the passengers go to? And if there would be a slight "jolt" of a train travelling at such a speed as sixty miles an hour, what sort of sensation would follow from a great body travelling at a thousand miles an hour coming to a sudden standstill? But Joshua, as we have said, was Commander-in-General—commander of kings and men, of suns and moons, of priests and gods—by special appointment to his Majesty Jahveh, "Lord God of hosts."

When Joshua came to die—and even great generals have to suffer that indignity—he delivered an impressive oration to all the tribes of Israel, in which he, like all good believers, said that the merit of having slaughtered the various peoples with whom they had come in contact did not belong to him, but to the Lord. Thus the actual murderers were acquitted of all blame, and the responsibility shifted on to the broad shoulders of the mysterious deity who concocted these crimes in his heavenly abode. At the age of a hundred and ten Joshua resigned all earthly appointments and departed to join the angels in the everlasting chorus.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

ACID DROPS.

DR. CROSSKEY'S chapel in Birmingham is in a bad way. He himself describes his position as "difficult and full of anxieties." Last year there was a falling off of nearly £100 in the income and the "committee see no prospect of any substantial portion of the loss being replaced by new subscriptions." Such is the condition of the chief Unitarian chapel in Birmingham. Mr. St. Clair has, we hear, left the pulpit of another Unitarian chapel which has sadly declined since the death of George Dawson. It would be interesting to know how many Unitarian churches would escape bankruptcy if their endowments were withdrawn.

THAT tough old lady, Miss Mouat, whose adventures in the "Columbine" have made her famous, believes that God preserved her in answer to prayer. It is a pity the Lord did not signalise his providence by keeping her hands and feet from suffering from the cold; and a still greater pity he did not save the poor captain, who had a wife and family depending on him. If Miss Mouat and her gushing friends are right, we must agree with Cowper that God *does* move in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

AMONG the "religious notes" of an exchange we find the statement that there are at present more than three hundred preachers, exclusive of Catholic priests and Mormon elders, now before the courts chiefly for crimes against women.—*I ruthseeker*.

A POLICEMAN, of Fresno City, California, lately went insane and was found up a tree in his orchard. He was persuaded to come down, like Zaccheus, and announced himself a new John the Baptist. He was committed to an asylum.

THE *Christian World* is piously severe on Sir Charles Dilke, but it deals gingerly with the Rev. George Dyson, whose adventures with Mrs. Bartlett have brought him into trouble. He was guilty, thinks the *C. W.*, of "nothing more than indiscretion," and then you know "young ministers are exposed to peculiar temptations." Very peculiar. But common people express this sort of thing in much simpler language.

How can a bottomless pit be full? Well, it is a puzzler, but a Bible Christian minister tries to solve it. He hails from Penryn, in Cornwall, and perhaps the locality will explain his advanced state of mind. Suppose, he says, you sunk a pit right through the earth; it would have two *tops* and no *bottom*, and it might be filled up. How's that for high?

WHO is Miss Von Finkelstein? A very wonderful young lady, according to the *Sunday School Chronicle*, for she has silenced all the platform Atheists in the United States. What a fine imagination the editor of that periodical must have.

MISS VON FINKELSTEIN is a native of Jerusalem, and she is now lecturing with great applause at Exeter Hall and other Evangelical haunts on the eastern customs referred to in the New Testament. Her argument appears to be that as the Gospels are true to oriental manners the Bible is the word of God. Evidently logic is not the lady's strong point.

ROBERT NASH, laborer, was hanged last Monday morning at Swansea, for the murder of his child, whom he threw from the pier into the sea, where it was drowned. The culprit walked with a firm step to the place of execution, and in a few minutes was launched into glory, the words "Lord have mercy on my soul" being on his lips. Death was instantaneous. The culprit left in the hands of the chaplain a long letter in which he made a full confession of his crime, admitted the justice of his sentence, and declared that he preferred death to reprieve. He professed himself saved through "the blood of Christ," and after thanking the chaplain, doctor, and governor for their kindness, he said he hoped to meet his dead wife and murdered child in heaven. If many more of these sanctified humbugs go to heaven, poor old God himself will stand a fair chance of being murdered. The Virgin Mary will perhaps be raffled for, and gentle Jesus thrown to the Devil.

AT Ipswich the other day a Salvation Army procession frightened a horse drawing a miller's cart. Terrified at the noise made by these pious maniacs, the animal dashed among the people, knocking down and trampling on a large number of them. Twenty at least were injured, five of whom were at once taken to the hospital. A broken thigh and a broken arm are among the mishaps.

EDWIN BURT PEARCE, a Warminster Salvationist, has been committed for trial on the charge of murdering his wife, who was found dead in bed, having been poisoned by arsenic and strychnine.

THE Rev. W. Truckwell, rector of Stockton, Rugby, has been lecturing at Birmingham on Church Reform. He roundly declared that his colleagues in the ministry are "intellectually incom-

petent," that their preparation is "infantine," and that towards science they comport themselves with "the hostility of absolute ignorance." Mr. Truckwell has evidently measured the capacity of his fellow-clergymen.

THE Rev. C. B. Brigstocke writes to the *English Churchman* from Homburg, to offer the suggestion that the London riots were a punishment from heaven for permitting a blasphemer to sit in Parliament.

UNDER the heading "A Prelate in his Pride," the *English Churchman* gives a cut representing Dr. King, the Anglican Bishop of Lincoln, with mitre, crozier and canonical robes. Only a judge of petticoats could distinguish him from a Roman Catholic bishop.

ALDERMAN FOWLER is known to have the courage of his religious convictions. He not only preaches in Little Bethels, but is reported to have boasted before his fellow-aldermen: "Every night I go down on my knees and say my little prayer, and I don't care a damn who sees me."

ONE of the Peculiar People, named William Theobald, a farm bailiff, has been found guilty of manslaughter by a coroner's jury for refusing to obtain medical aid for his child, who died from inflammation of the lungs. He is committed for trial at the next Cambridgeshire Assizes. This is what comes of believing the word of God. He loses his child and a Christian jury condemns his pious obedience to the Bible as manslaughter.

BOOTH'S view of the West-end riots is that the Government ought to have given him the fifty or sixty thousand pounds it will cost to replace the broken windows and stolen goods. If the Government will give it him now, he says, it is not too late to mend. He declares that the Salvation Army has got the right kind of Socialism, and announces details of forthcoming expeditions. Among the various "flying columns" and "jaunting car companies" sent on summer excursions through the length and breadth of the land, will be "The Speaking, Braying, and Singing Brigade." The "Braying"—for it is thus printed in the *Daily News* paragraph—is the best descriptive epithet yet hit upon by the Brayer-in-chief.

THE Vicar of Wigtoft recently not only refused to read the burial service over a child who had died without the holy rite of baptism, but insisted on nevertheless pocketing all the burial fees. What a beautiful specimen of the Christian creed is this sky-pilot who takes a parent's cash while emphasising his belief that his child has gone to eternal torment.

ANOTHER instance of clerical arrogance is reported in the *Gorton Reporter*, from which it appears that a Congregational minister having officiated at the burial of two children, the father was imperatively asked by the rector for explanations of some unnamed violation of the Burial Act. This demand was accompanied by a threat that criminal proceedings would be instituted, but the sky-pilot has not ventured to carry out his threat. Surely it is time the control of graveyards was taken out of the hands of the parsons and vested in a parish council.

ACCORDING to the *Western Times*, the Rev. John George Sydenham, of Cullompton, has been fined at Exeter for drunkenness. Police Constable Stokes who took him in custody deposed that he saw the man of God insult three females by catching hold of them round the waist. The clergyman pleaded that he had suffered from a severe attack of rheumatism, for which he had been taking "strong medicine," and he supposed it must have been too much for him.

FERGUSON DEFENCE FUND.

THE following additional subscriptions have been received:—Dr. Mortimer, 5s.; F. Smallman, £1; B. (Leytonstone), 10s. 6d.; B. M. Smith, 10s.; Mrs. Smith, 2s. 6d.; Lover of Justice and two friends, 1s. 6d.; R. Nicholls, £1.

JESUS IMPERFECT.—Nothing can be darker or less consistent with simplicity than his systematic application to himself of the title "Son of Man," a title which could be at will either pressed as Messianic, or explained away as unassuming. Nothing would be less creditable than the answer, "Destroy this temple," ascribed to him in John ii., 19, whether he had or had not a secret double sense. No subtle wrangler in a school least honored for candor can outdo the sophistry which defended "I give unto them eternal life; I and God my Father are one," by the plea that in Hebrew poetry leaders are styled gods (John x., 28—36). The whole tissue of conduct ascribed to him is such as cannot be justified by a purely moral critic, whatever his theory concerning the person of Jesus. Moral criticism will either dishonor the narrative as grossly inaccurate and virtually slanderous, or will pronounce that Jesus was neither a prophet from heaven nor an immaculate man.—Prof. F. W. Newman, *What is Christianity without Christ?* p. 17; 1881.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 7, Hall of Science, Old Street, London, E.C.; at 11.15, "Three Acres and a Cow;" at 7, "Who Made God?"

MARCH 14, Hall of Science, London; 21, Leeds; 28, Milton Hall.
APRIL 8, United Radical Club, Hackney; 4, Wigan; 11, Nottingham; 18, Milton Hall; 25, Liverpool.
MAY 2, Manchester; 9, Sheffield; 16, Milton Hall; 23 and 30, 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. 7d.

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.—H. P.

H. S. RUSSELL.—The *Freethinker's Text-Book* was published in 1877. Parton's *Life of Voltaire* is published, we think, at 24s. Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature*, we believe, is out of print. We know of no such book by Helen Taylor. Which Thomson do you mean—B.V., or the author of *The Seasons*?

A. FAGE.—We cannot be responsible for manuscript you may leave at some other address than our office. Your fresh piece shall appear.

B.—Sorry you do not agree with our ridiculing Christianity. We happen to know that our policy does succeed in making converts. Besides, you should remember we do not confine ourselves to ridicule. We argue against Christianity, and above all we explain and expose it.

A. MACKAY.—Glad to hear a Freethought Society is to be started in your district. See "Sugar Plums."

YOUNG READER, who pastes our "Freethought Gleanings" in a scrap-book and values them highly, hopes we shall publish more, as we undoubtedly shall when our space allows. We are afraid our correspondent's story about the Indians with long tails is only an American yarn.

W. MCINTOSH.—Pleased to hear the dispute is ended.

W. O. BIGGINS.—We do not see why we should give gratuitous advertisements to the Christian Evidence Society. You must make your lectures known through your own journals.

SOMEONE in Wolverhampton has sent Mr. Ramsey an order without a name or address. Will he supply the omission?

J. WEBB.—Safely to hand, but we have not yet had time to peruse it.

JOHN HICKS.—Christianity in England always admitted the jurisdiction of Rome in spiritual matters, and every one of its ministers was a Catholic priest. Bede wrote in the first half of the ninth century. But these matters have nothing to do with Disestablishment. The present Church of England was created by Acts of Parliament, and it is as much a part of the public service as the army, the navy, and the police. Its very Prayer-book was drawn up by a Royal Commission, and alterations have been made in it by the State since its introduction.

R. FOX.—The new edition of Mr. Laing's book is advertised at a much lower price: we have not the exact figure by us. A cubit was the length of a man's fore-arm, and is generally reckoned as eighteen inches.

J. T. thinks our last week's illustration the best we have yet produced.

S. C. FOX.—Single numbers of *Progress* for 1885 can still be had. Winwood Reade was the nephew of Charles Reade. There were obituary notices in the papers after his untimely loss to the world, but we are not aware that any of them have been reprinted. Glad to hear you find the *Crimes of Christianity* so useful. Mr. Wheeler esteems your warm approval of his *Footsteps of the Past*.

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.—Pontypool Free Press—Sheffield Independent—Halfpenny Weekly—Boston Investigator—Sydney Morning Herald—New York Beacon—Light—Western Times—Liberal—Nottingham Daily Guardian—St. Louis Post Dispatch—Sydney Evening News—Liverpool Review—British Workman.

SUGAR PLUMS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the severe weather, and the great local depression of trade, and a long strike (fortunately just ended) in the ship-building trade on the Tyne, there were excellent audiences at Mr. Foote's lecture at South Shields last Sunday, the evening meeting being a very fine one, and remarkably enthusiastic. The South Shields Branch of the N. S. S. has some exceptionally able and active members, and it enjoys, we believe, the honorable distinction of being the only Branch in the country that includes two members who have seats on a School Board.

MR. HARRY ALFRED LONG, the notorious Glasgow Orangeman, opened the ball for the Christian Evidence Society at the London Hall of Science on Thursday, February 25, the Rev. Dr. McCann occupying the chair. Mr. Long furnished the audience with a good deal of amusement, although it is fair to say that he did not intend to. Unfortunately he was frequently interrupted, but he had himself to thank for the disturbance. He kept asking them questions, which they took the liberty of answering, and every time they did so he treated them to a not over civil lesson on civility. It is Mr. Long's misfortune to be constitutionally insensible to a joke. A little humor saves many a misunderstanding, and breaks many a rock of offence.

MR. FOOTE was obliged to respond to repeated calls. He spoke for ten minutes only, in accordance with the rule, but he will have an opportunity of replying at length to all four of the C. E. S. lectures in his own two which are to follow. Mr. Long was also ably opposed by Mr. Mortimer and the President of the Hyde Park Branch. Dr. McCann was announced to deliver the second lecture of the course on "Secularism Impossible." He will probably find that Secularists are not impossible, and spend a lively hour after his discourse.

ACCORDING to the *Pontypool Free Press*, seven hundred people recently listened in the Abercarn Drill Hall to a debate on the question, "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?" It is added that "the order and decorum of the large assembly was most satisfactory." Over a column and a half is devoted to the report. Mr. George Barker and Mr. James Mackay and his brother appear to have been the chief speakers on the Freethought side. We are privately informed that the discussion was arranged by the Abercarn Debating Society, whose meetings are usually held in the vestry of the Baptists' Chapel; but as such a burning subject as the Resurrection was likely to occasion some "blasphemous" remarks the Drill Hall was engaged, to save the Lord's house from sacrilege. One good result is that the Freethinkers in the district are now combining in order to carry on a propaganda of their ideas. We wish them all success.

MR. ROBERT FORDER, the energetic secretary of the N. S. S., whose health has of late been somewhat impaired, is now recovering, and he has engaged to deliver a course of three lectures on Christian evidences on Monday evenings at the Monarch coffee-house, Bethnal Green Road. The first lecture will be given next Monday at 8.30. The admission is free, and we hope Mr. Forder will have a large audience.

THE *Sydney Morning Herald* of January 21, gives a good report of a complimentary banquet given to Mr. Joseph Symes and Mr. W. W. Collins by the Freethinkers of Sydney. Mr. Symes was congratulated upon his victory over the bigots of Victoria, and warm expectations were expressed of beneficial results to Freethought in New South Wales from the visit of Mr. Collins.

FROM Mr. Standring's letter, which we print in another column, it will be seen that Wednesday, March 31, is a day to be kept in mind by every Freethinker in London. The Executive of the National Secular Society has resolved to commemorate Mr. Bradlaugh's taking his seat in the House of commons. To this end the idea of a banquet was mooted, but it was more wisely determined to have a gathering from which none could be excluded by the expense. No doubt the Hall of Science will be crammed, and a host of Mr. Bradlaugh's friends will join in congratulating him on what looks like a happy termination of a long and difficult struggle. Mr. Foote will preside, and Mrs. Besant will present Mr. Bradlaugh with an inexpensive memento of the occasion, the most valuable part being the inscription.

AT the recent Disestablishment breakfast, the chairman, Mr. Henry Richard, stated that of the 333 Liberals in the House of Commons 171 had declared themselves favorable to disestablishment generally, while 57 more had declared themselves in favor of disestablishment in Wales or Scotland.

Few newspapers reported the striking incident at the complimentary dinner to the Labor Representatives a few days ago. When Lord Hobhouse rose and said, "There is one toast, gentlemen, which in every assemblage of Englishmen"—he was stopped by an outburst of hisses. Proceeding to eulogise the Queen, and to expatiate on her claims to the respect and affection of her subjects, he was greeted with a running fire of expostulation; and when the toast was drunk, a large number remained seated.

THE contents of the March number of *Progress* are varied. Mr. Foote contributes a paper on Sir Charles Dilke, anent the much-talked-of scandal. Mr. Wheeler continuing his account of the early English Freethinkers deals with the interesting life and works of John Toland. Mr. Standring has a suitable paper on Bret Harte. Mr. Harvey continues his reply to Mr. Foote on the Irish Question, and "Flaubert's Temptation of Saint Anthony," by James Thomson is also continued. Dr. Aveling reviews Dr. Hartmann's recent book on Anthropoid Apes. Both the book and the criticism deserve perusal. There are

also thoughtful contributions on the subjects of "Energy" and "The Origin of Morality." —

ON Sunday evening Mr. Foote delivers in the London Hall of Science his new lecture on "Who Made God?" which will doubtless attract a large audience. The question may sound strange, but it is not so puzzling as it seems, and it undoubtedly admits of being answered. The lecturer, at least, think so, and his hearers will be able to judge how far he is right.

BIBLE DRAGONS.—II.

ACCORDING to Isaiah xxvii., 1, the dragon must be a sea animal, and he appears to be identical with "leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent," whose "heads" the Lord breaks in pieces according to Psalm lxxiv., 14, just as in the preceding verse he breaks "the heads of the dragons in the waters." How many heads each of these sea-dragons or leviathans has, the Bible does not tell us. According to Job xli., 21, this leviathan or sea-dragon emits fire from its mouth and its breath kindles coals; but this may perhaps be ascribed to mere poetical exaggeration. Dragons also, it appears, can talk, for the writer of Revelation says that the beast who made fire come down from heaven "spake as a dragon" (Rev. xiii., 11).

All these references render it indisputable that the Bible adopts and confirms the false belief in dragons. They are talked of in conjunction with lions, owls and other real animals in such a way that equal belief is implied in the existence of dragons and of ordinary birds and beasts. Modern attempts to save God's credit by re-translating the word to suit present ideas recoil on the Bible itself by casting grave suspicion on the trustworthiness of the whole translation and of the divine but evidently uncertain original.

The inspired writers of the Bible believed in the dragons and other monstrosities of the current belief of their time. This is the simple explanation of the whole matter. Isaiah speaks of a "fiery flying serpent" in two places (xiv., 29; xxx., 6), just as he and other inspired writers speak of the cockatrice as if it had as real an existence as sheep and carnivora. Thus he says:

"And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den." (Isaiah xi., 7, 8).

Cockatrices are also spoken of in Isaiah xiv., 29; lix., 5; and Jer. viii., 17. The Revised Version substitutes the word "basilisk," which means the same thing. The basilisk, or cockatrice, was not far from being a species of dragon. It was a serpent which was hatched from the egg of a cock. It drove other serpents away by its fierce hissing, and its mere glance was fatal to spectators.

The Apocrypha, which Protestants reject as the word of God, but read for profit and instruction, treats of the subject more rationally than the Bible does. One of its sacred books, entitled "Bel and the Dragon" and put forth as a continuation of the book of Daniel, narrates how Daniel, after exposing the devices of the priests of Bel, demolished a "great dragon which they of Babylon worshipped." This great dragon, it seems, was made of brass, and the people believed that it ate and drank and was a living god. By the king's permission Daniel prepared a mixture of pitch and fat and hair—as a substitute apparently for the gunpowder which was not then invented—and placed the mixture in the dragon's mouth and set fire to it, and so "burst in sunder" the brazen monster.

Malachi, the last writer of the Old Testament, still believed in dragons, for he speaks of "dragons of the wilderness" (i., 3). But the New Testament writers have nothing to say on the subject of dragons till we come to the book of Revelation, which amply atones for their reticence.

The "great" dragon (who is also the "serpent" of Revelation and apparently of Genesis) stands on a different footing from that occupied by the other biblical dragons. He can more easily be defended as allegorical and as being merely seen in a series of visions or dreams. Nevertheless these visionary dragons sprung from the belief in real dragons and conformed to, and in turn confirmed the popular ideas on such matters. They rested upon a basis of supposed

reality, just as the angels and devils and lions and bulls and lambs of Revelation indicate belief in these various creatures as really existing species.

W. P. BALL.

(To be concluded).

THE END OF ALL THINGS.

FOR years the Church has preached the end of the world as imminent, but the end has never arrived. There is a hand-bill at present in circulation with the old watchword—"The end of all things has now come!" It appears by this pious effusion that when Almighty God "bloweth his trumpet" the "Children from Israel's College" will conclude that the Omnipotent conjuror has begun finishing up his big bag of tricks, and that "the seals of God's word will be unloosed, the flaming sword of Death will be removed, and the stone rolled away from the well's mouth."

It is asserted that the trumpet will give a distinct sound, and that immediately afterwards "Little children, from twelve to fourteen years of age, will, D.V., deliver discourses on the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God," and other easy and child-like subjects. Whatever is to be the effect of these discourses upon those who listen is not vouchsafed, but we should like to put in the place of these little ones some children of Freethinkers who would, *God willing or not*, deliver an admirable lesson on the folly of Christian superstition and the advantage of Secular education. Such a course would put to shame adult fools who are responsible for supreme bosh.

The bill continues—"The twelve baskets full of fragments which have been preserved specially for the twelve tribes of Israel. . . will be dispensed, that the dry bones of Israel may be gathered in *one body* into the Head Christ, bone to his bone, and the heirs (?) of his *heal*, number 144,000." If this means anything it must have reference to the twelve baskets full of fragments which the vast multitude miraculously rejected after their strong feed of two or three loaves and a few small fishes. The "dry bones of Israel" will dish up admirably with these remains and be uncommonly short eating after the lapse of 1,900 years. The repast will certainly not induce a rash taste for the more complicated delicacies of modern cookery, but will probably inculcate in the children of Israel's College a wholesome horror of gluttony. The drink available on this occasion too, is simply water—"the water of life" which may be imbibed *ad libitum*.

The old wind up as usual:—"The Spirit and the Bride say—Come!" But why on earth the Spirit continues to repeat this admonition since his alliance in Revelation with the Bride, we are at a loss to discover. "The Spirit and the Bride say—Come!" But is this constantly said to each other? If so, we should recommend the Spirit to seek another partner for his joys, and the Bride to embrace a companion more congenial to her tastes. If in this case it is an invitation to us to visit this meeting, why surely all right-thinking men and women would feel heartily ashamed to take part in the utter folly and pitiful humbug of these half-witted servants of God.

Some few years ago the *Shield of Faith*, a journal devoted to the "refutation of infidelity," and since, by the way, deservedly defunct, declared with due religious solemnity, that a little piece of parchment on which was written *God is Love*, came "fluttering down from heaven," and fell at the feet of a blaspheming infidel, thereby converting him. The present writer then questioned this pious falsehood in these columns, but the paper now under our consideration contains an equally remarkable, and, if true, exceedingly important statement. It says—"The Flying Rolls God's last Message to Man, can be had at the close of each meeting." Now on the parchment was found the handwriting of God Almighty, older than the pyramids or the rocks, but next to the "fluttering parchment" we should feel anxious to possess the "Flying Roll." This veritable communication from the Omnipotent and Omniscient ruler in the skies to his subjects, would be conclusive evidence even to the most stubborn infidel. But unfortunately our faith is insufficient, our energies too feeble, our desire for the divine not divine enough, and we stay away. The blessed power of religion is unable to direct our steps to this the meeting-place of God's chosen few, though we know that were we really handed "God's message" such evidence would certainly annihilate for ever in us the spirit of doubt and wicked unbelief. We stay away and are consequently damned! The "harpers may harp with their harps," and the Spirit and the Bride may cry "Come!" but we elect to wisely and contentedly absent ourselves.

A. T. W. F.

TWENTY ladies "chipped in" and bought some lottery tickets. One of them told her minister, and he was shocked. "My dear madam," he exclaimed, "do you not know that is gambling?" She rattled right along as if she hadn't heard him: "Yes, we are going to draw the thirty thousand dollar prize, and if we do—then we've agreed to give you five thousand of it for the new church organ." "An excellent idea, my dear madam—excellent; and I devoutly trust you may win it!"

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOIREE AND PRESENTATION TO MR. BRADLAUGH.
TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Will you permit me to call the attention of your readers to the fact that a Soirée and Presentation to Mr. Bradlaugh will take place at the Hall of Science, on Wednesday, March 31, in celebration of his recent admission to Parliament. The gathering will be held under the auspices of the National Secular Society. I append an outline of the proceedings. At 8.30 Mr. G. W. Foote will take the chair, and a musical entertainment will be commenced. At 9 o'clock the chairman will explain the object of the meeting; after which Mrs. Besant will present a Trout-rod (suitably inscribed) to Mr. Bradlaugh. At the conclusion of this portion of the proceedings, the entertainment will be resumed, and continue till 10.30. The room will then be cleared, and dancing will commence at 11, terminating at 4 p.m. The price of tickets is one shilling each; and they may be obtained at 63 Fleet Street; 28 Stonecutter Street; the Hall of Science; from the Secretaries of London branches of the N. S. S., or from the undersigned. Admission to the galleries, fourpence, by payment at the door.

It is requested that the sale of tickets be restricted to Freethinkers.

G. STANDING (Secretary of Sub-Committee),
8 and 9 Finsbury Street, E.C.

FREETHOUGHT IN MANCHESTER.

The late Mr. Spencer, of Manchester left in his will a sum of £500 towards erecting a Secular Hall in that city, on condition that a reasonable sum was raised in addition within three years. A Manchester Secular Hall Company was started soon after his death, Mr. George Payne, accountant, 20 Kennedy Street, acting as honorary treasurer. The expenses up to the present have been exceedingly light, and the Company's money is securely deposited at 5 per cent interest. Unfortunately too many intending shareholders are deferring their investment to the last moment, and the Committee of the Manchester Branch of the National Secular Society have therefore issued an appeal for greater promptitude. The £500 will be payable in May and it is necessary that the Company should by that time be in a satisfactory condition. The shares are £1 each, class A payable in full or allotments, and class B payable by monthly instalments of one shilling. Friends to the project who prefer to avoid the trouble or responsibility of shares may make donations. Mr. Payne's candidature at the late School Board elections showed that there are a large number of Freethinkers who if they were united and active, might become a powerful body. The Secular Hall Company furnishes the best opportunity they have ever had to effect this desirable object, and we trust they will avail themselves of it without further delay. Now is the time for those who listen to and applaud the lectures of Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, and Mr. Foote, to transform their enthusiasm into action. With premises of their own, suitable for lectures, classes, and social meetings, the Manchester Freethinkers would, we believe, wonderfully increase in numbers and influence. Let every one contribute his share at once to the good work and it will soon be accomplished. Mr. Payne is a shrewd man of business as well as an ardent Freethinker, and while he remains secretary the Company's affairs are sure to be well managed. We are confident there will be no loss, and we see no reason why the shares should not yield a good profit.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

THE BIBLE STORIES.—Some of these narratives are so grotesque, one might fancy that they were extracted for our amusement from a book of fairy tales. Such is the account of Elisha's going up to Bethel (2 Kings ii., 23), "When there came forth little children out of the city and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head! And he turned back and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood; and tare forty and two children of them." Conceive the Supreme Being miraculously destroying forty-two little ones for childish pranks like these.—Henry Coke, *Creeds of the Day*, Vol. I., p. 41; 1883.

POLYTHEISM.—I have referred to the truth, obvious enough though habitually ignored, that the Hebrew religion, nominally monotheistic, retained a large infusion of polytheism. Archangels exercising powers in their respective spheres, and capable even of rebellion, were practically demi-gods; answering in fact, if not in name, to the inferior deities of other pantheons. Moreover, of the derived creeds, that distinguished as Trinitarian is partially polytheistic; and in the mystery plays of the Middle Ages marks of polytheism were still more distinct. Nay, even belief in a Devil, conceived as an independent supernatural being, implies surviving polytheism. Only by Unitarians of the advanced type, and by those who are called Theists, is a pure monotheism accepted.—Herbert Spencer, *Ecclesiastical Institutions*, being Part VI. of the *Principles of Sociology*, pp. 747—748; 1885.

REVIEWS.

Our Corner. March. Freethought Publishing Company.—Mr. Bradlaugh opens with a paper on Labor Statistics. Mrs. Besant continues her essay on Modern Socialism, which contains some curious statistics from America, which many an employer of labor would like to see realised. Mr. Robertson writes learnedly on Evolution in Drama. There are two interesting letters by Richard Carlile and Robert Taylor. Mrs. Bonner continues her Chats on Chemistry. W. Elder is, as usual, Shakespearean and shrewd in his gardening notes. The number concludes with Socialistic notes under the auspices of the Fabian Society.

Modern Science and Modern Thought. By S. LAING. Second Edition. London: Chapman and Hall.—The first edition of this book was spoken lightly of by the press, but the public instinct was truer than the critics'; a second edition was soon called for, and a third edition is already advertised as in the press. The fact is, the book is extremely able and outspoken. It would be difficult to find a more admirable summary of evolutionary teaching in astronomy, geology, biology and anthropology, than Mr. Laing gives us in his first two hundred pages. He has mastered the subject, and he presents it with a delightful clearness. No doubt it was the section on Modern Thought which annoyed the critics. Mr. Laing was a member of the last House of Commons, and his oath was never questioned; yet he appears to have almost as little theology as Mr. Bradlaugh. He admits that Science does not help us in our quest for God, or furnish any indications of a future life; and all he can say of these primary dogmas of religion is that they "should be cherished as far as it is possible to do so"; a conclusion which can hardly be encouraging to orthodoxy. Mr. Laing dismisses the inspiration of the Bible and the divinity of Jesus Christ, and he devotes a pungent chapter to the subject of Miracles. "The most orthodox believer in miracles," he writes, "if his faith were brought to the practical test of backing his opinions by his money, would rather insure a gin-palace or gambling saloon protected by a lightning-conductor, than a chapel protected by the prayers of a pious preacher." On one of Christ's miracles he remarks:

"When nothing was known of the constitution of water or of wine, except that they were both fluids, it was comparatively easy to accept the statement that such a conversion really took place. But now we know that water consists of oxygen and hydrogen combined in a certain simple proportion, and of these and nothing else; while wine contains in addition nitrogen, carbon, and other elements combined in very complicated proportions. If the water was not really changed into wine, but only seemed to be so, it was a mere juggling trick, such as the Wizard of the North can show us any day for a shilling. But if it was really changed, something must have been created out of nothing to supply the elements which were not in the original water and were not put into it from without."

Mr. Laing is not only a student, but a man of note in business, and his secular training makes him express himself plainly and intelligibly, instead of darkening counsel with words after the manner of Mr. Gladstone, Professor Drummond, and other "reconcilers," who are always trying to pour the new wine of science into the old bottles of Judaism.

AN EXAMPLE OF MEEKNESS GONE WRONG.

It was in Seven Dials, on a Sunday evening. One of Booth's converted pugilists had stood on his head and sung a hymn and danced a Salvation break-down, and then proceeded to address the meeting. A number of the high-toned unregenerate were present, and for his text the late distinguished middle-weight adopted the scriptural advice to turn the other cheek when one cheek was smitten. He said he knew it was a hard thing to do, but it could be done if one had the faith and nerve.

To illustrate, he said he would give them an example of meekness, by allowing the assembled congregation to revile him, and spit upon him, and throw things at him, for fifteen minutes, and he would bear it, smiling all the time. He told them to go ahead.

A hymn-book struck him in the stomach and he smiled; a young coster slapped his face, and he turned the other cheek; a wicked person blew smoke from a twopenny cigar in his face, and his smile was still there; his paper collar was jerked off, and his coat-tail split up the back, but the smile was still there. Finally, a decayed and very previous kind of egg struck him on the jaw.

He smiled a sort of second-hand, moth-eaten smile this time, but wiped the egg on his sleeve, took out his Salvation watch with "Blood and Fire" on the dial, and looked at it and said:—"I am a meek and humble follower of the Prince of Peace, and will submit to be reviled just four minutes longer. At that time this meek and lowly business will run out, and then I will corpse the man that threw that egg, and don't you forget it." And the subsequent proceedings of that holiness meeting were of a nature to gladden the souls of the ungodly. They concluded with a grand stampede, in which half a division of police and a couple of ambulances played a conspicuous part, and the usual hymn was left unsung.

PROFANE JOKES.

SCENE: Rural village in West Highlands. Time: Arrival of mail coach. Angus M'Tavish, to Charles Campbell: "Who came on the coach to-day, Charles?" Charles Campbell: "Only Maister Macsporrán, ta Free Kirk minister, and another auld wife."

FOX, on one of his numerous occasions for borrowing money, met with a good natured Jew who told him he might take his own time for payment. "Then," said Charles, "we'll make it the Day of Judgment—or, as that will be rather a busy day, suppose we say the day after?"

CHORUS of ladies to comely curate who is ascending the ladder to hang decorations: "Oh, Mr. Sweetlow, do take care! Don't go up! So dangerous! Do come down! Oh!" Rector, sarcastically: "Really, Sweetlow, don't you think you'd better let a married man do that?"

AN old Scottish woman, wishing to cross the river Forth, hesitated to enter the ferry-boat because a storm was brewing. The boatman asked if she would not trust in Providence.—"Na, na," said she, "I would na trust in Providence as long as there is a bridge at Stirling."

It is a beautiful starry night, and the Seniors are out singing. First Senior (who studies astronomy)—"Look up there and see how beautiful Orion looks." Second Senior (who does not study astronomy, but who has a streak of Irish blood in him)—"Is that O'Ryan? Thank the Lord, then there is one Irishman in Heaven, anyhow!"

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