

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHOLEY.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



AN OFFERING TO THE LORD.

"There was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house. . . . And the Gibeonites said . . . Let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord. . . . The king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul . . . and the five

sons of Michal the daughter of Saul. . . . And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord. . . . And Rizpah . . . suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night. . . . And after that God was intreated for the land."—2 SAMUEL xxi, 1—14.

A NEW TRINITY.—II.

CANON WILBERFORCE would fain think that unbelief is not more extensive now than formerly, only it is "more patent, more aggressive, and above all more recorded, and therefore more mischievous." Yet he is obliged to make the following admission, which shows that facts will somehow obtrude themselves upon the clerical ostrich:—

"At a recent census in France, out of a population of twenty-nine millions, seven and a-half millions openly declared themselves to be of no religious belief; and in England, though I am not aware of any census having been attempted, there is not a town of any size without its organised society of unbelievers."

Some of this scepticism Canon Wilberforce believes to be merely "frivolous," and with a priest's instinct and impudence, he thinks that sensuality will account for most of the remainder. Yet he is obliged to allow the existence of "a sufficiently formidable residuum which is not necessarily immoral, and is serious, determined, and aggressive." Note the truly Christian charity in this reluctant admission. The *élite* of scepticism are not necessarily immoral, the implication being that, as a matter of fact, they are very likely to be so. Somehow you cannot get the notion into a parson that people think with their heads. He is all for the heart. And as his own heart is perfectly sound (of course), it naturally follows that if you differ from him

your heart must be *unsound*. Perhaps this explains why a Christian lays his hand on his bosom when he makes a profession of faith. He never pays his head such a compliment, no doubt with a full knowledge of its deserts.

This confusion prevails through Canon Wilberforce's attempts to account for unbelief. The utterly unspiritual lives of unbelievers; the hostile attitude of theologians to science; the rigid dogmatism of orthodoxy; such are the causes of Atheism in his diagnosis. It does not occur to him that Atheism is a philosophy, which might exist if theologians all smirked instead of frowned, and priests all roared like sucking doves.

Now for the effects of Atheism. In Canon Wilberforce's heated brain-pan they are terrible indeed. First, he discovers that Atheism is "a determined foe to liberty." His authorities for this charge are extremely numerous, but remarkably indefinite, consisting as they do of "those best qualified to form an opinion." Voltaire is the only one cited, but a parson quoting Voltaire is as edifying as the Devil quoting scripture. Jove sometimes nods, and even Voltaire could write nonsense on Atheism; nonsense, by the way, he was far too sensible to utter in the presence of Diderot or D'Holbach.

Mere *opinion* is worthless in such a case. Will Canon Wilberforce point to a single instance in all history of Atheism interfering with liberty? The field is wide, and we challenge him to find one stone, however small, that

Atheism ever cast at Freedom. On the other hand, Christianity has always tried to crush liberty. All the priests in Europe will never answer a single count of the appalling indictment of the *Crimes of Christianity*. It is not too much to say that no Christian ever understood the right of freethought. The mild Melancthon gloried in Calvin's murder of Servetus. Milton, in his splendid *Arcopagitica*, rejected the idea of tolerating "popery and open superstition" or impiety, and called on the commonwealth to "have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors." There never was, and we venture to say there never will be, a Christian who allows that Freethinkers have any rights except those they can extort. Canon Wilberforce is himself intolerant. He tries to conceal the fact, but he betrays it unconsciously; for bigotry, like murder, will out. He refers to "the editor of an infidel newspaper who was (unwisely as we think) imprisoned." Mark the word. *Unwisely*. Not *unjustly*; oh dear no. It was perfectly right; only as it did not suppress the paper, but simply advertised it, the imprisonment was unwise. Exactly. Persecution is a stick the Christian will always use while it serves him; when it is useless, or harmful, he lays it aside; but he always casts a furtive and longing glance at the corner where it reposes. "Will it pay me?" he asks. If no, he lets the stick lie: if yes, he flourishes it again over his victim's head.

The Gospel, says Canon Wilberforce, is the nursery of liberty. Yes, a baby-farming establishment, where the poor bantling has been kicked and cuffed, spat on and reviled, starved of food and dosed with the deadliest soothing-syrup.

Every step in moral progress, he continues, may be traced back to the Babe of Bethlehem, who quietly sowed moral seed that has changed the face of the world, without promoting a single rebellion or formulating revolutionary propaganda. In reply to this wild absurdity we refer Canon Wilberforce to the famous State Trial of Jesus Christ in the four gospels. The prophet of Nazareth rode into Jerusalem like a pretender; the mob hailed him with phrases of revolutionary Judaism; he comported himself in the holy city like a violent demagogue; and finally he was executed by the Roman governor on a charge of sedition. This is recorded in the New Testament, yet Canon Wilberforce gives it a complete and emphatic denial. When a parson mounts the pulpit or the rostrum he generally rides a steeplechase over science, history, morality, and common-sense; and as no one can answer him, he dashes on without fear of contradiction.

Take a few more instances of Canon Wilberforce's accuracy. He says that the discovery of evolution has caused "a marked decline of rationalism in the German universities"; and in proof of this statement he cites "the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston"! Evolution has also "given prominence" to "design in nature," which is the very thing every reader of Darwin knows it discounts; for evolution, as Schmidt observes, explains adaptation as a result without assuming design as a cause. Another remarkable assertion is that science has "disproved spontaneous generation," whereas every student of science knows it has done nothing of the sort. Pouchet and Bastian assert that spontaneous generation occurs now, while Huxley and Tyndall say it does not; but Huxley himself holds that it must have occurred millions of years ago when life began on this planet. Experiments at the present day are not conclusive, at least negatively, for it may be impossible to reproduce the original conditions. Canon Wilberforce may smile triumphantly at this admission, but the smile will be a symptom of ignorance. Take a diamond. It is merely a bit of crystallised carbon. But all the science in the world cannot make one. It is the result of unknown causes, in unknown conditions, through unknown periods. If our ignorance is a good basis for dogmatism, you might as well say that God moulded the diamond as that he created the first germs of life.

But to recur to our proper subject. According to Canon Wilberforce, Atheism is to be counteracted by circulating the Christian Evidence Society's leaflets. O most lame and impotent conclusion! "Public debate between selected champions is eminently unsatisfactory." Of course it is. The losing side always thinks so. At one time the parsons were eager for the fray, but having learnt wisdom in the school of adversity, they shun debate more zealously than the Devil does holy water.

Canon Wilberforce's crowning argument against infidelity is "the sixteen infidel leaders of London, who in the last thirty years have turned to Christ and salvation." For information as to these the reader is referred to the Rev. C. J. Whitmore's fraudulent tract, which is constantly circulated although it has been frequently exposed. Fancy calling men like Earwaker and Bishop "infidel leaders of London"! The joke is really ghastly. Mr. Whitmore is well aware of it, so he gives no names, but simply initials. All the cases are ancient as well as doubtful. Year follows year and not a single fresh convert can be bagged. Yet effort has not been spared. Money, the Christian's talisman, the Christian's divinity, has been tried again and again. An aged London Freethinker, who died not long ago, was repeatedly offered money by an emissary of the Christian Evidence Society to recant; and similar offers have recently been made to one of our open-air lecturers. Like desert vultures these Nazarenes watch our toiling column, and swoop down when a soldier falls from the heat and burden of the march. They do not even shrink from a camp-follower. They keep a list of the victims as trophies of their prowess, and it is flaunted at all the places where orthodox ninnies congregate. It tickles the heart of piety, and makes Christian benevolence open its purse-strings to provide the vultures with fresh liver.

G. W. FOOTE.

ODDS AND ENDS FROM A FREETHINKER'S NOTE-BOOK.

At bottom all things are mysterious. This is but another way of saying that all our knowledge is finite.

How can man, who is but as an atom in the illimitable universe, comprehend its infinity?

Religion, it is said, is natural to man. Yes, exactly as savagery is; it is an inheritance from an earlier and less cultured time.

The chief element in all religions is ignorance. Faith disappears before knowledge.

It is pretended that religion has educated mankind. The pupil is hardly to be congratulated. His education has to recommence by unlearning what religion has taught him.

So far from virtue depending upon supernatural sanctions, they cannot be introduced without undermining the proper natural sanctions to right conduct.

There could be no worse basis for conduct than the alleged will of an irresponsible being. The theory shows its origin in despotic government.

The restriction of duty to the sphere of this life at once gives it purpose and concentration. One world at a time is the only doctrine for those who know but of one world.

Gibbon has well said that to the eye of the philosopher the best priests are the worst. Their virtue lends a certain authority to their lies.

The training of many generations cannot be overcome by the culture of a single age. We are all more savage and more superstitious than we know.

Old religious beliefs are like old teeth. They shake but they hold.

As the study of comparative beliefs and investigation into the origin and development of the God-idea brings these subjects within the scope of science, religion will take its place as a department of anthropology.

Since belief in a personal God is accepted at one stage of mental development and rejected at another, it is clear that theism is an incidental, not an essential, element of human faith.

To attack dogmas as injurious at present is not to deny their utility in the past. When living they may have been valuable, but petrified or putrified they are poisonous.

The real position of Christianity is illustrated by its missionary conquests. It succeeds when brought in contact with savage faiths, but not in opposition to civilised ones, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism and modern Judaism.

J. M. WHEELER.

"Yo' wan' ter know what fust started me for to preach de gospil, sah?" repeated an old darky minister. "Yes, Uncle Jake." "I will tole you 'zactly all 'bout it, sah. One day I war workin' out in de co'nfield, an' de sun war berry hot, an' de groun' war stony, an' it's mighty pow'ful work, hoein' co'n in de hot sun on stony groun', boss, an' I war berry tired, an' I leaned back on de hoe an' got ter thinkin', an' all ob a sudden, like, I feel dat de good Lord called 'pon me ter preach de gospil, sah."

ACID DROPS.

AMONG the advertisements in the *Rock* for exchange of livings and other "strictly evangelical" matters of business, we see that a "Christian partner" is wanted for selling perambulators. We suppose the wheels wouldn't run true or the babies would fall out if there wasn't plenty of Christian influence about. Perhaps the Christianity is good for catching pious purchasers. Evidently the religiosity of a trade advertisement suits it for catching a flat, for the kind of Christian wanted is one who has disobeyed his master's command and has laid up treasure on earth, wherewith he may in due time and under the providence of God launch out into the perambulator business. In all these religious advertisements the one thing needful seems to be money. Almost the only advertiser who doesn't want cash is a lady who says she "seeks work for the Lord" and adds, "Salary no object, but comfortable home." She is a humble imitator of many a more ambitious Christian martyr and hero in one, who experiences a burning wish to serve the Lord at a thousand a year.

THE Shetland woman who was "providentially" saved from a fishing smack in which she had been (providentially?) blown out to sea, had several narrow escapes previously. In her younger days she was shot by a sportsman and some of the shots are still in her head. Once she was nearly drowned, and on another occasion she was run over by a cart and crippled. These escapes from death caused her to be regarded with superstitious fear, and she was spoken of as the Witch of Dunrossness. In early life her escapes were attributed to witchcraft and in later life to religion—which illustrates or compresses into an individual life the origin and development of superstitious delusion in the race. Christianity is but developed witchcraft and fetishism.

A LARGE number of letters are appearing in the *Daily Telegraph* on the subject of the Sunday-school "Kissing games" denounced by the *Christian Million*. Most of the writers are indignant, and consider that their not having witnessed the fast and indiscreet practices referred to is a full refutation of the charges. But many of the letters confirm the original account, and some, the editor says, give instances of the most lamentable results flowing from these kissings, rompings and embracings.

St. James's Gazette, anent the kissing games, declares: "We have proof on every hand of a very unwholesome state of things amongst the most earnest professors of religion and virtue; in the vagaries of the Salvationists; in the pastime of 'slumming'; in the avidity with which too many women poke and pry into the foulest obscenities and the relish with which they discourse of their discoveries; in the multiplication in our day of a pestilent creature who has never been absent from any Christian community for a thousand years; he who was known centuries ago as the 'foul priest,' and now goes sighing and whispering amongst the women of his flock as the prurient parson."

ETHEL MAY HAMPTON, a little girl aged nine, has been murdered at Coburg, in Australia by her mother and sisters. After kneeling down several times and praying, they "felt an inspiration" and "decided that the first life to be taken was that of the little one" and then they would kill each other. They thereupon cut the young sister's throat and drew the penknife across each other's arms, so that when discovered they were all covered with blood. They had been reading the *Pall Mall Gazette* revelations, which led them to the idea of preserving their purity by suicide.

COUNT LEON TOLSTOI, the Russian novelist and mystic, whose work on Christianity was lately reviewed in our columns, is reported to be far gone in the Nazarene superstition. He intends, it is said, to carry out literally the injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount; to sell all he has and give the proceeds to the poor, whom it will not do a ha'p'orth of good; and to earn his living by shoemaking. The count has nine children, but he does not consider he owes them any special duty, although he called them into the world, and he is resolved to make no provision for them, but to let them "fend for themselves," as they say in the north. When his eldest son asked him what profession he should take to, he answered "Go and sweep snow." Count Tolstoi is showing, like the early Christian anchorites (see *Crimes of Christianity*, Part IV.) what the Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount really means when reduced to practice.

THE Count not only makes his own bed and cleans his own room to save the servant's trouble, but, to spare the washerwoman he changes his linen as seldom as possible. Rather a dirty scrupulosity! We dare say the washerwoman has a good deal more sense, and would rather wash the Count's shirt for a small consideration than see him a sort of travelling vermin-holder.

THE Rev. Freeman Wills, of Shoreditch has opened four shops for selling meat, and wants a hundred more shops opened in different parts of London. "An Indignant Butcher" writes to the papers complaining of this unfair rivalry, and recommends

Mr. Wills to preach the Gospel and leave other people's businesses alone. Everybody likes to buy everything cheap, but the puzzle will be where philanthropy is to leave off. Must it sell cheap everything and ruin all the tradesmen everywhere? Christ said "Feed my lambs," and humble pastor Wills is making the lambs cannibals by feeding them on frozen mutton.

THAT Christian paper the *Rock* deeply regrets to hear of the purchase of large quantities of sabres and sword-bayonets for our army. Does this indicate the humanitarian feelings springing from a religion of love? Oh, dear, no. The deep regret is solely because the murderous implements are purchased of Germans. Hence these Christian tears. Warlike weapons ought to be made at home, the *Rock* insists, and not purchased of foreigners.

IN one of his American addresses, Archdeacon Farrar called upon the young men of the States to follow Christ. With frothy eloquence he told them that they were to give up worldly delights and to "trample on the base omnipotence of gold." This is particularly rich, coming from an Archdeacon with a big income, who went on a lecturing tour in America to raise the wind.

TALK about blasphemy! What could be more blasphemous than Archdeacon Farrar's misuse of the magnificent words of Garibaldi after his defeat at Rome? Said the great Atheist hero: "Soldiers, I have nothing to offer you but rags, and hardship, and cold, and hunger. Let him that loves his country follow me." And the youth of Italy sprang to their feet at the voice of a greater than god—a hero. Archdeacon Farrar knows very well that Christ's soldiers have not to face such trials. He is himself a good illustration of the truth that wealth and honors are easily won under the banner of the Cross.

MAY we also ask why the popular Archdeacon steals phrases from his betters? Will you be men, he asks the young Americans, God's chosen by election, God's servants by beneficence? He pilfers and spoils the end of the last sentence of Landor's dedication of the first edition of the *Hellenics* to the newly-elected Pope Pius IX.—"God's servant by election, God's image by beneficence." Archdeacon Farrar turns these fine phrases into nonsense. "God's chosen by election," is enough to make a jackass bray.

MR. THOMAS BURT, M.P., recently said, at a Primitive Methodist meeting, that the working classes were not losing faith in religion. In one sense he is right. They never had much faith to lose. In another sense he is quite wrong. Compare the references to religion in Radical and workmen's circles to-day with the references twenty years ago, and see what a change has been effected; a change which the denials of twenty Burts will not demolish. The fact is, while our Labor representatives are good, sound, practical Radicals, they are not philosophers, or thinkers, in the wide sense of the term; and they are quite out of touch with the skilled artisans, especially of London, in respect to many questions outside Trade Unionism.

THE Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham has warned all his sheep against joining the Primrose League, on the ground that its highest officials have encouraged secret societies of Orangemen, and that its defence of religion simply means maintaining "the heretical sect of the English Church." Freethinkers are delighted to see such harmony among the "happy family." While Christians denounce each other as heretics they furnish us with sport and promote our safety.

THE *Cambria Leader* reports that a Rev. Mr. Sayers, alias Gloston, a colored missionary, who has been lecturing in Cornwall and raising money for missions in Africa, disappeared from Swansea, having omitted to discharge his hotel bill. It has since transpired that although the worthy missionary wears the blue ribbon he is an inveterate boozier, and was last seen coming out of a disreputable house, accompanied by a female of bad character.

ANNOUNCEMENTS are made of forthcoming lectures at Cannon Street Hall upon the Speedy Coming of Christ, and the Approaching End of the Christian Dispensation. We are of opinion that a good deal may be said in favor of the latter clause of the programme.

THE ingenious person who has patented a "nose machine" is said to be largely patronised by members of the chosen race anxious to efface all signs of their descent from the twelve tribes

THE Catholic *Weekly Register* is highly indignant because a wealthy Jew of Turin is about to erect a large synagogue at Rome in sight of the Holy Father at the Vatican.

"FROM a little Greek, good Lord, deliver us," said Dean Alford, whom Christians regard as a great Greek scholar. Had he no fear of the Blasphemy Laws before him in thus taking God's name in vain and parodying the Prayer-book? Was his remark aimed at St. Paul and the other inspired writers of the

New Testament, whose Greek is not of the most polished character?

JOSEPH ARCH's father and some other Warwickshire laborers had allotments of poor glebe land granted to them at three times the ordinary rent. As soon as the men had got this land into good order it was taken from them and they were shifted to a fresh piece of poor soil. The same operation was repeated twice more for the benefit of the vicar. No wonder there is a growing hostility to the Church in the minds of agricultural laborers.

ANENT the recent proposals of Church Reform a very good sarcastic definition has been given of the Broad Church. It is the Church that *takes everybody in*.

THIS is a tolerably correct description of the latitudinarians, who care not a jot what people really believe so long as they attend Church and call themselves Christians. You need not believe in Samson's jawbone or Elisha's floating axe so long as you profess belief in Revelation, and you may deny the birth from a virgin mother if only you will admit the doctrine of the Incarnation. You may discard the story of the Fall if only you will admit the scheme of Redemption. What Broadchurchism really does is not to unite rationalism with Christianity, for they won't mix, but to unite a profession of both Rationalism and Christianity with a retention of clerical emoluments.

A DR. GASTER has recently discovered a translation of a Jewish book entitled *The Apocalypse of Abraham*. The work belongs to the period of the rise of Christianity, and had its origin with the sect of Sethians, who believed in Seth, the son of Adam, as the true Christ and redeemer of sin. All which confirms the evidence as to the immense credulity of the Jews of that period. They were ready to believe anything.

THE *Rock* rejoices to hear that the paper of the Church Army has been found a source of blessing to "one poor brother" in the condemned cell at Ipswich. It was "a great comfort" to him in his last hours on earth. If the paper didn't prevent the poor brother in Christ from committing murder, it at least assures him of forgiveness and furnishes him with a passport to heaven.

THAT high and mighty Church organ, the *Church Times*, makes the Freethought body a present of the Quakers. In its issue for March 12, it distinctly declares that Elizabeth Fry was no Christian, and says: "A good living woman who has not been baptised is no more a Christian than a charitable person, who has not been admitted into the society, is a Freemason, or than every violent Protestant is an Orangeman, or every traitor a Fenian."

THE same number of the same paper invents a new "heresy," Vegetarianism. It declares that non-meat eaters are heretics, because "when we remember the primeval grant to man of every moving thing as meat; the miraculous provision of bread and flesh for Elijah morning and evening at the brook Cherith; the multiplication by our Lord Himself of fish as well as bread to feed the multitudes; and the command 'Rise, Peter, kill and eat,' the force of presumption cannot go farther than to say that flesh diet is unlawful." What will Dr. Nicholls say to this?

THE *Church Times* says "It is notorious that family livings are very often indeed bestowed with no view beyond that of providing for a member of the family—sometimes, alas! an unworthy member."

THE close division upon the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales induces the *Church Times* to make the following nasty retort upon the Dissenters: "It is matter of notoriety that Calvinist and Methodist populations are apt to be exceedingly immoral, and that is notably true in Wales. The peculiar theology of these societies, by teaching those who have not yet 'experienced religion' that they are practically irresponsible, and those who have experienced religion that they are perfectly safe, in virtue of the tenet of final perseverance, tends to gross profligacy; and it is significant in this connection that the Mormons find their best recruiting-grounds in the Principality." There is sufficient truth in the paragraph to give it sting.

THE Rev. S. Baring Gould has just issued seven discourses for Lent upon the subject of "The Trials of Jesus." The reverend gentleman is sufficiently acquainted with the Jewish and Roman legal procedures of the time to show that those trials as reported in the Gospels were full of illegalities, but he seems unaware of the strong argument this affords against the veracity of those reports as instanced in our notes to the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*.

THE obituary notices of the *Local Preachers' Magazine* exhibit a suggestive union of pious and pecuniary considerations. For "Happy in Jesus" the claim is £2. "Calmly trusting in Jesus" has "claim £4" attached to it. "His mind was clear, and confidence in Christ unshaken," requires £8. "Weary and longing to depart" has a similar amount, and "Trusting on the all-sufficient Savior" is also followed by "claim £8."

A DISSENTING paper, pointing out the evils of lotteries at church bazaars, gives a case of a young man who won a prize of books at one of these lotteries, and from this lucky first venture was led on to purchase tickets in continental lotteries. Emboldened by success, he then risked his all, and was reduced to beggary.

THE Rev. Sam. Jones tells his hearers that if they have robbed some poor widow they ought to be very solemn when they come into the house of God. Does this explain the solemnity of the respectable deacons and moneyed pillars of the Church of Christ, and the general air of solemnity which prosperous religion always taketh unto itself?

JOSIAH FOWLER, who was arrested while conducting a religious service at Hull, says that the young widow with whom he was living was "worth a thousand of his first wife." In deserting his wife and six children he was probably sustained by Christ's promise that those who forsake wife and children for his name's sake shall receive an hundred-fold (Matt. xix., 29). He had obeyed Christ in hating his wife and children (Luke xiv., 26) and by loving his neighbor as himself.

A GRAND bazaar in aid of St. Philip's Church, Tiaro, Queensland, turned out to be a practical joke of a rather fraudulent nature. The "splendid picture of her Majesty the Queen, lately completed to the order of the Queensland Government," proved to be only a postage stamp, and the advertised representation of the "meeting of Wellington and Blucher" was a pair of boots. People who came down by the cheap railway tickets as advertised found themselves victimised. In every case the advertisements were frauds, while raffling and betting were prominent features. But then the Lord pulled in good takings, and religion revives under the supply of the one thing needful.

THE AMBITIOUS CHOIR.

[Some distance after Tenyson.]

Half a bar, half a bar,
Half a bar onward!
Into a desperate ditch,
Choir and Precentor hitch,
Up to an awful pitch,
They led the Old Hundred.
Trebles to right of them,
Tenors to left of them,
Basses in front of them,
Bellowed and thundered.
Oh! that Precentor's look,
When the sopranos took
Their own time and hook,
From the Old Hundred.

Screached all the trebles here,
Boggled the tenors there,
Raising the parson's hair,
While his mind wandered;
Theirs not to reason why—
This psalm was pitched too high;
Theirs but to gasp and cry
Out the Old Hundred.
Trebles to right of them,
Tenors to left of them,
Basses in front of them,
Bellowed and thundered.
Stormed they with shout and yell,
Not wise they sang, nor well,
Drowning the sexton's bell,
While all the church wondered.

Dire the precentor's glare,
Flash'd his pitch-fork in air,
Sounding fresh keys to bear
Out the Old Hundred.
Swiftly he turned his back,
Reach'd he his hat from rack,
Then from the screaming pack
Himself he sundered.
Tenors to right of him,
Trebles to left of him,
Discords behind him
Bellowed and thundered.
Oh, the wild howls they wrought!
Right to the end they fought!
Some tune they sang, but not,
Not the Old Hundred.—*Andre's Journal*.

THE POWER OF RELIGION.—Two burglars had ransacked the house and secured every portable thing of any value. While passing through the pantry, one of them picked up a piece of cold meat and was about to eat it. "Whist, Pat!" said the other, warningly; "av yez fergot phat day it is?" "Be jabbers," said Pat, dropping the meat; "Oi had; it's Friday mornin'."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 21, The Circus, New Station Street, Leeds; at 11, "An Hour in Heaven;" at 8, "God's Mother;" at 6.30, "An Hour in Hell."

MARCH 28, Milton Hall; 29, Battersea.

APRIL 4, Wigan; 8, United Radical Club, Hackney; 11, Nottingham; 18, Milton Hall; 25, Liverpool; 28, Conference of Association for Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws.

MAY 2, Manchester; 9, Sheffield; 16, Milton Hall; 23 and 30, Hall of Science, London.

JUNE 6, Oldham; 13, N. S. S. Conference.

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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. 7¹/₂d.

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.

A. RAWLINSON.—Not a bad idea, but unfortunately you cannot draw.

E. CHAMBERLAIN.—Your explanation is quite satisfactory, the omission of the author's name being an accident.

WE shall be glad if our readers will send us any newspapers containing notices of *Progress*, *Prisoner for Blasphemy*, or any other of our publications.

W. STEWART.—Mr. Ramsey says that you must have received the remainder of your order soon after the arrival of the two *Freethinkers*, the former being sent by the slower parcel post. Could you not arrange to have your small parcel enclosed with a larger one Mr. Ramsey sends to another customer in Hull?

E. JAGGER.—Thanks. Cuttings are always welcome.

J. WIDDICOMBE.—Pleased to hear of your gallant battling for the good old cause. Write whenever you like.

H. CANTLE.—Her Majesty, and her Majesty's family cost the nation over half a million a year. The Civil List of £385,000 does not include the grants and pensions to her children and relations. See the *Financial Reform Almanac* for further details.

W. T. LEEKEY wishes to thank his friends for their attendance at the Midland Arches on Sunday, and their readiness to defend him from the threatened violence of Mr. Woffendale's followers for his endeavors to sell the *Freethinker*.

R. BROWN.—*Lent* is a contraction of *lengen-tide* a Saxon term for Spring, as the time of the lengthening of the days. The suggestion that the fast was instituted by apostolic fishermen in order to dispose of their fish is an old one.

JAMES WHEELER, 85 Russell Road, Wimbledon, desires Freethinkers in the neighborhood to communicate with him, with a view to form a branch of the N. S. S.

J. SOPER.—We are sorry to hear that your long day's work as a shop assistant prevents you from attending any Freethought meetings on a week night; but it is impossible for Mr. Foote's debate with Dr. McCann to take place on a Sunday, both disputants being otherwise engaged on that day, the one in lecturing, and the other in preaching.

J. FIRTH (Rochdale).—We have no literature on the Sunday question. Mr. Saveranx, secretary to the Sunday League, New Oxford Street, London, W., might be able to supply you.

E. J. HUDD writes: "I owe the *Freethinker* a deep debt of gratitude for my conversion. Twelve months ago I was as bigoted a Christian as ever breathed, and now I enjoy your lectures immensely." Our correspondent is thanked for the cuttings.

F. G. WILLATT.—You say "Intelligence is infinite—eternal." We envy you your extensive information. For the rest we have no time to carry on a controversy with you, having much abler antagonists to cope with. We answered your previous questions because we presumed you were in search of information.

A. ANDRADE.—Shall appear.

F. J. MAIR.—The piece appeared many years ago in a Freethought journal now extinct, but we will print it again as it will be fresh to many of our readers.

BANJO.—Mr. Ball's review of Father Lambert's reply to Ingersoll appeared in the *Freethinker* for January 18 and 25, 1885, and the "Priest on Liberty" was in the number for February 15, 1885.

IGNORAMUS.—You should read a manual of physiology.—Asking whether the brain suffices in itself for thought is like asking whether a steam-engine in itself suffices for locomotion. The brain must be supplied with blood, and it must receive the stimulus of sensitive experience. What we do hold is that thought without a brain is never met with, and there is no reason for believing it ever was or ever will be.

H. M. RIDGWAY.—Hundreds of thousands of our Tracts have been circulated, often with good results. We call them *Freethinker Tracts* as an advertisement of our paper. As we lose financially on the Tracts, owing to their low price, we must get the fair compensation of publicity. Thanks for your good wishes.

T. C. GRAY.—Probably the debate between Mr. Foote and Dr. McCann will be published. Glad to hear you think the *Crimes of Christianity* "one of the finest and most useful works." Your wish will be gratified. The authors intend to devote a chapter to "Christianity and Woman."

S. LEESON.—Mr. Foote will be happy to pay Wellingborough a visit if your secretary will write to him. We are pleased to hear that a

laugh you had over one of our illustrations three years ago was your "first step towards mental freedom." The pious lawyer who presided at the meeting of your local Bible Society and talked about the decadence of France through its infidelity, uttered mere nonsense. We cannot reply to vague general statements. Where are his proofs?

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Western Daily Mercury—Oldham Chronicle—Liberal—Cambria Daily Leader—Liberty—English Mechanic—Cassell's Saturday Journal—Truthseeker—Wellingborough News.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Mr. FOOTE lectures three times to-day (21st) in the Circus, Leeds, and as the building is very large, we hope the Freethinkers in the district will make a special effort to bring their friends. If the weather is cold, the subjects are warm—"An Hour in Heaven," "God's Mother," and "An Hour in Hell."

THE third of the Christian Evidence Society's course of lectures at the London Hall of Science was delivered on Thursday evening, the 11th inst., by the Rev. Mr. Potts, of Ledbury. His discourse was full of promise with very little performance, but he seemed a fair-minded though not very strong man, and the audience gave him a remarkably attentive hearing. Mr. Potts did not shine in debate. Both his physical and his argumentative powers seemed exhausted. The last lecture of the course was announced for the following Thursday, the 18th inst. Mr. B. H. Cowper is the lecturer, and he is the only one of the four who has taken up the defence of Christianity. He deals with the "witnesses," that is, we presume, the documentary evidence. As the subject is a very definite one, we hope Mr. Cowper will not be opposed by anyone who is not conversant with its facts, for he has a considerable mastery of them himself.

AFTER Mr. Cowper's lecture Mr. Foote will reply to the whole of the C. E. S. lecturers except Dr. McCann. He has made notes of their discourses, and will give them an exhaustive answer. His two lectures will be delivered on Thursday evenings, March 25 and April 1.

THE debate between the Rev. Dr. McCann and Mr. Foote is definitely arranged to take place at the London Hall of Science in April. Full particulars will be published next week. The subject of discussion will be "Christianity or Secularism—Which is the Truer."

THE second volume of *Crimes of Christianity*, containing Parts X. to XVIII. inclusive, will be ready next week. It will be bound in a handsome wrapper like the first volume. Purchasers of the parts or volumes as they appear will gain an advantage, as the work when completed will be sold at a higher price.

MARCH 31 will be a red-letter day for London Freethinkers. A great family gathering, so to speak, will take place in the evening at the Hall of Science, to commemorate Mr. Bradlaugh's accession to his seat. Mr. Foote will preside, and Mrs. Besant will present Mr. Bradlaugh with a *souvenir* of the occasion from the National Secular Society. There will be some good music, some speeches we hope also good, and after ten o'clock the hall will be cleared for dancing, which the fanatical devotees of the art can pursue till four o'clock in the morning. Moderate people will be glad to know that attendance till that hour is not compulsory.

N.B.—Tickets for the body of the hall must be obtained beforehand. The price (1s.) includes the ball. Those who do not wish to enjoy the whole programme, but still desire to hear the speeches and the music, can get a seat in the gallery for fourpence. Any balance after the payment of expenses will go to the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund.

A FEW days ago we received a welcome visit from one of our Calcutta subscribers—a very pleasant, intelligent gentleman in the Indian Civil Service, who "could not miss the opportunity of thanking those who had given him so much pleasure for years." His wife is a Freethinker also, and he tells us there is always a rush among the children for a first sight of this "blasphemous" journal.

By the way, we hear throughout the country that the children are delighted with the *Freethinker*, and we are no less delighted to hear it. The youngsters in many families look forward to every fresh number; they enjoy the jokes, the pictures, and some of the paragraphs; and in time they take to reading the articles. Without specially intending it, we have been teaching the young idea how to shoot, and helping to prepare another generation of Freethinkers.

A FEW weeks ago we were privileged to be for a short while in one of the happiest homes in Lancashire. The mother was giving her youngest child some scripture lessons from our *Comic Bible*, and the little maiden seemed to like the exposition a great deal better than children like the sober, not to say bitter, dose they receive at Sunday-school.

Reynolds' Newspaper of last week gave some racy extracts from Mr. Foote's *Prisoner for Blasphemy*, selecting particularly what it called "the very humorous" account of the prison chaplain. According to *Reynolds'*, Mr. Foote's sentiments as to his imprisonment will be shared by "nine-tenths of his countrymen." No doubt they will by-and-bye. We wish we could think so now.

A MOVEMENT for Disestablishment of the Lutheran Church has been inaugurated in Sweden. Considering that within the present century all persons not conforming to that Church were subject to expulsion from that country, this indicates a great advance.

THE *Nonconformist and Independent* of last week states that there is a native press at Lahore engaged in translating modern infidel works into the various dialects of North-Western India, and that these works circulate throughout the Provinces and even beyond the Afghan border.

THE prospects of Disestablishment in Wales are growing more favorable. Mr. Dillwyn brought forward his motion in Parliament declaring that the Established Church in Wales was "an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist." The defenders of the orthodox faith did not venture to oppose a direct negative. They diplomatically moved an amendment calling for speedy reforms to enable the Church to adapt itself to the religious needs and wishes of the Welsh people. This amendment received 241 votes against 229 for Mr. Dillwyn's original motion. But as soon as it had served its purpose of defeating Mr. Dillwyn, the pretended Church reformers abandoned it. When put as a substantive resolution it was lost by the hopeless minority of 49 votes against 346. The talk of reform is evidently a farce, and the Liberationists can press forward for victory in the near future, encouraged by a defeat in which the enemy only won by a narrow majority of 12 votes. Virtually the Liberationists had a majority, for the Government abstained from taking up the matter solely because it is not yet prepared to give practical effect to its views on the matter.

WHAT miracle has happened to the *Rock*? It actually sees that morality without religion is "not altogether an Utopian dream." It sees that there are men who display, "even without the religious sentiment, lives of high moral worth." Freethought must indeed be making progress if antiquated religious papers can allow themselves to state such facts as these to their bigoted readers.

ANOTHER little shackle has been removed. The London theatres were allowed to be opened on Ash Wednesday for the first time, and no particular national calamity that we are aware of has happened in consequence. It seems strange that people have submitted so long to so foolish an exercise of power in the interests of a piety that could not bear to see people enjoying themselves. The restriction was a relic of the still more pious law which closed theatres during the whole forty days of Lent. In London the regulation was particularly absurd, as it applied only to theatres north of the Thames. Theatres in the Borough, being in another county, could keep open—impiety, like its cousin blasphemy, being evidently a matter of geography. People who have been annoyed by finding the theatres closed when they have gone there—in wicked forgetfulness of its being the day after pancake day—can rejoice that the pious stupidity of this antiquated regulation will trouble them no more.

THE *New York Churchman* laments that during the last twenty years despite the immense increase of population the number of ordained ministers of the Anglican Church has only increased from 111 to 117. If this is the measure of the progress of the English Church in America it may as well throw up the sponge. At any rate it does not augur very well for the institution when Disestablished.

PAUL BERT, the distinguished French scientist, and Gambetta's Minister of Public Education, has just uttered a good *mot*—"In every commune there is a candle—the schoolmaster—and an extinguisher—the priest."

THE *Athenaeum*, in a review of James Russell's *Reminiscences of Yarrow*, has the following passage: "Odd figures were some of those Border ministers. There was the Reverend, but drunken, Mr. Potts, of Ettrick, who often astride a stone wall, would pull off his wig, and with it belabor his fancied steed. Mr. Paton, his successor, had a morbid fondness for witnessing executions. His stipend was £45; and his manse fell into such sad disrepair that the outer door had to be barred with a wheelbarrow, which kept out the cow and the pig, but not the poultry, whilst a folio of Matthew Henry stopped up a hole in the floor. Then there was Dr. Douglas, of Galashiels, who combined

brewing and money-lending with his ministerial functions. At after-synod meetings, when some of the brethren were loth to leave whist-playing even for supper, he might be heard exclaiming, "Gentlemen, hold up your hands till the grace is said."

A PARSON ON GOD.

THE Rev. J. Longland has just published a half-crown book on a subject that ought to be of great importance to religious people—namely, on "Who and What is God?" One would think that the clergy ought to have settled this long ago, seeing that they have been introducing the God in question to people's notice for some thousands of years. But it appears there is still very great difficulty in forming any definite notion of who and what he is, and the Rev. J. Longland rushes in to supply this want. He has been struck with "a new idea about God," which continues to "unfold deeper convictions of its truth" the more he compares it with other theories.

It is discouraging to find our author talking about "taking it for granted that God means the infinite power that created and governs all things," because this is far from being a new idea, or from throwing any fresh light on the matter. It is a little more encouraging, however, to find him acknowledging that the Bible "has not clearly and satisfactorily made out what God is"—a defect in the divine revelation, which it has evidently been reserved for the Rev. J. Longland to supply after the lapse of so many anxious centuries of obscurity and ignorance.

Plainly and plumply, our parson's grand new idea is that God is fire or heat. Of course he likes to express this idea guardedly and at length, for fear of shocking his orthodox readers; but he takes for his text, "God is a consuming fire," and apologises to Moses for presuming to "intentionally misinterpret him," so as to give him "the credit of having, by accident, expressed a remote fact in the most literal and scientific language that could then or now be made use of." He claims that the "hidden truth" of this remarkable assertion of Moses has not yet been made manifest, and as its "literal defence" will provoke some "religious indignation," he craves the indulgence of his readers while he makes out his case.

Heat, then, is the "sole vivifier of all creation." Life is heat, and "heat is the almighty power of God." This almighty power of God, coming from the sun to the earth, has the "quality" of "drawing out to the surface the latent heat contained in the bowels of the earth"—such, at least, is our parson's silly idea, and he doubtless feels happy in the certainty that his old woman's nonsense is infinitely superior to the uninspired science of Huxley and Tyndall. He also dilates upon "the indisputable vitality of our earth" internally as well as externally; for "its earthquakes tell that its heart still beats, while its fiery breath proclaims its living functions through the throats of its roaring volcanoes!"

After this there follows some rather more sensible remarks upon the wonderful nature and subtle properties of heat, which lead up to the two conjoined mysteries—What is heat? and What is God? Heat is the effect of a "secret power, and there is no other power." Therefore, evidently that one and only power is the one and only power that "heats and changes" and vivifies and governs all things. Q. E. D.

Having shown by this "clear manifestation" that God is heat, our author next turns to the New Testament and finds that "God is light" (1 John i., 5). Not that Moses and John knew that God was literally light and heat. No; they were only "in the track of truth, but neither of them gave that particular truth the full force" which it was reserved to our reverend author to impart to it by the power of his incisive genius and celestial inspiration. The thoughts of the inspired writers "from Genesis to Revelation" were but "struggling towards a goal" now happily attained in the pages of the all-enlightening work before us. God cannot be a person—the glory of the clear moon and the lustre of the pure stars, the waves of the deep sea and the peals of the lofty thunder, have forced that truth on our poetical parson; so God must be heat, because each and both are a secret power and an "undefinable mystery," and a "great fact," as life also is a "great fact" and a "real thing." Light is emitted, he tells us, from putrefying fish, and the sun in sending us our daylight, which

is probably "electric fire," "gives us a daily proof of the great spirit's vigorous contact with a prodigious mass of matter." The sun is apparently electrified white-hot by rubbing with God's wings or by collision with God, who then manifests himself as the heat and light of which he is composed. "Light is God." Heat is God. And these appear to be the scientific trinity of the newly-discovered theology.

With the help of his God and his own improvements on the Bible, the Rev. J. Longland can reveal to us wonderful facts concerning a supposed infinite and almighty being. But tested by smaller matters he is an incorrigible noodle, wiser in his own conceit than a thousand scientific men, who can give good reasons for the beliefs that are in them. He tells us that light and heat draw out the colors of flowers, and at the same time "it is really the hydrogen (!) gas contained in the atmosphere that imparts the colors to vegetation." This discovery of hydrogen gas in the atmosphere, and of its effect on vegetation, shows a happy imbecility of intellect that would unfit the reverend defender of the faith for any business where reason and accuracy were required. He wants to correct his antiquated books of science by his discovery of the five primary colors that make up the light which is God—namely, red, blue, yellow, black, and white. He has not yet heard that the primaries are red, green, and violet, and he deliberately chooses not to believe that black is no color and that white is a mixture of them all. Space, according to him, is alive. He says: "The undying vitality that fills all space never alters." I suppose his friends consider him harmless.

In his pickings and re-coining of scientific fragments this new theologian has taken no notice of the great scientific theory which treats light, heat, sound, and electricity as only varying and interchangeable modes of motion. If God is heat, he is only motion—only an attribute of matter, and non-existent independently of matter. He is destitute of intelligence, will, and freedom, and is a mere blind slave to circumstances. The supposition that God is fire would justify the Parsees in worshipping fire and adoring the sun. It is felt to be an insult to deity, and believers evidently will not endure it. So our theological showman draws back. He acts like the cow who after giving a pail of milk kicks it over. He revokes his brilliant discovery of the identity of deity with incandescence. After all God is not exactly heat, seeing that orthodoxy might make it only too hot for a parson who did not soften down so blasphemous a doctrine. God only "proximates all heat, fire, and light." "All the work of the universe is forged by him through the heat, the fire, and the light of his presence." "Heat is evidence of God in the first degree"—a statement which enables us to understand the frequent burning of heretics in religious ages, and the godly warmth of fierce-tempered bigots.

With the only point worth noticing, thus withdrawn after all in spite of its tolerably bold advancement, the book sinks to the ordinary level of dulness attained by prosy sermons, and is worthy no further word of either praise or blame. W. P. BALL.

THE TREASURY OF DAVID.

CHRISTIAN England indulges an egotistical vanity by sending missionaries to correct the notions held by some that the earth is supported on the back of a somewhat over-sized elephant, which in its turn rests on an overgrown tortoise. But who will say that David had a worthier conception when he speaks of God "who laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed for ever,"—words which seem to suggest that our planet rests on solid masonry, which never moves in space. It is remarkable that those theories which Christians laugh at most, are really the nearest akin to the infantile fancies advanced by David and poetasters of his ilk. The elephant is appropriate enough as a symbol of strength, and as to the tortoise, if the earth rested upon one it would not be "removed" very fast. Hence David and the heathen are in reasonable agreement. But Jesus the son of David said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away:" thus did he come to fulfil the law of contradiction. In Asaph's time "the foundations of the earth were out of course," the cement having been washed away by the flood no doubt, and it is a standing miracle that the whole earthly economy has not collapsed long since in spite of David. Yet he contradicted himself, for in Psalm cii. he is credited with saying of the earth and sky, "They shall perish." It will be seen that he contradicted himself and every one else with right royal impartiality.

The author of the Book of Proverbs, whoever he may have been, says "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, but the simple pass on and are punished," and in another place, in adverse critical tone states: "The simple believeth every word." Now *vide* David, "The Lord preserveth the simple!" The class on which the heavier punishments generally descend is the class of simpletons, and if the simple believe every word uttered by the quack, or by the Duck of Divinity, the extent of God's "preserving" operations is no doubt better imagined than described. The world is said to be a compound of folly and knavery, and the Lord knows which is the most persistent order. The child taught at its mother's knee to repeat the words,

"Pity my simplicitee
Suffer me to come to thee,"

eats some poisonous berries, dies and explodes the cracked idea that the Lord preserveth the simple. In one sense the simple are preserved, for we are confronted on every hand with the fact that the race is not extinct.

By mentally altering the punctuation of the text which adorns the Royal Exchange, the land-owning peers have 'possibly come to think that the earth is the lords'—theirs. Such seems to be their interpretation of the passage; but David runs amuck of himself and of them on this point, for in Psalm cxv., 16, neither the Lord of heaven nor the lords of earth are allowed exclusive proprietary interests in the land, for he advances this comforting doctrine—"The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men"—the people. We need not object to the foregoing—whether the possessive pronoun be made plural or left in the singular—for we make the Lord or "the lords" heartily welcome to the heaven, even the heavens, every storey of them. We are further taught in this instructive text to mind our own earthly business and leave other worldly matters to the Lord or to the aristocracy, remembering with deep humility that we have no voice in the Upper House.

To pass on to another hash, David writes: "The dead praise not the Lord. . . but we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore." That is to say, dead men praise and do not praise; for David is dead, and either deceased gentlemen do praise, or David abandoned his rash project of blessing the Lord for evermore.

New Testament saints, however, will make a quibble over the word "dead," endeavoring to show that "dead in trespasses and sins" was David's meaning, as though he knew any more of the Pauline theology than Plato did—if as much. The quackery of "spiritual death" was never dreamed of by David. In his time you could see if a man were a saint. The nonsense about being "hid with Christ in God" had not been evolved. If to be without knowledge of God is to be dead, then the heathen outside the little circle, which danced round Jehovah of the Jews, were as dead as door-nails; but yet David cries: "O, praise the Lord all ye nations, for his merciful kindness is great towards us" (the Jews). Now, according to himself, most of the "all nations" would be incapable of praise, if we allow the Calvinistic interpretation of the word "dead," which some are ready to seize upon as a defence against ridicule.

Why all the nations should praise God for his partiality to the Jews is a piece of mystery which passeth all understanding. Another diplomatic blunder on David's part was the admission that God sleeps, a fact which should qualify the scorn with which the story of Baal's slumbers is received by the orthodox. Christians are sarcastic, as Elijah is said to have been, at the idea of a fairly-lively god sleeping. Yet David thus addresses his god, "Awake! Why sleepest thou, O Lord?" And again, "Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep," and like a convivial tar that shouteth by reason of grog (Psalm lxxviii., 65). We are told that the Lord rested on the seventh day, after making a universe without materials; and he may have dozed on every seventh day ever since, which supposition will explain the futility of Sunday prayers, if Jehovah changed his day of rest with the Christians; and makes the indifference of Baal a justifiable and God-like attribute. And may we not imagine that Baal finally awoke and did "answer by fire." Baal (Hebrew *Lord*) was the most popular, if not the supreme, male divinity of the Canaanitish nations, as well as of the Carthaginians and Babylonians. The name Baal, intended to denote the lord or master of the world, was applied to the sun, as the great celestial influence, and it is only just to allow that Baal, awakening in confusion, honored Elijah's prayer—rose like a sun of righteousness with *roasting* in his wings, and forfeited the credit thereof to a rival deity, acknowledged to be as sleepy as himself. W. C. SAVILLE.

A PARSON lately called upon one of the editors of a religious journal and said, angrily, "I believe your paper would praise the Devil." Editor: "Well, we have praised you a good deal." Then followed explanations, and the incensed parson left in a very happy mood.

RETIRED GLASGOW ORATOR (to neighbor): "Did ye notice that Ward Beecher has g'ien up the doctrine o' original sin?" Neighbor: "Am surprised at ye talkin' aboot original sin. A' the men I ken hinna eneuch originality to ha'e original sin. Theirs a' copied!"

PROFANE JOKES.

MR. DEMIT is the awkwardly profane name of a Minnesota divine.

WHERE does the Bible prohibit polygamy? Where it says "No man can serve two masters."

SOMEBODY says that "a pretty woman has ruined more than one church." Yes, and more than one preacher.

AT one of the colored churches the brethren were surprised at the shortness of the contributions, but their wonder ceased when they discovered that one of the collectors had tar in the top of his hat.

THERE is a man in Warrington so mean that when he is asked to join in singing "The Old Hundredth," churns off "Ninety and Nine" instead. He says he has got to make one per cent. anyway these hard times.

A PARISH CLERK apologised to a church dignitary who had been summoned to take a service at a small village church. "I am sorry, sir, to have brought such a gentleman as you to this poor little place. A worse gentleman would have done if we had only known where to find him!"

A LITTLE fellow who had been taught to pray at evening for uncles and aunts and cousins besides his own family, one evening, when very tired, stopped after praying for father and mother, grandma and grandpa, and then remarked: "I'm not going to do any more praying outside of our own family; let them do their own praying."

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