

# THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTER.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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## CHRIST ON 'CHANGE.

*And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers.—MATT. XXI., 12.*

## OUR NEW BISHOP.

DR. FRASER having died and presumably gone to the place appointed for rich sinners, Dr. Moorhouse has come over from Melbourne to succeed him in the bishopric of Manchester. By taking a salary of several thousands a year, he is running a frightful risk of perdition. But perhaps he takes the burden of wealth in order to lighten the load of others, and incurs the danger of damnation to give them a better chance of reaching heaven.

For some months Manchester has been without a Bishop, and has not suffered in consequence. The streets are busy with traffic, cotton-spinning flourishes, the magistrates have no additional work, and nobody but a churchman feels there is anything amiss. Cottonopolis is apparently able to get on as well without a Bishop as with one, but according to law the city must have a bishop, and with a salary nearly as large as the Prime Minister's, the see is never likely to be vacant for want of candidates.

The installation of a Bishop being a long and pompous business, Dr. Moorhouse has had an opportunity of shining in London before proceeding to Manchester. Probably he feels more comfortable in Belgravia than he felt in Melbourne, where Mr. Joseph Symes appears to have been his thorn in the flesh. During his stay in London the new Bishop has preached in many pulpits. One of his sermons was on "The Risen God." It is reported in full, and occupies the place of honor in the *Christian World Pulpit*. Bishop Fraser was not an intellectual giant, but

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he never uttered, or at least he never printed, such a weak and washy flood of words. "There are very few," he says, "who disbelieve [the Resurrection] because of the defect of historical evidence." Begging his lordship's pardon, that is the very reason why multitudes *do* disbelieve. Scholarship has proved, and the fact has leaked out of expensive books into the cheap press, that the four Gospels are not the work of eye-witnesses of the miracles recorded in them. They are simply tradition, put into a literary form, not by Jews, but by Greeks, nobody knows exactly where or when. Such third and fourth-hand testimony would not now be held sufficient to prove an ordinary statement in a court of law; much less would it be held sufficient to substantiate a miracle. To say, therefore, that the "historical evidence is incontrovertible" is to ignore facts and fly in the face of common sense.

Nor is there any force in the remark that "the Resurrection is assumed as a fact" by Paul. According to the New Testament itself, Paul disbelieved the Resurrection, and treated the Nazarenes as dupes or impostors, until he fell a victim to a miracle or a sunstroke on the road to Damascus. The Resurrection was so clear a "fact," that for ten or twelve years, according to Christian writers, Paul denied it as a fiction on the very ground where it occurred. His statement in Corinthians is quite incompatible with the first chapter of the Acts, and he was such a logician (after the Damascus affair) that he made no distinction between his own vision of Christ and his bodily appearance to his disciples after the Resurrection.

Again, Dr. Moorhouse wants to know what became of Jesus's corpse. Either it was removed or he revived.

Quite so, if the Gospel story be true; but that is the very point at issue. Dr. Moorhouse speaks as though Pilate and the Sanhedrim publicly investigated the matter and found that the body of Jesus had disappeared from the tomb. But they did nothing of the sort, and the Gospel narrative of the watch at the sepulchre is one of the flimsiest myths that superstition ever invented. Irenæus, who was much nearer Jesus Christ than Dr. Moorhouse, says that the Savior lived to the age of fifty. If he did so, either the birth of Jesus must be put back nearly twenty years beyond the Christian era, or we must conclude that Jesus did not die on the cross at all, as indeed some of the early Christians maintained; and not having died there was no room for his Resurrection.

Dr. Moorhouse tells us that "the knell of materialistic philosophy has been rung in Europe." Probably that is what he heard in Australia. A year or two's residence in England will open his eyes on this subject. Materialism was never so rampant (that is the clerical word) as now. You can hardly talk to an educated man without finding that he regards "soul" as impossible or hypothetical. After centuries of suppression the body is coming to the front. Theology is left to the priests, while the men of science study the body and its surroundings, and political and social reformers strive to improve both.

Another sermon by Dr. Moorhouse is on "Education and Religious Unbelief." The title is excellent and contains a universal truth. Dr. Moorhouse does not mean it, but education and religious unbelief are inseparably connected, being indeed cause and effect. The State has resolved that national education shall flourish, and the Church must therefore accommodate itself to the fact. Consequently it now declares that education is a splendid thing, but it must be taken with theology, or it will produce most alarming effects. "We must," says Dr. Moorhouse, "take care that we retain the education of the young, if we intend our Church to have possession of the future." Exactly. But this amounts to a confession that Christianity will die unless it has the fullest opportunity of biasing the minds of children. Unprejudiced adults, especially when educated, do not accept it, and never will. While the priest poisons the child's mind with supernatural dogmas, the power of the Church is secure; but if the child is freed from the priest, the power of the Church is broken. The great battle between Christianity and progress will ultimately be fought out in the school.

"I have seen," says Dr. Moorhouse, "the desolating consequences of having only a Secular system of education, how utterly under such a system the children are ignorant of the common facts and common morality of the Bible." "Common" is a good word. Bible morality is exceedingly common, and many Bible facts are not only common but silly. As for the "desolating consequences," we presume this means that when religion is not taught in schools children grow up without a taste for church. That is indeed deplorable—to the Church. We see this more fully when we look at Dr. Moorhouse's ideal of a Christian:—"He reads God's word, frequents God's house, keeps holy God's day, and whenever he is called upon gives liberal contributions." There lies the sting of Jeremiah Moorhouse's lamentations. The "liberal contributions" are at stake, and in order to preserve them the clergy must represent society as going to rack and ruin unless it swallows their nostrums.

In the interest of true morality the Bible and all Christian teaching should be swept out of our schools. We know from experience in Sunday schools and elsewhere that children do not ponder the best parts of "the blessed book," which are beyond their comprehension; but their minds are frequently polluted and degraded by its beastly stories of bloodshed and lust. They also derive from the Bible, before they arrive at years of discretion, the falsest views of science, history, and human life. These color their whole future, and the mischief is intensified by the radically false character of Christian morality. Instead of being shown the proper basis of ethics, and having their social sympathies wisely developed, children are taught to obey the will of God unquestioningly. This makes them slaves, and the hope of heaven and the fear of hell makes them hypocrites and cowards. Fortunately this evil system is expiring. People are beginning to feel the truth so tersely expressed by Paul Bert, that every parish has its candle (the schoolmaster) and its extinguisher (the priest).

G. W. FOOTE.

## UNFULFILLED BIBLE PROPHECIES.

My subject is so extensive that in order to keep within bounds I shall confine myself for the present to prophecies in the Old Testament, and there only those not alleged to be predictions of the Messiah. The first prophecy in the Bible was that uttered by God when he commanded Adam not to eat of the tree, and said, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam, however, lived to be nine hundred and thirty years old. This day if not exactly a geological period was a pretty long one, and the case goes to show that threatened people live longest. The curse upon the serpent, who seems to have told the truth in this matter, "dust thou shalt eat all the days of thy life," is one of those predictions which will doubtless be verified upon the coming of the Lord.

Keith in his work on Prophecy instanced Noah's curse on his grandson Canaan, "a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren," as a prediction verified by negro slavery. It was very pious of Keith to attribute that abomination to God Almighty, but he forgot to prove the descent of the negroes from Canaan, he omitted to explain that there is monumental evidence that negro slavery existed before the time of Noah, and two thousand years before Genesis was written, and he was unaware that his version of the prophecy would be falsified by the negroes becoming free.

More definite was God's promise to Abraham that he would make his seed in number as the dust of the earth, and that he would give unto them "all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession (Genesis xiii., 15; xvii., 8.) But of course, everlasting does not mean lasting for ever; which is excellent news for the damned. Similar to the promise to Abraham, was that to David that the throne of his family should be established for ever (see 1 Chronicles xvii., 12, 14, 23; 1 Kings ii., 33; viii., 25,) and that the Levites should carry the ark of God and minister unto him for ever—"for ever" in the language of the Holy Ghost, like everlasting, only meaning a limited period.

When we come to the prophets pure and simple (or rather impure and obscure) we meet so rich a crop of unverified predictions that it is difficult to know where to begin. Let us first take a few, the disproof of which lies within the covers of the Bible itself. Jeremiah (xxii., 18, 19) prophesied—"Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. They shall not lament for him. . . . He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem." And again (xxxvi., 30)—"Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim, king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost." That is, he should have no honorable burial and no successor. Yet we read in 2 Kings xxiv., 6 that "Jehoiakim slept with his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead." Jeremiah prophesied that Zedekiah should behold the king of Babylon (xxxii., 4) and die in peace. We read, however, in 2 Kings xxv., 7, that the sons of Zedekiah were slain and his own eyes put out before he was taken to Babylon. Jeremiah was like the fortune-tellers who can read the stars, but never know when the policeman is coming round the corner. He found himself imprisoned as a false prophet, and, indeed, there was some warrant for the charge. Amos, too, ventured to foretell a violent death by the sword to Jeroboam (vii. 11), notwithstanding which he died in peace (2 Kings xiv. 29).

Isaiah gives the reins to his imagination. In the name of the Lord he declares that the judges of Israel shall be restored as at first, that all nations shall go to Jerusalem, where the Lord shall judge them; and "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (chap. ii., 4). A grand prophecy, but it hasn't happened yet. Other prophets had different ideals. Malachi, instead of making the Gentiles worship Jahveh at Jerusalem, prophesies they shall offer up incense to his name in every place (i., 11). Joel reverses the words of Isaiah, and says: "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears" (iii., 10). "And in that day," says the prophet, who seems to have had the ancestral love for polygamy, "seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our

reproach." That is, they would require neither food nor raiment, but only marriage. "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night" (chap. iv.). "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (xi., 6). This poetry has not yet been translated into fact. As Dickens said, when the leopard lies down with the kid the kid is *inside*. Joel (ii., 31) declares that the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood; but Isaiah prophesies that "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold" (xxx., 26); and afterwards, that "all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll" (xxxiv., 4). "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light" (lx., 19). Those who try to walk by the light of the Lord are always found stumbling into ditches. We suppose they are blind from excess of light. In the prophecies of Ezekiel whole chapters are given prescribing what shall take place upon the restoration of the Jews, and these even Christians believe are yet to be fulfilled, although they include the restoration of all the sacrifices and the prohibiting of the uncircumcised entering the sanctuary. Haggai prophesied that the glory of the second temple should be greater than that of the first (ii., 9). Josephus, however, says that it was sixty cubits lower (Antiq. xv. xi., 1). It was certainly not so richly embellished as Solomon's temple was fabled to have been, and it wanted the ark, the mercy seat, and the Shechinah. Perhaps the most decidedly unfulfilled prophecy of all is that of Zephaniah iii., 13, which promises that "the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity nor speak lies."

J. M. WHEELER.

## ACID DROPS.

CARDINAL MANNING signs his name to a contribution to the *Contemporary Review*, entitled "The Child of the English Savage," a compilation of cases of cruelty and immorality brought under the notice of the Society for the Protection of Children. It opens with the astounding statement that Christianity created the sanctity of home and the charities of domestic life. Why, we doubt if worse cases than those recorded were known to the heathen world. Where has Christianity been to allow such savagery to grow up in our midst? It was the Pagan Cornelia who, when others boasted of their treasures, called in her children, saying "These are my jewels." It was the heavenly-inspired Solomon who said that to spare the rod was to spoil the child. It was the divine law of Moses which declared that a stubborn and rebellious son should be stoned to death. It was the prophet Elisha who cursed little children for mocking him, whereupon the Lord sent she-bears that killed forty-two of them. It is in religious schools, and especially in nunneries, that the worst cruelties go on at the present day.

PREACHING in Perth, Dr. A. K. H. Boyd said that music prepared the soul for uplifting spiritual influences. At this moment the brass band of the Salvation Army marched past in full blast, causing a general titter among the congregation. Dr. Boyd explained that this was not the sort of music he meant.

A CLERGYMAN delivered a sermon in which he warned his hearers of the speedy end of all things, and closed with an appeal for a liberal contribution to build the new church tower.

How Christianity has changed. At its outset it was supposed to be the gospel of the poor and lowly. Now the *Church Times*, in an article entitled "The Attraction of Anglicanism," boasts that "the bulk of the wealthy and titled classes" are ranged on the side of the Church, while Puritanism has never been able to fix its hold on the educated classes, nor to retain the affections of those reared within its own fold when they have once reached a certain intellectual level. No doubt there is some truth in this. If, however, we look to Scotland we shall find that there the bulk of the wealthy and titled classes are ranged on the side of Puritan Presbyterianism, as represented by the Scotch Established Church. This is the secret of the whole matter. The Established Church with its abundant loaves and fishes for the privileged classes can always range on its side those whose families and friends share in the spoil.

SAINT TALMAGE, of course, knows all about heaven, and he is not above communicating his knowledge to his congregation. Addressing the women, he comforts them with the news that there will be no cooking and mending and household drudgery

in heaven. Men "never hunger there, and consequently there will be none of the nuisances of catering for appetites. And in the land of the white robe they never have to mend anything, and the air in that hill country makes everybody well. There are no rents to pay; every man owns his own house, and a mansion at that."

BUT the Bible speaks of "angel's food" (Psalm lxxviii., 25), and Milton, who was almost as great a man as Talmage, represents the angels as having capital appetites and enjoying good square meals. But the victims of "domestic martyrdom" whom Talmage gulls with his assurances of a paradise of idleness, don't read Milton, and won't be troubled with the contradictions of the information derived from saints. They will console themselves with Talmage's declaration: "Some of the brightest thrones of heaven will be kept for Christian housekeepers. Oh, what a change from here to there—from the time when they put down the rolling-pin to when they take up the sceptre!"

TALMAGE also promises them all carriages in the celestial regions as well as thrones, but he warns the rich ladies that the luxury will not seem so delicious to them as to the poorer classes. "It will not be so great a change for you to have a chariot in heaven if you have been in the habit of riding in this world. . . . But if you have walked with tired feet in this world, what a glorious change to mount celestial equipage; and if your life on earth was domestic martyrdom, oh, the joy of an eternity in which you shall have nothing to do except what you choose to do!"

TALMAGE deals with the celibacy of Jesus in the following curiously mixed way: "Jesus was never married that he might be the especial friend and *confidante* of a whole world of troubled womanhood. I blunder; Christ *was* married. The Bible says that the Church is the Lamb's wife, and that makes me know that all Christian women have a right to go to Christ and tell him their annoyances and troubles, since by his oath of conjugal fidelity he is sworn to sympathise."

AFTER relating some instances of clerical stupidity and bad temper, the *Boston Mercury* says that the English Church will fall "by its own senile decay."

"A CURATE," writing in the *Rock*, maintains that Genesis is marvellous in its "substantial but not scientific accuracy." He says that "Scripture is perfect for the purpose for which it is written," and if we bear this in mind "we are delivered from the laborious task of harmonising Genesis with recent physical researches—a task to which even Mr. Gladstone has lately proved unequal." How then are we to test the Bible if untruthfulness is no drawback? If inspiration adopts current falsehoods, how are we to distinguish between the true and false in its records; and what is the special value of such a mixture? If God will speak untruly in matters where we can detect the untruth, does he thereby prove his strict veracity in statements which we cannot examine and verify for ourselves? Is exposed falsehood a guarantee of future truth? The magniloquent conclusion of our "Curate" after the confessions he makes is typical of the baseless self-glorification in which religion always indulges. He declares as the final result of the plain exposure and the lame explanation that "In simplicity, grandeur, and truth alike, Genesis is an unceasing monument of the manifold wisdom of God in providing for the religious wants of mankind in every age."

THE Rev. H. Hunnings, chaplain of the South Hants Royal Infirmary, was expecting dismissal on the ground of bad health. Belief in Christ so comforted him in his trouble that he committed suicide by taking a dose of cyanide of potassium.

BIBLICAL scholars are aware of an important mistranslation in 1 Tim. iii., 16. The words "God was manifest in the flesh" of the Authorised Version are not in the two most ancient manuscripts. Instead of *θεός, God*, they read *ος, who*. The Revised Version accordingly reads "He who was manifested in the flesh." A writer in the *Rock*, however, points out that it only needed a stroke across the o "to establish our Lord's divinity." Just so. And this is probably what some copyist has done. But just fancy our Lord's divinity resting upon whether a transcriber of manuscript omitted or inserted a stroke!

THIS May pilgrims are flocking in large numbers to the Holy House at Loretto, in Italy, this being one of the prescribed means by which Pope Leo XIII. offers the special indulgence of this jubilee year. Of course the pilgrims have to pay for their curiosity in visiting the birthplace of the Savior, which, when the infidel Mohammedans took possession of Palestine, was—for the satisfaction of believers—transported bodily through the air, first to Dalmatia and then to the Papal States. A full exposure of the whole pious fraud is given in No. VI. of *Crimes of Christianity*.

WE read in a Christian journal of Mr. Moody "preaching once every day in a colored church," and thus solving the "colored question." Whether this colored church was red, or blue, or yellow, we are not told. Perhaps it was scarlet, as the favorite

hue of the Lady of Babylon, according to Protestant ideas; and the colored congregation would probably be green—until they found themselves done brown. To call black people "colored" seems to us an absurdity, for black is the absence of all color.

WHY should there be a colored question, or a colored difficulty, when negroes and whites are brother Christians? If the white Christians believe what they profess, they should mingle freely with their black brethren in Christ.

FLORA SETTERFIELD, one of the "hallelujah lasses" of the Salvation Army at Canterbury, has been committed for trial on charges of stealing a large quantity of wearing apparel and a cheque for £5 odd, the property of Major Obbard, of Bridge, in whose employ she had been as domestic servant. Prisoner, when apprehended, was found wearing some of Mrs. Obbard's under-clothing, and a woman at whose house she lodged after running away from her situation deposed to cashing the cheque for her. This witness being herself a Salvationist, no questions were asked by the tradesman who cashed it.

THERE is likely to be a split in the Salvation Army. "Major" Corbridge and "Colonel" Day are in rebellion against the despotism of its autocrat and are under dismissal. The "Southern Division of the Army" is said to endorse the action of these leaders, and many "officers" threaten to desert Booth and join a new organisation.

A CORRESPONDENT who listened last Sunday on Clerkenwell Green to a lecture by Mr. Batchelor, an agent paid by the Christian Evidence Society to abuse its opponents, gives us some specimens of the linguistic crudities indulged in by these bright examples of Christian culture. The chairman invited "any of his Secularist friends as was present" to come and "argue the Scriptures what would be brought forwards." The lecturer, speaking of the days when Almighty God was said to have failed to assist Judah effectively, etc., informed people "the Infidels in them days was just like what they are now." "They says," "I have took the trouble," "Voltaire has wrote," and similar grossly inaccurate expressions were indulged in *ad nauseum*. Our correspondent commends this to Mr. Engstrom's attention.

H. A. COLVILLE is conducting a Church mission at Florence in the Potteries. In a gushing circular to the inhabitants, he says that we are living in strange times, which is obvious to anybody who listens to H. A. Colville. Nothing, he says, but "a revival of true godliness will save our country from the spread of the increasing infidelity and perhaps a revolution." He then advises his "friends" to "break up your fallow ground." This is meant in a religious sense, and is not an allusion to Mr. Bradlaugh's Land Cultivation Bill. In conclusion he asks them to pray "that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly." This appears to us a highly superfluous prayer; it is like asking for rain in a thunder-storm. The evangelist's mouth will always open boldly while there is a chance of obtaining anything to put into it.

ANOTHER instance of the happy effect of religion. Kate Edith Callow, of Hackney, has drowned herself in the River Lea. According to the evidence at the inquest, she had been "brought up very religiously." So far as her relatives knew, she had nothing to trouble her. But the strong doses of religion had turned her brain. She suffered under the delusion, which is by no means uncommon among fervent Christians who realise the doctrines of original sin and hell-fire, that she was irretrievably bad, and had wandered hopelessly from her heavenly father. There are hundreds of persons similarly deluded in our lunatic asylums. The Christian Evidence Society might address itself to this subject. Why not offer a prize for the best essay on Religion and Suicide?

ANOTHER girl, Elizabeth Ashley, aged twenty-one, has committed suicide. The mother of the girl stated that her daughter had been confined in a lunatic asylum at Portsmouth through religious excitement.

YET a third case is that of Emily Chalk, spinster, aged 43, who committed suicide by drinking carbolic acid. The medical man said he had attended her for some time and found her depressed in mind and suffering from melancholia through religion. The jury returned a verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind." What a blessed thing is religion. No doubt if believers realised that their chances of salvation must be extremely small there would be a much larger crop of suicides than there are.

A MISS BURNS, a spiritist medium, falsely calling herself a relative of the editor of the *Medium and Daybreak*, has been convicted for stealing at Keighley.

THE *Church Times*, reviewing Canon Wilberforce's *Trinity of Evil*, declares that a person who, like the Canon, plays fast and loose with our blessed Lord's own words and acts in respect to the use of fermented wine in the sacrament, is hardly the person to write against "Infidelity." "If infidelity means anything, it must surely include an unwillingness to accept our Blessed

Lord's word and actions in their entirety, and a claim to the right of twisting these words and actions so as to suit their own personal fancies." This it accuses Canon Wilberforce of doing.

THE Rev. W. Reece Heal compares the sceptics and doubters of the present age to unbelieving St. Thomas. There is this great difference. According to John, Jesus supplied Thomas with the evidence he required. He offered him nothing less than the evidences of his own senses that a miracle had been performed. Modern sceptics are offered no evidence at all, but are asked to believe simply because others believe.

THE Rev. O. J. Reichel, vicar of Bansholt, Berks, was singularly ill-advised in bringing a criminal action for libel, and for endeavoring to extort money by threats of exposure, against Mrs. Niblett, keeper of a lodging house in which the reverend gentlemen had lived with his housekeeper Caroline King, the couple passing under the assumed names of Mr. and Mrs. Rice. Under cross examination the reverend prosecutor had to admit that the alleged libel was perfectly true, that fourteen years ago he took Caroline King for a day's excursion to Stratford-on-Avon, and then seduced her, and that she had had two children, but he was not sure that he was their father. He had also taken lodgings for her in London and visited her as Mrs. Ringley, and had been on the continent with her. Mrs. Niblett said that "Mrs. Rice" had gone away leaving twenty-seven shillings due for her board, and this was why she wrote to the vicar threatening public exposure if he did not settle the bill. The jury naturally enough acquitted the accused. The parson in this case has shown himself a vindictive fool. He has brought on his own head full publicity and proof of his own immorality and hypocrisy. Nevertheless he will go on preaching and praying to God and his flock, who will put up with it all with Christian equanimity. Couldn't the Church drum him out as rogues are from the army? The Church evidently don't dare to begin the process—there is no knowing when it would end.

THE Wesleyan Missionary Society report a deficiency of nearly £5,000. One of these leading men says "either God is going too fast or we are going too slow." As they are going faster than their means will allow we suppose the fault is Jehovah's.

WE see by the *Temperance Record* that at a recent Exeter Hall meeting a Scotch sky-pilot acknowledged his own country to be the most drunken and the most religious on earth. This is quite natural. The more religion a man has the less he thinks, and as a rule, the less he thinks the more he drinks. Of course, there are many Scots who are neither religious nor drunken; but with the national Sabbath and the national mistrust of what other people consider innocent enjoyment, it must be very hard for the godly to resist John Barleycorn.

WE see that Messrs. Elliot Stock and Co. are publishing for the benefit of Sunday-school teachers a *Handbook of Biblical Difficulties*, edited by Rev. Robert Tuck. If the difficulties are stated fully and fairly, we have no doubt the work will be an eye-opener to many who have hitherto supposed there were no difficulties in the word of God.

#### MR. GERALD MASSEY ON "THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND THE MYTHICAL CHRIST."

LECTURING at St. George's Hall last Sunday afternoon, Mr. Massey remarked that the only historical Jesus was the one of the Talmud—Joshua ben Pandera, pupil of Rabbi Joshua ben Perachia, who, in the reign of King Jannaeus, went with his master to Egypt, learned magic, and was finally hanged on the eve of the Passover. This was the Jesus known to Celsus, and of whom he says: "I could relate many things quite different to those believed among Christians," and his genealogy from Pandera was given in the pedigree of Jesus by Epiphanius, in the fourth century (see the *Jewish Life of Christ*). Joshua ben Pandera, the historical Jesus, was, however, distinct from Christ. The one was human, the other divine—that is, mythical. Mr. Massey then gave evidence that the birth of the mythical Messiah from a Virgin Mother was depicted on the walls of Luxor sixteen centuries B.C., and cited numerous passages from the Litany of Ra and other sacred Egyptian writings to show that essentially the same story as that of the Gospels formed part of the Egyptian mysteries. The birth in the manger, the salutation by the magi, Horus as the child of twelve, Horus as the anointed one of thirty years, Jesus in his baptism, walking on the water, multiplying bread, casting out demons, and as the vicarious mediator for man, were all shown to have pre-existed in Egypt. "From the descent of the Holy Ghost to overshadow Mary, to the ascension of the risen Christ at the end of forty days, according to the drama of the pre-Christian mysteries, the subject-matter, characters, events and sayings bear the impress of the mythical mould instead of the stamp of human history. Right through the ideas which shape the history were pre-extant, and are identifiably pre-Christian; and so we see the strange sight to-day in Europe of a hundred thousand Christians masquerading in a pantomime of Paganism." The lecture, which was well received by a large audience, is to be followed by one next Sunday on "The Teachings assigned to Jesus," and on May 23 by one on "The Mystery of Paul and his Christ."

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, May 16, Milton Hall, Hawley Crescent, Kentish Town, London, N., at 7.30.

MAY 16, Milton Hall; 23 and 30, Hall of Science, London.

JUNE 6, Oldham; 13, N. S. S. Conference; 20, Milton Hall; 27, Ball's Pond.

## 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.
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- RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—C. E.
- J. RAE.—“Freethought Gleanings” will be useful in your debate.
- W. WEST asks, “What do you think of Archdeacon Dennison?” We don't think of him.
- LOUIS COLEMAN (36 Carter Gate, Newark) thanks the Glasgow friend for the parcel of Freethought literature which he had distributed in his district.
- G. L.—Thanks for the trouble you have taken in the matter.
- FITZ.—Shall appear.
- W. PROSSER.—Thanks. See “Acid Drops.”
- H. P. BOWDEN thinks that petitions against the Blasphemy Laws should be pushed as far as possible among Christians. Our friends might take the hint and procure the signatures of their orthodox acquaintances.
- H. P. B. asks whether there is any Freethought commentary on the New Testament. We know of none, although such a work, if carefully and thoroughly done, would be very useful.
- G. WARD.—Thanks for the correction. We had noticed the slip ourselves. It is so easy to blunder over a name in the heat of speech.
- “POOR DAVIE.”—It may serve as a hint, but the sketch is too rough to serve for reproduction.
- R. W. HARDING, referring to our paragraph of last week, says that, in addition to Mr. Trumper's discourses, the Hackney Branch of the N. S. S. conducts an open-air station in Victoria Park. We are glad to hear it, but the information was not before us when the paragraph was written.
- A. LEWIS writes flatteringly of the article on “Social Dreams” in *Progress*, and hopes it will not be allowed to go out of print.
- J. COLE writes that the Bethnal Green Branch of the N. S. S. is very successful with the open-air propaganda in Cambridge Road on Sunday mornings, and a newsagent is in attendance to sell the *Freethinker* and other Secular publications. J. C. adds, “we could do with one or two big lectures, and only wish we could get them.” Is this a broad hint? As a matter of fact, although Mr. Foote is working at high pressure, he is half inclined to strain a point this summer and give a turn to some of the chief open-air stations.
- C. H. F.—Thanks for the cuttings. Mr. Laing's *Modern Science and Modern Thought* is now published at 7s. 6d. We should like to see it at a third of that price.
- W. T. LEEKEY informs us that the North London Branch of the N. S. S. have arranged for continuous lectures at the Midland Railway Arches on Sunday mornings.
- E. M.—Many thanks for the cuttings. They are always welcome. We agree with your wishes for harmony. The enemy is too strong for Freethinkers to be divided with impunity.
- R. SPENCER.—Next week.
- F. S. MOSTWORTHY.—Hardly up to the mark for reproduction.
- J. S.—Received with thanks. Pleased to hear that the *Freethinker* is now exhibited for sale in Reading. If the local sky-pilots boil over with rage, it shows that our pictures tell.
- HOLY GHOST.—Some of your points are good, but the paper is too long for our space.
- R. E. FARMER (Longton) writes: “I am proud to see the spirit with the *Freethinker* is conducted. . . . I always leave the papers, when I have read them, where they may spring a leak in the bark of superstition.”—Our correspondent asks whether we can recommend him any work against the theory of man's innate belief in God. We know of none, but a study of Tylor's *Primitive Culture* and Lubbock's *Origin of Civilization* will show how religious ideas arise among ignorant savages, and are transmitted as divine revelations to more enlightened people.
- W. SCHWITZER.—Mr. Foote will fix a date and write to you in a few days.
- J. CLARKE.—*Death's Test* will shortly be issued with additions bringing it down to date.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—Railway Signal—Christian—Ironclad Age—Liberal—Rationalist—Cambria Daily Leader—Aberdeen Free Press—Helmet—Sunday Chronicle—Reading Observer—Pittsburg Truth—Surrey Times—Essex Weekly News—Republican—Weekly Dispatch—Dublin Evening Mail.
- 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.

LAST Monday evening, for the first time, the use of the Hall of the Working Men's Club at Wellingborough was granted to the local branch of the N. S. S. The place was crowded beyond all expectation, the surrounding towns and villages being well represented. Mr. Foote lectured on “Will Christ Save Us?” and there was a lively discussion. The most twaddling opponent was a skimpy member of the Salvation Army, who sang rather small, although he had been heard to declare that the editor of the *Freethinker* deserved, not twelve months', but twelve years' imprisonment. The Wellingborough branch includes a number of hard-headed and warm-hearted working men, and it was pleasant to witness their enthusiasm and to hear how they had overcome their difficulties.

THERE was a little delay in printing Mr. Foote's new pamphlet, *Gladstone's Irish Stew*, and many intending purchasers were unfortunately disappointed. It is, however, on sale now, and is written right up to date.

*Is Secularism True?* is now ready. It contains a verbatim report, revised by both disputants, of the second two-nights' debate between the Rev. Dr. McCann and Mr. Foote. The whole four night's debate will also be published in one cover at a shilling. The volume will be ready next week.

WE are asked to announce that Miss Thornton Smith lectures this evening (May 16) at the Monarch Coffee Tavern, Bethnal Green Road, at 8.30, on “Creation Stories,” and the Bethnal Green Branch of the N. S. S. hopes for a large attendance.

THE Shelley Society's performance of “The Cenci” at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on the 7th inst., was an unqualified success. A more distinguished company never, perhaps, assembled in front of an English stage. Robert Browning and George Meredith were present, with at least two thousand men and women of less mark in literature and art. Mr. Herman Vezin gave a masterly, though scarcely ideal, personation of the terrible *Cenci*; and Miss Alma Murray showed high faculty as *Beatrice*, a part which taxes the physical and mental powers in a very high degree. There was also much quiet force in Mr. Outram's *Orsino*. The performance was a private one, admission being by ticket only, as the Lord Chamberlain would not license the play. He is willing to let the public see fine women stripped nearly naked on the stage, but the idea of their listening to Shelley's magnificent blank verse was too shocking to be entertained.

WHETHER “The Cenci” is a good acting play or not depends on taste. Those who like plenty of exciting situation will say No; while those who like enough situation to exhibit character may say Yes. But the greatness of the work is indisputable. The mind almost succumbed under four hours of such splendid diction and imagery. Compared with what one usually hears at the theatre, Shelley's lines were like an archangel's song beside the screechings of an imp. After all criticism the fact remains that the one great play written since the age of Shakespeare was written by the atheist Shelley.

MR. PETER RYLANDS has given notice of a motion for excluding the Bishops from the House of Lords.

THE *Contemporary Review* for May has a slashing attack upon the Quarterly Reviewer of the Revised Version (understood to be Dr. Burgon, the Dean of Chichester) from the pen of Dr. Perowne, the Dean of Peterborough. Dr. Perowne accuses the reviewer of not being able to read or write Hebrew. One notable admission is that Azazel, erroneously rendered “scapegoat” and often instanced as a type of the blessed Savior, in the Authorised Version of Leviticus xvi., is simply “an evil spirit inhabiting the wilderness, and that consequently the direction here given seems in some measure to sanction a superstitious belief.” This was pointed out in “Notes on the New Old Testament” in our columns for July 5 last year.

VOL. XX. of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* which has just been issued contains several articles of interest to Freethinkers. The one on Psalms, by Professor Robertson Smith, overthrows the theory of the Davidic origin of the collection and while assigning the bulk to the fourth century B.C. places the latter portion in the time of the Maccabees in the second century B.C. An article on Quakers, by Sir Edward Fry, gives their diminishing numbers at 15,219. George Saintsbury writes on Rabelais, not very satisfactorily. The subject of Rationalism has been entrusted to the Rev. J. F. Smith, who deals simply with German rationalism, with but the slightest mention of the English school. The important subject of the Reformation is dealt with by J. Bass Mullinger, and that of the Renaissance (a most competent sketch) by J. Addington Symonds.

A MOST important article is that on “Religions,” by Professor C. P. Tiele. It well deserves separate publication. Religions are here treated on the scientific method of comparative history,

Professor Tiele attempts what he calls a genealogical classification of religions, in which they are grouped according to their proved or probable descent and affinity. In these tables Judaism and Christianity and Mohammedanism take their place as branches of the old Semitic religion, while Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism and Parseeism, as well as the ancient religions of Greece, Rome, Scandinavia and Slavonia, are traced to the early Aryan religion. African, Mongolian, Aboriginal American and Polynesian religions remain, and are dealt with on the comparative method. The stages of religious development are characterised as—(1) polydæmonistic magical tribal religions under the influence of animism; (2) purified magical religions in which the spirits are usually considered in animal form; (3) anthropomorphic polytheism; (4) religions founded on sacred writings, and subduing polytheism more or less by pantheism or monotheism; and lastly, universal religions, of which Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism are the only specimens.

THE French Government has established a School of Religious Science, under the direction of Professor Sabatier. If religion is to be taught at all, it should be studied comparatively. Nothing gives a surer death-blow to the exclusive claims of one religion than acquaintance with the rival claims of others.

THE *Christian* gives the following from an aged missionary in India: "Comparatively few Europeans now make any profession of godliness. But knowledge is increasing, and Christianity is more and more regarded as one sect among many; or, rather, a multitude of sects, each with its peculiar caste customs. The form that education is now taking, under the auspices of our Universities, deserves the attention of the friends of missions at home. It is absurd, mischievous, and now to a large extent, antagonistic to the Gospel."

MR. SAMUEL LAING'S *Modern Science and Modern Thought* has reached a third edition which contains a supplemental chapter dealing with Mr. Gladstone's "Dawn of Creation," and the Rev. H. Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World."

THE Manchester *Sunday Chronicle* deserves support if only for such bold articles as those on "Freethought" and "Idolrous England" which have recently appeared in its editorial columns.

THE Central London Branch of the N. S. S. invites the ladies and gentlemen who formed the Committee for the children's excursion last year to meet at the Hall of Science on Sunday next, after the lecture, to form a Committee for the coming excursion.

A MADRAS paper having supplied its readers with an extract from Canon Wilberforce's "Trinity of Evil," the *Thinker* reprints Mr. Foote's reply to that work from our columns.

It is announced that the Japanese intend sending Buddhist missionaries to Europe and America to preach Buddhism and convert the Christian heathen. We do not know if the announcement is true, but we are quite sure there are a few just now inside Exeter Hall as well as without whose conversion to the reasonable and tolerant doctrines of Gautama is devoutly to be wished.

THE May number of *Knowledge*, which is now published by Messrs. Longman at the increased price of sixpence, is replete with matter of interest to Freethinkers. Mr. Proctor leads with a paper on "The Worship of Planets," in which he says, "As that exceedingly religious rhyme-writer Robert Montgomery did not hesitate to invite Deity to 'pause and think,' so the medicine men of olden time were ready to request the sun and moon to stand still, and either persuaded themselves or tried to persuade others that on occasion even such bold prayers as this has been answered." Mr. Proctor also contributes an interesting paper on "Mind Acting on Body," and some lively Gossip. Mr. Clodd continues "The Story of Creation: a plain account of Evolution," dealing with present life forms. "How the Bible Came to Us," by a Student of Divinity, is thoroughly rationalistic, and indeed, declares that if the book of Jude is inspired so is the book of Enoch, which Jude quotes as authoritative. There is also a translation of M. Lenormant's "Analysis of the Book of Genesis."

### IS GOD THE DEVIL?

THE editor of the *Christian Commonwealth* has sufficient personal acquaintance with the Devil to be able to assure us that His Satanic Majesty is "a great coward." But surely the daring angel who fought the Omnipotent himself in pitched battles in heaven would hardly be described as a coward except by petty-minded Christians who are always ready to abuse their enemies and especially ready, as it seems, to fling vulgar charges of cowardice at the enemy of whom they are so terribly afraid.

Those who wish to think justly of the Devil—and the popular saying that "the Devil is not as black as he is painted" indicates an unchristian tendency in this direction

—must remember that all our accounts of him are biased ones. His history is written by his enemy, who never allows the leader of the opposition an opportunity of defending himself and of giving his own account of his history.

Perhaps if God had allowed Satan to speak freely, or had given him one of the books of the Bible to himself, men might materially alter their opinion both of the successful competitor for the throne of the universe and of his defeated rival. As it is, free speech is denied. The Devil's defence is nowhere to be found. How then can we be sure that the best spirit won in the heavenly conflict, and that the alleged rebel whose defence is entirely suppressed, may not have been the nobler, braver and more humane being? Charges which may be only the malignant libels of the unscrupulous victor ought to count for little. The eternal enemy of free thought and free speech would naturally accuse the great conspirator against his despotic rule of all the evil possible, and would silence his reply.

If a really evil Being had won, would he not have acted as God has done? Would he not claim to be supreme over morality, while at the same time he pretended to be its great promoter and only patron? Would he not profess attractive virtues without the reality, and seek to disguise the fiendish malice of his acts on earth and of his eternal vengeance hereafter as everlasting righteousness? And would he not try to transfer the blame for his own crimes to the head of his opponent? How then are we to know that the Bible God is not the Evil Being in disguise, and that his indomitable foe the Devil is not a Prometheus still bound, a Radical before his time, a defeated Garibaldi or Mazzini kept in the dungeons of a greater than Bomba? To those who believe in God and Devil this question of the intrinsic goodness or badness of their God should be a most serious one. It has troubled believers before now. The poet Blake, who in his mystical way was a truly fervent Christian, condemned all the ordinary religions, including orthodox Christianity, as embodiments of evil or the principle of vengeance, "and," said he, "their God is Satan named by the divine name." One of the first things Christians should do is to inquire whether their God is not an Evil Being, whether he is not an actual or moral usurper, a demon, a scheming and mendacious fiend in disguise.

As the only source of information open to us in investigating this matter is the Word of God, uncorrected by any Word of the Devil, we must expect to discover only such indications of the diabolical nature of the Christian God as he felt it unnecessary to conceal, and such unsuspected signs of the Devil's moral superiority as the stupidity and intrinsically immoral nature of the Christian God allowed to pass the divine censorship unchallenged.

God's own Bible shows that in many respects he is the Devil's inferior. The Devil introduced mankind to the blessings of knowledge, while God had doomed our race to ignorance. God lied when he threatened Adam with certain death on the day that he ate the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge; but the Devil spoke the simple truth when he declared he should not die. Throughout the Bible it is God, not the Devil, who curses men and revenges furiously. It is God, not the Devil, who sends storms and floods, and famine, and sword and flame. It was God, not Satan, who drowned the human race and all living things. It was God, not Satan, who ordered Moses to kill the Midianitish babes and mothers and keep alive only the young girls as a reward for the chosen cutthroats of our Father which art in heaven. It was God, not Satan, who made his people exterminate their brethren, the seven nations of Canaan, in order to steal their land. It was God who said that witches should be killed and that heretics should be stoned to death. It is God, not Satan, who is responsible for the innumerable biblical atrocities associated with the divine name and perpetrated at the divine command. It is God, not Satan, who sends disease and death into this world. It is God who drowns and starves and murders men, women and children wholesale on this earth, and who prepares a hell of everlasting torture into which he may plunge his adversary and the shrieking millions of men whom this loving God calls his own children. And this God has the blind effrontery, the crass stupidity, to boast of all this. So hopelessly brutalised is his moral nature that he glories in agonies and outrages and butcheries over which humanity shudders. Well might Shelley, in depicting the

effect of this Deity's revelations of his fiendish intentions to Moses, the fugitive slayer of the Egyptian, say: "Even the murderer's brow quivered with horror." Civilised humanity quivers with horror and with indignation over the frightful deeds of which this vaunted Lord of the Universe is so proud. Has not this God of the Bible sufficiently betrayed himself? Is it not evident that he is the real Evil One, the real Fiend if there be one? The case against the Devil at least is not nearly so black as the case against his accuser and slanderer, the Christian God.

But it will be said that God teaches good morality. Yes, some amount of sound morality he does mingle with the evil; but so do dishonest merchants mingle good things with the bad in order to cheat purchasers the more easily. The Evil One would surely be artful enough to adopt such Jesuitical means of success. Who shall guarantee that the Lamb who came to bring not peace but a sword was not a wolf in sheep's clothing? Would not a deceitful Demon pervert moral sentiment as Christianity has done? How else are we to explain the noxious exaggerations of Christ's teachings, including slavish non-resistance to evil, poverty of spirit, dastardly submission to tyrants, arrogant persecution of heretics when in power, love to scoundrels, and hatred of parents and children? The way in which Christ crushes human affections and diverts attention from real progress and happiness to myths and mockeries, indicates a Machiavellian scheme of evil rather than a system of just and true morality. Good itself is perverted into pernicious follies more inimical to progress and happiness than open vice.

Supposing the Evil One triumphant and seated on the throne of the universe, what would be more natural than that the cunning usurper should institute priestcraft and religion wherewith to subjugate men's minds and lead away as cringeing slaves the morality, the honor, the conscience, that would otherwise rebel against so unscrupulous and malicious an impostor? How effectually his priests have done this evil work all history shows. His crowning stroke is the Christianity which washes away the most awful guilt by means of the barren credulity which it enthrones as the only saving virtue, while it spurns honesty and intelligence as the only really damning vices or crimes of which human beings can be guilty.

Christians may well ponder the question of the divine diabolism. The Secularist who notes the great process of Evolution in forms of belief as in biology, ponders the question at second-hand. He studies the beliefs and cravings of credulity in others and the theologies or mythologies thence arising, and he sees that God and Satan, *divus* and devil, Zeus and Deus, Jove and Jehovah, Demon and Deity, are closely related descendants of one common stock, the supernatural beings evolved by the fears and fancies and hopes of the savage forefathers of our gradually advancing race, now emerging from the age of belief in myths and shams into the scientific age of realities, when liberty and progress shall be founded on knowledge, and credulity shall no longer be enthroned as king of virtues and the only hope of man.

W. P. BALL.

#### THE HIDDEN PAST.

(Dedicated to Messrs. Foote and Wheeler.)

TEAR down the veil that hides the past,  
Reveal the deeds of former times;  
Through tear-dimm'd eyes, apall'd, aghast,  
Let men behold a Godhead's crimes.

Depicted on that veil we see  
A life-like world of peace and joy;  
Of perfect love and harmony,  
Where want ne'er comes, nor cares annoy.

Lit by the warm refulgent beams  
Of Chaste Religion's quick'ning sun,  
The fairest period it seems  
Since Time began his course to run.

And Priests who wove that web of lies,  
And ever paint those sins anew,  
Blare forth—"The Past! The Paradise  
That medieval Christians knew;

Ere doubt had reared its curs'd head;  
When king and priest reigned side by side;  
When holy men the gospel spread  
With loving unction far and wide."

Man trained his reason to despise  
With child-like trust to bow the knee,  
Puts forth no hand—his faith-dimm'd eyes  
Delusion deem reality.

The veil is torn! See on the sight  
Burst lurid scenes of blood and death,  
Lit by the glare of crimson light  
From fires fann'd by Religion's breath.

Burnt, tortured, mutilated, maimed,  
Low lie the noble and the free,  
Whose fearless, lofty minds inflamed  
Tyrannic priests' malignity.

Borne on the smoke-clouds to the sky  
Ascend the cries of woe and pain;  
Peace, Art and Learning prostrate lie,  
And Fear and Death triumphant reign;

While God, whom every law obeys,  
Who ev'ry earthly ill could quell,  
Looks on; nor will a finger raise  
To succor those he loves so well.

Complete the work; warned by the past,  
Mankind shall shake their fetters free;  
Religion shall no longer blast  
Their hopes, their joys, their liberty.

EX-RITUALIST.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### LAST WEEK'S SKETCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

DEAR SIR,—Your artist has done me a great injustice in last week's number of the *Freethinker*. I was never such an infernal-looking cad as he has depicted me in his cartoon. I used to pride myself, when on earth, on my personal appearance—see how all the women ran after me!—and my whiskers and beard were a perfect picture. A razor never touched my skin. My Father used to shave with one that is hired. Well, Sir, my object in writing to you, in addition to protesting against being made such a horrid-looking cad by your artist—the dileneator of my features in your Christmas Number ("The Transfiguration") is nearer the mark—is to give you a plain, unvarnished statement of facts regarding the miracle illustrated in last week's issue of your valuable paper. The blind man in question was a *notorious impostor*, and had frequently got coppers out of me. One day when walking in the suburbs of Jerusalem, "far from the madding crowd," I came across the old rascal seated under a hedge, smoking a short clay and reading the Jewish *Tit-Bits*. I came upon him so quietly that he had not time to put away his pipe and paper and close his eyes. Of course he did not know me, but I knew him, and determined to be quits with him. The next time I met him in the city I offered to restore his sight. This he could not with any decency *refuse*; so I spat, with a great noise, on his left eyelid, which caused him to open both his eyes in amazement, and before he had time to say a word, I spat very skilfully into his right eye and said: "Brother, receive thy sight!" to which he replied, *sotto voce*: "All right, gov'nor; but I'm blowed if you ain't made a precious site too much mess over it." These, Sir, are the plain facts of the case, and I do not find them recorded in either of the four Gospels. To tell you the plain truth, the evangelists were a bit jealous of me. They tried one or two miracles which never came off, and they were "that wild" they did not know what to do with themselves.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

JESUS CHRIST.

Behold I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.  
Tarry till I come.

### FERGUSON DEFENCE FUND.

THE following additional subscriptions have been received:—Plymouth Branch N. S. S., 11s. 6d.; Thomas Bright, £1; Sheffield Hall of Science, 10s.; Dr. A. Walker (second subscription), 10s.; W. Snowden, 10s. Manchester: John Dutton, 1s. 6d.; J. Pearson, 1s.; — Leigh, 2s. 6d.; A. Hemingway, 6d.; Mr. B., 10s.; W. Griffiths, 4s. 6d.

"MOTHER, don't the angels wear any clothes?" asked a little girl of her mother. "No, my daughter." "None at all, mother?" "None at all." There was a pause, and the little cherub asked: "Where do the angels keep their pocket-handkerchiefs?"

"MAMMA," said a little four-year-old boy, "what do de angels do w'en dey git tired of flyin'?" "Oh, I don't know, Willie. I suppose they sit down and rest." "I dess I dot you dere, mama! De angels ain't dot anything to set on, 'cept de back of dere necks!"

PROFANE JOKES.

If the man who invented the accordion is in heaven, he will have a hard time of it dodging the men who have a mission to murder him.

A DRUNKEN parishioner was admonished by his parson. "I can go into the village," concluded the latter, "and come home again without getting drunk." "Ah, meenister, but I'm sae popular," was the apologetic reply.

"Do you allow drunken people on the train?" asked a fussy clergyman, at the station the other day. "Sometimes, but not when they are too drunk," replied the guard. "Just take a seat near the middle and keep quiet, and you'll be all right."

A LITTLE BOY caught his foot in some worsted with which his sister was working the sentence, "God is Love," in perforated cardboard, and got a crack on the ear that will lay him up for a fortnight—if it does not injure him for life.

A LITTLE half orphan, four years old, who has been taught that her papa was in heaven, and who was particularly annoyed by loud thunder one day, said: "I wish I could speak to my papa to ask God not to make so much noise up in heaven!"

"CHILDREN," asked a minister, addressing a Sunday school, "why are we like flowers? what do we have that flowers have?" And a small boy in the infant class, whose breath smelled of vermifuge, rose up and made reply, "Worms." And the minister crept under the pulpit chair to hide his emotion.

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