

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. VI.—No. 31.]

AUGUST 1, 1886.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 162.



THE LORD'S PILLAR.

“And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him. . . . And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light.”—EXODUS xiii, 19, 21.

BURNT OUT.

SEVERAL weeks ago the top floors of the building next to our office were burnt out, and we remarked that the destroying angel had probably mistaken 14A for 14 Clerkenwell Green. Apparently the mistake has been discovered and rectified. Last Friday morning our office was burnt out. Fortunately, the *Freethinker* was completely printed, and we were spared a break-down which would have been an enormous mischief. Had the fire occurred on Tuesday night, not a copy of the *Freethinker* could have been printed. We may therefore congratulate ourselves on the fact that the destroying angel chose the wrong day, although he came to the right house. Probably he saw that the paper was dated for Sunday, and fancied that Friday morning was the best time to intervene.

The fire originated in one of the floors above our office, occupied by a firm of box-makers. It spread with alarming rapidity, and although the firemen were quickly on the spot, it seized upon several adjoining and adjacent buildings. In a couple of hours it was practically extinguished, but by that time three of our five floors were completely destroyed. My office was the front room on the first floor,

and my publishing stock was stored in a room behind. Upon books and pamphlets and unprinted paper the fire played dreadful havoc, and what the fire spared the water spoiled. Such a scene of desolation is seldom visible. The floor was a mass of charred and saturated paper, and some tons fell right through a large hole in the centre to the ground floor. Scarcely a single copy of any publication was left entire, and most of the stock was absolutely beyond identification. A few reams of unprinted paper were saved from the *débris* near the window, where the fire had blazed less fiercely, but everything else was sheer ruin.

Happily Mr. Ramsay's printing plant on the ground floor was comparatively uninjured, and the machinery in the basement suffered no more than a good wetting, from which it will recover. All the type has been removed elsewhere, and the *Freethinker* is out in due time for the trade. This was not done without great exertion, but it was done, and as the paper is not stopped the loss is not irretrievable.

My personal loss is very heavy. I have, in fact, lost all the valuable publishing stock which I have been for years accumulating. All my savings were invested in it. It represented days and nights of hard work and hard thinking, years of labor and years of pain. Some people, and

especially Christians, fancy that my life is a bed of roses. They would think otherwise if they only knew how much I have to do, what responsibilities I have to bear, and how small is the pecuniary reward. But I never made that the chief consideration. In writing and publishing for the Freethought party my principal object has been to provide what was wanted. If profit came, well and good; if it did not, still well, if not so good. As a matter of fact, the profit has not been immense; and the labor, the worry, the persecution, and the imprisonment, have been very hard realities. Still, I had by reasonable economy amassed a large stock, which sold steadily, and would all have realised in time. Now it is all gone, and I have to begin again. Fortunately I am not cast down. I have gone through worse troubles before, and I may go through worse again. Barriers are made to be leapt; and, as Burke says, while the heart is sound it finds a way or makes one.

Several Companies declined to insure Mr. Ramsey or myself. They appeared to regard us as dynamite agents. Perhaps some of them remembered Sir Hardinge Giffard's observation that the stuff we produced was worse than dynamite. But at length we effected policies with the City of London Fire Insurance Company. Recently, however, there has been a dispute about a tremendously increased premium; and now, feeling the law to be on its side, the Company disclaims responsibility and refuses to pay a farthing. Whatever claim I may have is a question for my solicitor; personally I am not very hopeful of recovering anything.

My publishing business must go on, however, and I must keep Mr. Ramsey's establishment employed. He, like myself, embarked in the enterprise and invested capital, mainly in order to put the *Freethinker* and other "blasphemous" publications out of the reach of accident. While it was printed by others, the paper was never safe; the threat of another prosecution might at any moment have endangered its very existence. Yes, I must go on, and I will go on. But how?

Well, the suggestion has been made, and urged upon me, that I should appeal to my friends throughout the country for assistance. Mr. Arthur B. Moss, with touching generosity, sends in a first subscription, which he hopes will bring many others. If any readers wish to imitate his example they can do so. But I cannot press the matter. I have begged for others, but even in this emergency I shrink from begging for myself.

Another matter I can press. Much service, and some suffering, in the Freethought cause give me a right to ask, if not to command, assistance in fighting its battles. I trust I am not given to boasting, but on such an occasion, it would be something worse than modesty to ignore my claim to consideration. Many friends will be anxious to see me effectively fighting the enemy again, in book and pamphlet as well as in journal and magazine. Some of them, perhaps all of them, may be in a position to do something towards this object. Any moneys they send me will be regarded as loans, to bear five per cent. interest, and to be repaid out of the sales of fresh stock. A proper voucher will be given in each case, and the amount will be repayable on six months' notice. As fresh editions of all the principal publications burnt will be prepared, besides others that are projected, there will naturally be a good sale, and the copyright of the *Freethinker* is always a supplementary resource. Mr. George Payne, the President of the Manchester Branch, thinks there should be no difficulty in raising £500, and being a practical man he leads off with ten guineas himself.

Here I must pause. I have occupied enough of the reader's time. Next week I shall recur to the subject, though not in a leading article. Meanwhile I await the answer.

G. W. FOOTE.

GODS MANY.

"There be gods many, and lords many."—1 Cor. viii. 5.

Right you are, Paul; and a queer crew they are. The curious thing about gods is that, amid the multitudinous variety that have been set up for the worship of mankind by the various theologies, there is scarcely a decent presentable deity among the entire batch. The early Christians declared that the gods of the heathen were only demons in disguise, assuming to themselves divine worship, and most modern men will agree that the gods of early man

were little better than ugly devils. Fear formed the first gods, and disease, storms and disasters were supposed to be their handiwork. From the fetish of the savage to Jahveh of the Jews, all were propitiated with sacrifices of blood. Nothing for nothing was the rule with gods, as with men. The most refined God of the Christian is still supposed to require not only the praises and prayers of his votaries, but even the blood of his own innocent only-begotten son, that his wrath may be appeased.

Paul's own article seems scarcely to have been of a superior kind. "Our God is a consuming fire," he says. We suppose the disaster at Clerkenwell Green was a manifestation of this deity. Among other objectionable particulars which Paul supplies about his God is that he sends strong delusions that men may believe a lie and be damned, and that he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. On the whole, I would rather worship with those Athenians whose inscription "to the Unknown God" Paul found so "superstitious."

Paul's God was but a revised edition of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—a partial, jealous, cruel and capricious deity, thinking a great deal more of his apples than of his people, and caring nothing whatever for any men save those of the chosen nation. Calvin's God is of a similar character, predestinating his creatures to eternal torment or unending happiness from before the foundation of the world.

The God of the Thirty-nine Articles is an interesting individual, without body, parts or passions. He is, in fact, as close an approach to nothing as a footless stocking without any leg. The triune divinity of the Athanasian Creed is expounded so thoroughly and analysed into its component portions so exhaustively, that I feel that document, if not drawn up by the Creator himself, must at least have been composed by a very intimate acquaintance. No doubt those who understand it and refuse to believe, deserve to perish everlastingly, but my poor brains could never fathom the mystery of the Trinity. They always imperilled my soul by either confounding the Persons or dividing the Substance, so I can only hope for pardon on the score of invincible ignorance.

These gods have been going out of fashion of late, and their place supplied by a vague, nebulous kind of article, warranted to change into something fresh every time you look closely at it. A somewhat ancient and musty variety is the metaphysical god, demonstrated by *à priori* methods to exist beside the universe, but who must not be confounded with the universe itself, or anything inside it, for fear of flat Pantheism. This deity is so much like mere space that I should as soon think of praying to an empty band-box as addressing any metaphysical god I have yet become acquainted with. Paley's God, who, like a watchmaker, constructed the universe from pre-existent materials, according to designs derived from an external world, has given place to the vague deity of the scientific theist. Sometimes he is something like atoms; at another time he is like heat, light, electricity, or magnetism—a sort of deity, in fact, that has to be mastered before he can be put to any use. When looked at a little he turns out to be something unknown, that lies or does not lie behind phenomena; the luminosity of light, the aquosity of water, etc. As something distinct from phenomena, the difference between this god and nonentity is so minute that only microscopic eyes of faith can appreciate it.

Then there is Matthew Arnold's God: a stream of tendency not ourselves, that makes for righteousness. We suppose the Devil is the stream that makes for the opposite direction. "Man never knows how anthropomorphic he is," says Goethe, and despite Mr. Arnold's repudiation of, and even contempt for, the personal "non-natural magnified man" of the orthodox, it is evident, since righteousness and unrighteousness have only relation to men in society, that he is in his way as anthropomorphic as the believers in a personal deity.

All the modern deities are receding, and taking their place among the Epicurean gods,

"who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to mar
Their sacred everlasting calm!"

They are too remote for human worship. Why should we

care more for them than they care for us? Whenever did they show an eye of pity or stretch forth a hand to save? It is time we had done with the gods. They are but the expressions of our ignorance. Not one of them ever explained so much as the mystery of the life and death of a cat. Not one of them ever did a stroke of work for suffering humanity. They have taken up time, attention and devotion we could ill spare. For myself, after inspecting various samples, I have come to the conclusion I cannot afford to keep a god, and I have no need to invent one, since I fortunately possess a little goddess who, unlike any of the gods, can more than repay all my love and attention. My divinity condescends to cook my dinners and keep my home tidy.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

BROOKLYN nuns have been in the habit of sending children to New York to beg money of saloon and store-keepers. The other day the children were arrested, taken back, and the nuns warned against further violation of the vagrancy laws.

THE *Church Times* objects to the Broad Church school who would abandon those portions of Christian doctrine which conflict with science, remarking that, "on this system we should be obliged to reject the Ascension as opposed to the law of gravitation."

CANON BERNARD, who carried the diocesan treasury of Tournai over to America, was on the prosecution of the present Bishop of Tournai sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment for breach of trust. Having appealed against this judgment, he has just been sentenced to three years' imprisonment. An immediate arrest of the appellant was ordered, but the canon was not to be found.

AT Spennymoor the rifle corps were ordered to Whitworth Church last Sunday. The Anglicans went into the church while the Romanists waited outside. The parson appropriately preached on unity.

TALMAGE again! We have a few clippings before us from his discourse on "The Diet of Ashes," which would be a capital head-line for the spiritual bill of fare in his tabernacle. "Did you ever," asks the big-mouthed preacher, "meeta placid sceptic? Did you ever find a contented Atheist? Not one. From the days of Gibbon and Voltaire down, not one." Talmage evidently knows about as much of Gibbon and Voltaire as they would care to know about him. Neither of them was an Atheist. In fact, Voltaire wrote strongly against Atheism. As for placid sceptics, we could show Talmage plenty who are placid enough in a world that requires so much mending. Anyhow the idea of Talmage twitting other people with not being placid is a huge joke. He is one of the greatest fidgets in existence, and is about as placid as a monkey. Indeed Talmage's antics are a striking corroboration of the Darwinian theory.

THE Committee of the Bradford Secular Society have sent us a copy of their balance sheet to June 30. They "have pleasure" in calling attention to it, but we should imagine their sentiment is not likely to be shared by anybody who reads it. We gather that the Society rents a hall which, instead of using, it lets to other parties at a profit. The report naively says, "During the past session we have had no lectures on account of the hall having been let for other purposes." It appears that the only thing the Society has done for twelve months was to hold a tea-fight on Thomas Paine's birthday. We don't quite understand why the Committee incur the expense of printing such a mean and miserable document, but if it must publish such things we hope it will strike our name off the free-list. In conclusion we venture to suggest that the Bradford Secular Society should either do something or wind up. There is plenty of room for a good Freethought organisation in the town, and the present Society only seems to stand in the way of something better.

TWENTY-six bodies have been recovered from the ashes in the volcanic districts of New Zealand. Five children including an infant at the breast were found dead with their mother, Mrs. Hazard, who was rescued alive. What harm had these children done to Jehovah that he should take such terrible vengeance on them? They could have done nothing to hurt him or his feelings. Omnipotence cannot be at the mercy of mortal men, and his destructive work must be purely malicious. The trembling inhabitants thought the end of the world had come, and a fearful panic still prevails. Grave fears are entertained for the safety of the sundry villages which the capricious deity has spared up to the present. The township of Wairoa is ten feet deep in mud and stone.

LUNACY has increased more than fifty per cent. since 1859. We cannot expect to have a Salvation Army flourishing amongst us without paying the price for it.

IN 1593 an Act of Parliament was passed enacting "that any persons above sixteen years of age neglecting for one month to attend divine service should be sent to prison." If this Act was only enforced now all vacant pews would soon be filled, or else the prisons would do a roaring trade.

As there is no power on earth which can drag some men to church on Sundays when the weather is fine and the fish are biting keenly, so there is nothing will keep a woman from going to church when she has a new bonnet with which to astonish the congregation. What a decrease in gospel-shop attendance there would be if notices were posted up, "No bonnets allowed."

IMMEDIATELY over the name of the "Administration of India Court" in the Exhibition appears a trophy of bayonets, and among the other arrangements of small-arms bedecking the walls, the visitor will also notice that our Indian motto, "Heaven's Light our guide," is surrounded with radiating sword-bayonets. Tolerably suggestive of the facts of the case. Our administration of India is only too well illustrated in the "Heaven's Light," reflected from glittering murder-tools in the use of which Christian nations are so proficient. We should like to hear the sarcastic comments of some intelligent native upon these Christian designs in cold steel.

ALEXANDER WALKER, the secretary of the Adelaide Young Men's Christian Association has been sentenced to four years' imprisonment with hard labor for embezzling over one thousand pounds belonging to the Association. In commenting on the case, the *South Australian Register* condemns "the culpable carelessness" of the management of the Association, and at the same time thinks Walker was doubly to blame for deceiving those who trusted him and that "the sentence passed upon him was exceedingly light."

THE *Adelaide Express and Telegraph*, which also reaches us from Australia, gives, in the same issue which contains the report of the trial of the Secretary of the Y.M.C.A., a report of the committal to prison for two months' with hard labor of the Rev. Wm. Comber for obtaining money on the false pretence that he was employed by the Sydney Church Mission.

A NEWARK, N. J., church member, who says on Sunday that he is too tired to stand up in church while the hymns are sung, stood the other day, for an hour on Broad Street, waiting for a circus to come along. His neighbors say that he did not complain of being weary on that occasion.

THE South Sea Islanders have some good opportunities of studying the noble ways of Christian nations towards people weaker than themselves. The schooner "Dick" was engaged in recruiting laborers for service in Queensland—Christians don't go slave-hunting now-a-days, of course, though the stupid natives somehow don't seem to appreciate the difference. A conflict ensued between the pagans and the Christian visitors, in which several Christians were killed and many natives. The captain of the "Dick" sailed away and brought back her Majesty's ship "Opal," which, under the divine blessing duly shelled the village, killed all the natives who came in sight, and burned their houses. The jewel of a ship belonging to her Majesty the Defender of the Faith then went to Lendara Island to repeat the thoroughly Christian performance. Of course the islanders are always in the wrong in these little affairs. When a heathen kills a slave-hunting Christian it is murder; when a Christian kills the population of a village it is justice: any civilised being knows that. And of course there is no hypocrisy in pretending to love our enemies and turn the other cheek while thus converting the wicked islander from the error of his ways by our beautiful examples of gentle Christian love displayed in bursting shells and showers of bullets from Gatling guns.

THE congregation of the Rev. Mr. Reid, of Savock, Scotland, has fallen from 800 to 45. The case against him, which was abandoned two years ago for want of sufficient evidence, has been opened again, the parishioners demanding clear proof of his innocence as to the paternity of a child by a girl who was formerly a boarder in his house.

ANOTHER inquest on the child of one of the Peculiar People was held at Southwark. The father, a stonemason, said the child had several illnesses one after the other, but he did nothing except praying over the child and anointing it with oil. The Coroner warned him that he ran the risk of trial for manslaughter for not providing medical treatment. The Christian jury concurred in the Coroner's remarks. The peculiarity of the Peculiar People is merely that they really believe and obey the Bible which other Christians only profess to believe and obey. Some of these days a Christian jury will send a man to jail for obeying the apostle James's inspired instructions.

THE Rev. G. R. Bristor, of Spring Valley, New York, criminally assaulted Ida Downs, a girl of fourteen, whom he had reared in his own house. She fled and complained to a justice. His church defended him and she was returned to his house. On

complaint entered subsequently he was indicted by a grand jury and awaits trial.

THE mother of the late King Louis of Bavaria has just given fresh proof that madness runs in the family. She has ordered the erection of a new chapel, and is actually going to pay for it herself.

"DON'T you think, sir," said an old lady to the minister of a proprietary chapel, "that considering the price of the seats, your sermon was rather short?" Surely she must have been a glutton for sermons. The last one we heard was ten times too long, and it only lasted twenty minutes.

ALL lovers of poetry remember Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. Setting aside Mr. W. M. Rossetti's criticism of its "moral" as gratuitous and far-fetched, we may enjoy this unique poem, and admire the perfect skill with which Coleridge has taken a weird old sea-superstition and embodied it for ever in faultless verse. Dr. George Macdonald, however, is not one of these simple delighters in good things. He extracts from the *Ancient Mariner* all sorts of doctrines, and turns every point of the story into an illustration of the Christian creed. Macdonald on Coleridge is a farce; probably Coleridge on Macdonald would be a tragedy.

NOT content with turning the *Ancient Mariner* into nonsense, Dr. Macdonald patronises his Savior, and praises him for using "a homelier tongue than the Greek of the New Testament, poor as that was." No doubt the Holy Ghost used about the vilest Greek that ever was written, but how does Dr. Macdonald know what precise kind of "homely" language Jesus used? Two or three phrases are all that is preserved of his lingo. Perhaps George Macdonald has been inspired to reproduce the original discourses of the preaching carpenter; but if they are not better worth reading than some of his own effusions, there is very little utility in publishing them. Besides Syriac is understood by only a few, and their knowledge seems rather mixed.

THE Rev. Mr. Leys refuses to give up his two grandchildren or to disclose their whereabouts to the father, who has turned Roman Catholic. The Supreme Court at Edinburgh has sent the obstinate grandfather to prison. He pleads that the children were brought up as Protestants, and that he took them when his son was in poverty and debt. He knew the risk he ran in refusing to obey the order of the Court, but it was his duty to obey God rather than man. Thus religion sets father against son, as Christ said it would. It makes men disobey the law for the sake of sect. But the old man has gone to prison for his convictions despite his feeble health, and we cannot help feeling some respect for his courage and firmness. Priests usually prefer sending other people to suffer.

DON'T argue, but avoid religious controversy. At the same time be *always* ready to converse directly about Jesus, and his love, and his salvation, and *what he is to your own soul.*—*The Watchman*. That is, be always ready to make a nuisance and bore of yourself by talking pious twaddle to your acquaintances, but when one of them asks you how you know all you say, just refuse to answer, and run away. Rare advice! Yet it is the only safe counsel for Christians.

THERE are four Edens in Britain, but they are all rivers. The famous old garden of that name has not yet been identified. Lots of commentators have dealt with the subject, but the only point they agree on is that Eden was *somewhere*. That isn't very precise, but, bless you, it's near enough for the faithful.

AMONG the many attractions of Southport are the public performances of the Salvation Army. Their ham-and-jam-and-glory tea is said to be A 1. And the best of it is, it isn't like tea-and-shrimps—price ninepence; but free gratis for nothing.

THE Australian papers report "blasphemies and burlesques" by the Salvation Army. At Hindmarsh, Adelaide, one zealous captain is known as "The Donkey Rider" because he burlesqued Christ's entry into Jerusalem at the head of a monster procession of Salvationists. A mock trial, absurdly advertised as "an inquest on the Devil," has been held at the barracks. One witness gave evidence that he saw his Satanic Majesty enter his house dressed in black clothes, with a bell-topper on his head. The judge summed up against the Devil, and pronounced him guilty, though he said he was still alive and must be fought. There was a large attendance of the outer public and so much interruption to the ludicrous proceedings that the police had to be called in to restore order.

PROFESSOR SHEDD has published a book on Eternal Torments, learnedly showing that when the Lord Jesus Christ threatened the wicked and unbelieving with everlasting punishment, he phant what he said. As to the justice of infinite punishment for finite sin, he defends it on the ground that the Lord can say as in the parable "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"

WHEN John Lord, the historian, was examined for ordination, he was asked by a disciple of Dr. Emmons: "Are you willing to

be damned for the glory of God?" His answer was, "No; but I am willing you should." That is the case in a nutshell. Who ever saw a good Christian who expected, or was willing to be damned? But who ever saw one who did not expect, and was not willing that his wicked neighbor should be damned to all eternity.

THE Scottish peers have selected the same old sixteen to represent them in the House of Lords, and of course the sceptical Marquis of Queensbury is excluded again. His love of the turf is not allowed to balance his awful heresy, although that is of a rather mild character from the *Freethinker* point of view.

It has become quite the fashion for parsons to leave off their clerical attire when out for a holiday. We are looking forward to the time when they will gladly lay it aside altogether.

A BOY down at San Juan gained an envious religious reputation by committing to memory 1,000 verses of the Bible, and was rewarded by the present of a shotgun. His reputation was somewhat smirched, however, when four days after he shot his grandmother in the right leg.

It is said there are over 100,000 families in London without a copy of the sacred scriptures. As the majority of these contrive to procure a weekly newspaper of some sort the suffering is not so great as might be imagined.

It was natural that the Lord in destroying our premises should make a holocaust of the stock of infidel literature stored on the premises, nor are we surprised to find that such works as Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary* and Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, are hopelessly singed and charred, but why did the Lord also consume in his wrath many copies of his own work including his Old Testament in Hebrew and in Greek, his Greek New Testament and many versions of the same, not to mention such orthodox works as Cruden's *Concordance*, The English Church Prayer Book, The Westminster Confession of Faith, The Key of Heaven, Garden of the Soul, etc., etc.

THE Brighton sky-pilots and their church and chapel friends are in a dreadful rage. Six members of the town council have formed themselves into a committee for providing a Sunday band in the public park. Thousands of people listen to the music, and the men of God apprehend a terrible loss of business. They should, however, comfort their poor souls, for if the worst comes to the worst, as the hymn says, "The scripture assures us the Lord will provide."

MR. HILL, printer, Stapleton Road, Bristol, or whoever authorised the tract before us which bears his imprint, should be looked after by his relatives. The tract is entitled "Awful Death of an Infidel," and is about the trashiest piece of imbecility we have ever encountered. The Tichborne Claimant said that some men had brains and no money, and others money and no brains. It is easy to see which class the author of this tract belongs to, and still more the person who paid for the printing.

A NICE specimen of a Conservative sky-pilot is the vicar of Stainton, who upon a half-witted lad aged nine, being sent to the vicarage with a paper containing the words "No Primrose Dames need apply," had the lad's legs tied and thrashed him within an inch of his life with a knobbed stick. We trust the man of God will receive his reward.

OUR Socialist contemporary, the *Commonweal*, has a funny man on the staff, and the June number of *Progress* has apparently occupied his attention ever since it appeared. He has been concocting a review of Mr. Foote's article on Socialism as expounded by Mrs. Besant. The result of the funny man's long and profound reflection is now in print. The reason of the delay is obvious. There are some men whose invention, as Iago says, comes from them as bird lime does from twigs; it plucks out brains and all. Besides, the funny man had to insert a joke in his title. No doubt it was a painful process, but after much labor he has succeeded in producing something at once subtle and strikingly original. "Putting his Foote in it" is a pun worth any amount of labor. Charles Lamb could not have beaten it; Hood could not have come within a mile of it. The *Commonweal* funny man should not allow his wit to blush (comparatively) unseen in the organ of the Socialist League. By applying to the proprietors of *Punch* he might easily supplant Mr. Burnand, and find a proper scope for the exercise of his extraordinary genius.

THE SPOILS OF THE CHURCH.—And why should not the clergy of the Church of England be turned to grass, and be made to seek their fortune among the people, as well as preachers of other denominations? Where's the sense and reason of imposing parochial priests upon the people to take care of their souls, more than parochial lawyers to look to their estates, or parochial physicians to attend their bodies, or parochial tinkers to mend their kettles? In secular affairs every man chooses the artist and mechanic that he likes best; so much more ought he in spirituals, inasmuch as the welfare of the soul is of greater importance than that of the body or estate. The Church lands would go a good, if not a full, step towards paying the nation's debts.—Rev. T. Woolston, *Defence of the Discourse on Miracles*, p. 23; 1729.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

AUGUST 8, West Hartlepool; 15, Milton Hall; 17, Walworth; 22, and 29, Hall of Science, London.

SEPT. 5, Liverpool; 19 and 26, Hall of Science, London.

OCT. 3, Ball's Pond; 10, Birmingham; 24, Manchester

CORRESPONDENTS

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. W. J. Ramsey, 28 Stonecenter Street, London, E.C.

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 6d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. Displayed Advertisements:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

All papers having been lost in the fire, many of Mr. Foote's correspondents, as well as editorial ones, are unanswered. It is requested that all such will communicate again at once.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—Wm. Tunstall.

J. H. ROGERS.—Glad to hear from you, and to know that you appreciate our articles.

ARGUS.—We are much indebted to you for your batch of cuttings.

L. LEWIS.—The sketches are frightfully rough, but they may serve as a suggestion.

J. H. PINDBER.—Thanks for the cuttings. Always pleased to hear from you.

C. M. writes: "Your Summer Number is making some of my Christian friends' sides ache with laughter, although some of them nearly faint when they see the Trinity Solved. . . . I am very pleased with your intention of making *Progress* a purely Freethought magazine. I intend subscribing to it for the future, and I shall take care that it is put to good use after I have read it each month." Our correspondent adds that he has been a Freethinker only eight months, and has already made one convert, and nearly finished another. He also inquires—but we are unable to answer at the moment—whether there are any Freethought meetings held at present in Chatham.

J. N. FRYER.—Very pleased to hear from you, and to receive the balance sheet of the Australian Secular Association.

A. BONHAM.—Benjamin Disraeli was a Jew of the Jews. He was baptised a Christian, but there is no trace in his writings of any real belief in the doctrine of the Nazarenes. He died without any of what are called "the ministrations of religion." It might indeed be said that his religion was probably that of the Christianised Jew in the play, the blank leaf between the Old Testament and the New.

L. SAMPSON.—Smartly written, but rather out of our line. We are never "hard up" for copy for the *Freethinker*; in fact, we have always more than we can use.

E. BUTLER.—Shall appear.

H. F.—Cuttings received with thanks.

OAKENSHAW.—Glad to hear from you again.

G. NAEWIGER.—Shall appear.

G. G.—Cuttings are always welcome, though we cannot deal with the matter this week.

PULOMATH.—The fire will not prevent the issue of the *Freethinker* and *Progress*. Thanks for your expressions of sympathy, and promise of assistance. Our position is explained in the leading article.

J. H. WHITE.—We are unable to deal with the subject at present, as you may easily imagine. Our hands are too full.

A. B. MOSS writes: "I am very sorry to learn of the destruction of the whole of your valuable stock by the unfortunate fire at your premises last week. Enclosed is a postal order for 10s., and if a thousand of your readers would send a similar donation, it would help you in some measure to overcome your trouble."

A. POMEROY.—Fortunately the printing plant is very little injured, and by great exertion our periodicals duly appear. For the rest see our article.

T. B. SMART, Secretary of the Kensington Branch, begs our assistance in holding an open-air meeting this evening (August 1) at Waltham Green Railway Station. He complains that Mr. Batchelor, of the Christian Evidence Society, has been the chief occasion of disturbance at the meetings, which were quite orderly until he put in an appearance. Last Sunday an organised gang of ruffians were prepared to wreck the stand, but were disappointed in their amiable intentions by the downfall of rain, which prevented a start at the usual time. This evening the proceedings commence at seven o'clock, and we trust that Freethinkers in the district will rally round the stand. Unfortunately our own hands are at present too full to admit of our promising any personal aid. We hope the Branch has secured a speaker with a powerful voice, otherwise it will be next to impossible to hold a disorderly meeting together.

M. ROSS.—Papers received with thanks.

GO ON.—Received with thanks.

M. BLACKWELL.—Our tracts are burnt, so you must wait until we can print a fresh supply.

OWING to the work and worry of the preceding two days, Mr. Foote was unable to fulfil his engagement to deliver an open-air lecture at Battersea last Sunday morning; and, as all his papers were destroyed in the fire, he was unable to send an apology to the Secretary's address. Mr. Foote will be happy to give the Battersea Branch Sunday morning.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Liberal—San Francisco Weekly Chronicle—Ironclad Age.

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 Stonecenter Street, London, E.C.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE August number of *Progress* has been delayed by the fire, but it is well on the way now, and it will probably be ready by the time this paragraph meets the eyes of our country readers. An extra supply is being printed, as, judging from the information we have received, there is likely to be a greatly increased demand now that the price is reduced and the magazine is devoted to Freethought. We trust our readers will all give the August number a trial. It is an exceptionally strong one.

THE fight over the *Freethinker* still rages in the Oakenshaw Colliery Reading-room, and the bigots are still ignominiously defeated. A local preacher, seeing that every other method of attack had failed, raised an objection which could hardly have been expected from a student of a book like the Bible, whose immoralities and indecencies, if collected together, would raise the hair of all honest and sensible people. The objection was that the *Freethinker* is "an immoral paper." This was too much even for his fellow-bigots, and the local preacher collapsed.

At the close of the meeting there was a sale of the quarter's papers. One bigoted Christian offered 2s. 6d. for the *Freethinker*, which was a very good price indeed, being over 2d. a copy. Whether he meant to burn the blasphemous thing, or to gloat over it in private, his intention was frustrated, for a young Secularist offered 2s. 9d., and it was knocked down to him amidst laughter and applause.

THE *Christian World* is out of love with the new Bishop of Manchester. It accuses him now of airing "a set of hole-and-corner opinions about fifty years behind the times," and says that such a prelate is a host in himself in fighting the battle of the Liberation Society.

By "fifty years behind the times" we must of course understand fifty years behind the *Christian World*; and as that journal is itself fifty years behind the real thought of the age, as exhibited in its leading writers, we conclude that Bishop Moorhouse is a century behind date. In our opinion this should be multiplied by eighteen and a half.

THE decree of the Pope and the Inquisition against cremation as a device of the Freemasons and anti-Christians, has produced a counterblast from the Masonic Lodge *La Razione*, of Milan, which "in consequence of the deliberate vote of the Holy Roman Inquisition, condemning and prohibiting cremation, deeming it highly honorable to Freemasonry that the Pontiff should attribute to its influence a work of hygiene and civilisation, invites the Grand Orient of Italy, to urge all the lodges to inaugurate associations for cremation and to erect cremating temples."

THE *Freethinker's Magazine* for July, has reached us from Salamanca, New York. The editor contrives to fill its pages with readable and timely matter. We hope American Freethinkers give it the support it deserves.

THE American Unitarians are receding farther and farther from orthodoxy. We notice that at a recent Conference of "the Unitarian Churches of the West" the following resolutions were proposed: "1. That the primary object of this Conference is to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity." "2. That, while rejecting all creed limitations, the Western Unitarian Conference hereby expresses its purpose to be the promotion of a religion of love to God and love to men." "3. That the Western Unitarian Conference conditions fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all who wish to join it to help establish truth, righteousness, and love in the world." No. 1 was rejected because it contained the word "Christianity;" and No. 2 because the word "God" was "too dogmatic;" so that all that was left was No. 3.

COLONEL INGERSOLL, acting as counsel for the plaintiffs in a telegraph case, was recently attacked by the opposing counsel, Mr. Choate, who dramatically reminded the jury that they had been sworn upon the Bible, a book which Colonel Ingersoll ignored. "What has my ignoring the Bible to do with this case?" replied Mr. Ingersoll. "A good deal to do with this case," replied Mr. Choate, with a defiant air. "I ask your honor if my ignoring the Bible makes any difference in this case," said Colonel Ingersoll, addressing Judge Lawrence. "Not the slightest," responded Judge Lawrence, "and I so instruct the jury."

THERE is a good story afloat of a clergyman's wife who called on Mrs. Gladstone at Hawarden. After sundry remarks on the troublous times, she piously ejaculated, "But there is One above who will guide us." "Yes," said Mrs. Gladstone, "and if you will take a seat I darsay he will be down stairs in a few minutes."

G O D ' S H A N D .

WE often read in the Bible of God's hand or the hand of the Lord. Christians usually claim that *all* these expressions are purely figurative and poetical; and if we Freethinkers refer either jocularly or seriously to the anthropomorphic descriptions of God in the Bible as realistic they do not scruple to accuse us of the most scandalous misrepresentation and falsehood. But Freethinkers will continue to criticise, to ridicule, to satirise, and what is the most deadliest offence of all, to *prove* the points in this ridicule and satire of monstrous absurdities and noxious delusions.

The Lord would not allow Moses to see his face because the sight thereof would have been as instantaneously fatal as the gaze of the Gorgon's head or the glance of a basilisk's eye. But he placed Moses in a cleft in the rock and covered him with his hand; and presently, taking away his hand, he allowed Moses to see his back parts as he passed by, but not his death-dealing face (Exodus xxxiii., 20-23). Is this figurative? Then why does not the Bible say so? Why has God deceived the people all these ages? When seventy elders "saw the God of Israel" he had feet, and "he laid not his hand" upon his guests (Exodus xxiv., 9-11). He also wrote the ten commandments on stone with his own finger. Has the unchangeable changed since then, and are the many other anthropomorphic descriptions of God in his own word thus converted into falsehoods which none but reverential Christians may repeat without forfeiting their personal veracity?

When the Lord presented himself to Ezekiel in the "appearance of a man" girt with amber fire "an hand" appeared with a parchment roll or book which Ezekiel had to devour (Ezekiel ii., 9; iii., 2). Later on Ezekiel says that this fiery God "put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem" (Ezekiel viii., 3). The prophets were a raving and visionary set, and this description may be regarded as a dream or vision. But these later ideas are not much less anthropomorphic and barbaric than those in Exodus, though the simple honest belief in a materialistic man-like God was passing away through poetical or idealistic stages of thought. It was perhaps only a visionary hand of a visionary God that took a visionary prophet by a visionary lock of his hair and carried him through the air in a visionary fashion to a visionary Jerusalem.

In the case of Christ, who is God equally with Jehovah, we know that God has hands. He said to doubting Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands" (John xx., 27). As the Pentateuch gives Jehovah two hands and the New Testament gives Christ two more, the Triune Deity must have at least four hands. But Christian imagination does not care to join the three beings into one. It makes God the Son sit (when Stephen saw him he was standing) on the right hand of the Father with whom he is one. Nobody troubles to say whether the poor neglected Holy Ghost sits or stands or perches on the left hand or left shoulder of the central third of the Trinity whose fractional parts or personages are separated and arranged in order of dignity, although every Christian who would not perish everlastingly must acknowledge that they are strictly co-equal and strictly one in the unity of undivided substance. Of course we must not assume that the Son "sitteth on the right hand of the Father" in any literal or intelligible sense, or that he "sitteth" literally on either side of the Ancient of Days, seeing that Christians maintain that the infinite Three Persons in One has neither body, parts, nor passions.

In many cases it may fairly be claimed that the divine hand is only spoken of in a figurative or indefinite sense. Thus "the hand of the Lord was on Elijah" (1 Kings xviii., 46) and on Elisha (2 Kings iii., 15), and on Ezekiel (i., 3; iii., 14); and we are told that the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind are in his hand (Job xii., 10), and that his hand is stretched out upon all nations (Isaiah xiv., 26). His hand laid the foundation of the earth and his right hand spanned the heavens (Isaiah xlvi., 13). "His hands formed the dry land" (Psalms xcvi., 5), and the heavens are the work of his fingers (Psalms viii., 3). But it is not always easy to distinguish between realism and figure

of speech. Even at the present day Christian preachers like Talmage talk as if the hand of the Lord really and not figuratively made all things and fashioned the continents, and scooped out the seas and rivers. If the Lord did not labor in any bodily fashion how was it that he rested and was refreshed after the six days' work of creation, and why does he command men to imitate him by working six days and resting on the seventh?

Some of the scriptural references to God's hand or hands are rather curious. Not having a completed Bible to kiss, the Lord swears by his own right hand (Is. lxii., 8). He says to the holy city, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" (Is. xli., 16). He is apparently not a Blue Ribbonite, for David tells us that "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red" (Ps. lxxv., 8). Jeremiah figuratively, or in vision, also took "the cup at the hand of the Lord" (xxv., 17). But the wine in these cases appears to represent destruction poured out in floods upon threatened nations. God will spread forth his hands like a swimmer (Is. xxv., 11), and he spreads out his hands all day to rebellious people (Is. lxx., 2). His hand was heavy on them of Ashdod (1 Sam. v., 6) with most disgusting results, and the Egyptian magicians recognised the finger of God in a plague they were probably too cleanly to desire to imitate.

Figurative or literal, intelligible or unintelligible, the believer cannot explain away one prominent characteristic of the Lord's hand, or the Lord's will, or the Lord's power, or whatever interpretation our Christian opponents may consent to give to an otherwise meaningless figure of speech. The Lord's hand is "heavy" upon his children. It works evil. It is malignant; it is crushing. It may save and uphold a few of his favorites and do valiantly for them (Ps. cxviii., 15), but usually when God shakes his hand it brings ruin and destruction upon people (Zech. ii., 9). God lays his hand upon Egypt to inflict awful plagues upon man and beast (Ex. vii., 4). It was the "hand of the Lord" whereof "all the cattle of Egypt died" (Ex. ix., 3, 6). The hand of the Lord caused a murrain more fatal and more widely prevalent among various species of animals than any known before or since. God even declares that he will turn his hand "upon the little ones," and that two-thirds of the people shall die (Zech. xiii., 7, 8). When we hear that his right hand is glorious we are sure to find that is because he has "dashed in pieces the enemy" (Ex. xv. 6), or done some other murderous piece of work, such as helping to rob and massacre the natives of Canaan from a spirit of favoritism towards the sanguinary and treacherous descendants of Jacob, the apple of his eye (Ps. xlv., 2, 3). Job tells us that the "tabernacles of robbers prosper," and that "the hand of the Lord hath wrought this" (Job xii., 6, 9). In his sufferings he asks for pity, as well he might, because "the hand of God" had touched him (ix., 21.)

In Jeremiah xxi., 5, 6, God says: "I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence." This is thoroughly typical of the work of the Lord's hand. It is the hand of a fiend. It slays, it strangles, it smites, it tortures the beings whom its owner calls his children. None can escape its vengeance. "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them," saith the Lord (Amos ix., 2). Well may Paul tell us that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x., 31).

Surely civilised man must disown a God whose hands scatter the lightnings of death, and the horrors of famine, pestilence and war. Civilised thought, set free from the terrors of superstition, must see that a God who revengeth so furiously in his bitter jealousy and consuming wrath is no longer a fit object for human adoration and imitation.

W. P. BALL.

NOTES FROM CHRIST.

JESUS'S PATERNAL EXPERIENCES.

"HONOR thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land," is a pretty precept, and sounds well when said with the usual priestly solemnity, but in my case how difficult of following. On the maternal side it is comprehensible; but which father am I to honor out of the numbers who have acted towards me in that capacity? For each planet I attend for the Salvation

scheme, mother has to find out a fresh—very fresh—Joe, and my experience of some of my fathers is very ludicrous, but still wiles away many a pleasant hour with the comical recollections mother and I have of them. Having always to appear first amongst the least educated, mother has very little choice, and in nearly every case has to choose a husband who is low in the social scale, the more educated classes placing their thumbs to their noses and extending their fingers. On one earth we visited the mater chose a likely kind of fellow, stolid of look, lank of body, and with a wonderful capacity for the liquor of the country. We found he was a "Preservative working man" and "public" orator to "The Imperial and True Blue Patriots" for the preservation of Church and King. I could understand his eagerness to preserve the Church, for by it he existed; but the king—a rotund, oleaginous-looking being, with an inane stare and a great desire to be thought a literary star, having in fact written a book of his august holiday tours, about as interesting as the attempt of an aged donkey to gallop.

This public orator, selected by mother as her representative Joe, used to call a king a "heaven-sent author," whose fame would be the guiding star for future generations of unborn authors. After an evening's spouting and imbibing, this representative Joe would return home in a state of bad temper and ditto beer, make mother listen to what he could remember of his tall falutin' speech at the corner "public" forum, then sponge for more cash, or else threaten to smash the sticks, as he called the "penates" of home. The presents brought by the Wise Men of the East he took to a local tradesman he facetiously called his wicked and hard-hearted relative, whose armorial bearings were three golden globes. He got so hard up for funds, the swaddling clothes were lent to this relative, and if I had not asserted my authority as I grew older, he would have got rid of mother's nimbus or the properties used for the crucifixion and resurrection performances.

Another planet we went to mother selected for her Joe a gentleman in the wholesale chickweed and groundsel profession, whose peripatetic labors took him much from home, where he certainly wasn't missed. It was rather *infra dig* to meet your father in the street, carolling to intending purchasers that he sold vegetable diet for "your singing byurds," putting on a country twang to mislead the unwary. I know he made up his boots at home before commencing the labors of the day, by rubbing moist clay over them. Still he was preferable to a father I had in another planet, who called himself a timber merchant, his timber trade consisting in the retailing of matches, certainly not warranted to strike either on the box or anywhere else. When he earned any cash, it was sacrificed at once on the altar of his pet failing—to wit, skittles. He was a "past grand master" of that noble sport, and would back himself, until his cash vanished, to clear the "nobby nine," as he irreverently called the skittle pins. This gentleman nearly starved us, and if I hadn't loafed around fig orchards I'm afraid there would have been no crucifixion in that planet.

The most terrible fellow of all the Joes was one we had to put up with in one of the earths we visited. He was a captain or major of some new religious sect, with a very earnest outlook for the main chance, and to enhance his popularity with his poor dupes, who kept him in funds, actually wanted mother to head his religious processions beating a tambourine for the "glory of God," as he expressed himself, whilst I was to be dressed in a harlequin costume and warble my joy on a moderately-sized drum. This half maniac we kept well supplied with the liquor of the country, until he sank down to a very submissive servant of the proprietor of a booth. I think he was the professional finger-out.

By my present experience of the earth I'm now on, mother would experience some difficulty in providing herself with a Joseph of the present day. It was easy 1800 years ago, but now—well, it makes me shudder to think of it—her selection could only be from some Polynesian island, and the difficulty would arise that, should the manly but cannibalistic dark gentleman return home a-hungered, there might be fricasseed Virgin Mary on his side table, or your humble servant would provide a dinner for one, roast or boiled. Let me draw a veil over this terrible alternative.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FREETHOUGHT IN AUSTRALIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

DEAR SIR.—The Government here intend to again try conclusions with Mr. Symes. He was this morning served with a notice from the Chief Commissioner of Police, to the effect that unless he complied with the provisions of the Printers' and Publishers' Act (which requires two recognizances to be entered into by the printer and publisher of a newspaper for £300 each, as a security against blasphemy and sedition) on or before July 31, 1886, legal proceedings would be instituted against him. This is in connection with the publication of the *Liberator*. Well, the Government has never received one iota of satisfaction from the Freethinkers here out of any of the preceding prosecutions, and, I opine, will not do any better out of this. The *Liberator* has openly defied them for three years, and will continue to do so in the future.

God has been playing sad havoc in New Zealand, as you will see by the accompanying paper. Not long ago he quite suddenly shut up one of the mouths of hell in the Sandwich Islands, and now, without any previous warning, he opens another in N. Z., at Mount Tarawera, in the hot lakes district. A number of people were killed, but I have not been able to learn whether they imitated Sodom in that part, or what particular crime they were guilty of.

A most disastrous shipwreck occurred last week on the New South Wales Coast. The Ly-ee-moon ran ashore at Cape Green, and seventy lives were lost, only fifteen being saved. Amongst the saved was the Rev. Mr. Poole, who attributes his escape to the efficacy of prayer. What a pity he neglected to mention the other seventy to God in his petition!

By the death of Mr. Alexander Williams, a member of the A. S. A. here, the trustees and treasurer will receive, on behalf of the Association, £167. Mr. Williams also stipulated in his will for a Secular funeral, and Mr. Symes visited Malmsbury and delivered an address at his grave.

Christianity has been coming prominently to the front here lately, especially in Adelaide, S.A. Mr. Crooks, manager of the Bank of S.A., has been sentenced to eight years, and his accountant, Wilson, to four years, for defrauding the bank. Both were prominent members of the Church. Crooks made membership of the Y.M.C.A. a *sine qua non* for admission to the service of the bank. Walker, the son of an Independent minister at Ballarat, Victoria, and Secretary of the Y.M.C.A., Adelaide, was to-day sentenced to four years for embezzling £1,000 of the Association's money. There has been an epidemic of religious mania here too. Mrs. Hampton, of Coburg, and her two daughters were tried for murder, having cut the throat of a younger child, eleven years of age, while suffering from the above malady. They are now in the lunatic asylum, together with the eldest son. Two whole families at Carlton have also been arrested on the same charge, and one man at Yarraville.—Yours, etc.

J. N. FRYER.

120 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Victoria,

June 11, 1886.

REVIEW.

Our Corner, August; Freethought Publishing Company.—The number opens with some "Childish Recollections of James Thomson," by Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner: they are certainly interesting, though the implication that Thomson's freakish letters to a couple of school-girls somehow discount the pessimism of the "City of Dreadful Night," is enough to lift one's eyebrows. Mrs. Bonner forgets that others were well acquainted with the joyous side of Thomson's nature, or she must have read something less than "several biographical notices." Nor do we understand why she objects to the word "sturdy" applied by one writer to the poet's form, for he was square-shouldered strong-necked, and firm of grip; and, having bathed with him, we are prepared to say that his frame was naturally such as might be called "sturdy" without any great strain of language. Mr. John Robertson concludes his searching essay on Rent, which we are afraid few will follow; and Mr. Bradlaugh writes on "What the Country Says," giving, it appears to us, every reason but the chief one why Mr. Gladstone's appeal to the country failed. Mrs. Besant concludes her interesting account of "How London Amuses Itself." Mr. J. M. Wheeler's paper on Madame Roland is perhaps the best in the number; but, with what seems a lack of dramatic insight, he drops the curtain at her death under the guillotine. The real close of that pathetic tragedy was near Rouen, where Roland ran a cane-sword through his heart, and was found dead at the foot of a tree, with a paper at his feet announcing that he had left a world polluted by his wife's murderers.

A BLASPHEMOUS PRIEST.—In the middle of the seventeenth century a curious volume of mystical poems, almost of the character of proverbs, in a book entitled *The Cherubic Wanderer*, was published in Germany under the name of "Angelus Silesius." This is understood to be a pseudonym of one Johan Scheffler. Vaughan, in his *Hours with the Mystics*, gives some verses which seem worth preserving as a religious expression of Pantheism:

"God in my nature is involved,
As I in the divine;
I help to make his being up
As much as he does mine.
As much as I to God, owes God to me,
His blissfulness and self-sufficiency."

LIES AGAINST INFIDELS.—Calumny is the homage which dogmatism has ever paid to conscience. Even in the periods when the guilt of heresy was universally believed, the spirit of intolerance was only sustained by the diffusion of countless libels against the misbeliever, and by the systematic concealment of his virtues. How sedulously theologians at that time labored in this task, how unscrupulously they maligned and blackened every leading opponent of their views, how eagerly they fanned the flame of sectarian animosity, how uniformly they prohibited those whom they could influence from studying the writings or frequenting the society of men of different opinions from their own, is well known to all who are acquainted with ecclesiastical history.—W. E. H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, Vol. II., p. 293.

PROFANE JOKES.

It was in Boston. The family had just got home from church before the rain, when the little girl said, without the slightest thought of irreverence, "Well, we beat the Lord that time, didn't we, ma?"

"Your wife died while you were abroad last summer, I hear." "Yes; she's in heaven, the good old soul." "That ought to be a great source of worryment to you." "Why so?" "Because it's not likely that you'll ever see her again."

THEY are expecting the minister to dinner. "Is everything all ready, my dear?" asked the head of the house. "Yes, he can come now as soon as he likes." "Have you dusted the family Bible?" "Goodness, gracious! I forgot that."

A SARCASTIC parson had two daughters at home doing nothing, and when the census paper came he was at a loss how to fill it up properly with regard to his daughters' occupation, so he wrote as follows: "They toil not, neither do they spin, vot Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

"LITTLE girl, do you know whose house this is?" asked a solemn-looking old man of a bright child seated on the church steps. "Yes, sir; it's God's. But he ain't in," she added, as the old gentleman was about to walk up the steps, "and his agent's gone on the Continent."

A RITUALIST clergyman, in catechising a class of Sunday-school children on the Apostles' Creed, asked them, "Where did Christ go after his death?" They replied, "To heaven." He then scolded them, and said, "Don't you know the Creed says he descended into hell?" And by-and-bye he asked them where would they go after death. "To hell, sir," they replied. The clergyman was horrified.

In a moment of inspirational eloquence, a Durham pastor exclaimed from his pulpit: "What is riches? Thank God I'm poor, and I pray he may ever keep me so!" Taking him at his word, and wishing to demonstrate the efficacy of prayer, the deacons met together the same week and reduced the pastor's salary from £100 to £60 per year.

36pp. Pamphlet, in colored Wrapper. Price 3d.

MRS. BESANT'S SOCIALISM.

Its Follies, Fallacies, and Impossibilities.

By W. P. BALL.

"A fair and well-written criticism of some of the facts of 'Collectivism.'"—Weekly Times.

"A vigorous and timely pamphlet."—Weekly Dispatch.

"Concise, lucid, and cleverly augmentative..... with a chivalrous bow to the lady till his plume touches the mane of his destrel."—Secular Review.

"A little book that should be in the hands of all who show any leaning towards the false Socialism which is rampant in England and in most other countries. The author has been at much pains to examine into and refute the chief fallacies of the Socialist League and its off-shoots."—Literary World.

"Torrent of personal abuse and slander."—Mrs. Besant in the National Reformer.

"The most able, comprehensive, and vigorous reply to present-day Socialism that we have yet seen." "Should be read by all who wish to know the other side of her visionary picture."—Freethinker.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St., E.C.

W. J. RENDELL,

CHEMIST AND DRUGGIST,

26 GT. BATH ST., CLERKENWELL, LONDON, E.C.

Drugs and Chemicals, Surgical Appliances, Patent Medicines, etc.

Particulars of a Malthusian discovery sent on receipt of stamped directed envelope.

Orders by Post promptly executed.



RUBBER STAMPS.

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

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

TO FREETHINKERS, Etc.

A TRIAL SOLICITED. BEST STYLE, FIT AND VALUE.

H. HAMPTON,

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

Summer Number

OF THE FREETHINKER.

CONTENTS—

ILLUSTRATIONS.

- Captain Noah's Menagerie (Twelve Sketches)
The Trinity Solved. (Athanasius nowhere).
Joseph Sold by his Brethren.
Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image.
Moses in the Bull-rushes.
Hebrew Old Clothes. A God of Letters.
The Confidence Trick. Salvation Howlers.
Healing by Faith. Rustic Religion
A Celestial Conference

ARTICLES.

- A Sermon on Sin. By G. W. Foote.
Socialist Riots in Jerusalem. By J. M. Wheeler
Eve's Diary. By W. P. Ball.
A Seaside Sermon. By W. C. Saville.
The Death of the Atheist's Child.
The Apostles' Whit-Sunday Conference. By Scoffer.

MISCELLANEOUS.

- Samuel Called. By A. B. Moss.
An Excursion to Heaven. By E. Vans.
Discovery of a Letter by Mary Magdalene.
The Robber Robbed.
All for the Glory of God.
Sam Slicove in Church.
Rib Ticklers. Milk and Honey.
Comic Answers to Correspondents. Etc., Etc.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

Gladstone's Irish Stew.

2D]. By G. W. FOOTE. [2D.

"A remarkably clear-headed view of the situation."—Democrat.

CHRISTIANITY or SECULARISM

WHICH IS TRUE?

VERBATIM REPORT (revised by both Disputants) of a FOUR NIGHTS' DEBATE BETWEEN THE

REV. DR. JAMES MCCANN

AND

MR. G. W. FOOTE.

120pp., in stiff paper covers, ONE SHILLING.

Is Christianity True? ... 6d.

First Two Nights separate.

Is Secularism True? ... 6d.

Second Two Nights separate.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

Man and the Lower Animals.

By ARTHUR B. MOSS.

The Freethinker says: "A good summary of the question of man's relationship to the lower animals. The quotations from Darwin, Owen, Bastian and Biechner are well chosen, and the pamphlet may be read with advantage by those who have not access to larger works or leisure to study them."

The Secular Review says: "Mr. Arthur B. Moss is one of the most indefatigable of Freethought pamphleteers and one of the most popular of our platform advocates. . . . The latest product of his prolific pen is 'Man and the Lower Animals.' The pamphlet is eminently readable, and it is replete with interesting facts and data."

The National Reformer says: "We venture to recommend it to our readers."

Freethought Publishing Co., 63 Fleet Street.

THWAITES' LIVER PILLS

are acknowledged to be the best Family Medicine in the World by the many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after you had read it you might say it was only advertising puff; but I ask One Trial of the LIVER PILLS; if not better than any you have tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. I recommend them for Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Dizziness, Biliousness, Costiveness, Nervousness, Palpitation of the Heart, Piles, Etc., all of which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what we call a sluggish liver. Try some of the LIVER PILLS as soon as you can, as they are PURE HERB PILLS, and may be used at any time by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking a cold. Prepared only by GEORGE THWAITES, 2 Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees. Sold at 1s. 1d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post for 15 or 26 Penny Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

MR. FOOTE'S WORKS.

- Prisoner for Blasphemy. A full history of the author's Three Trials and twelve months' Imprisonment in Holloway Gaol. Paper covers ... 1 6
Best edition, on fine paper, bound in cloth ... 2 6
Arrows of Freethought ... 0 6
Theological Essays, including all the theological pamphlets now in print. Cloth ... 2 0
Blasphemy No Crime ... 0 1
Mill's Christ. Being an exhaustive examination and exposure of John Stuart Mill's panegyric on Christ in his Essay on Theism ... 0 2
The Folly of Prayer. New edition; with fresh Introduction ... 0 1
Atheism and Morality. New edition; fresh Introduction ... 0 1
Secularism the True Philosophy of Life. An Exposition and a Defence. (In Wrapper) ... 0 4
Atheism and Suicide ... 0 1
The God Christians Swear By ... 0 2
Was Jesus Insane? ... 0 1
Brown's Story; or, The Dying Infidel. 16pp. ... 0 1
Law and Gospel. Letters to Lord Coleridge, Judge North, Gaoler Harcourt, and Lawyer Giffard ... 0 1
Jonah's Excursion to Nineveh. With twenty-four illustrations ... 0 2
Randolph Churchill, the Woodstock Bantam ... 0 2

BIBLE ROMANCES (1d. each).

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

FIRST SERIES, bound in elegant wrapper, ONE SHILLING.

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

SECOND SERIES, bound in elegant wrapper, NINEPENCE.

PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING CO'S LIST.

AVELING, DR. E. B.

- The Darwinian Theory ... 0 3
Monkeys, Apes, Men ... 0 3
Origin of Man ... 0 3
The three together as—
Darwin Made Easy (cloth) ... 1 0

INGERSOLL, COL. ROBERT.

- Mistakes of Moses (only complete edition). Paper covers ... 1 0
Cloth ... 1 6
Live Topics ... 0 1
Myth and Miracle ... 0 1
Do I Blaspheme? ... 0 1
Real Blasphemy? ... 0 1
The Great Mistake ... 0 1
The Clergy and Common Sense ... 0 1
The Dying Creed ... 0 2

PAINE, THOMAS.

- Age of Reason ... 0 6
Complete Theological Works—
Paper covers ... 1 0
Cloth ... 1 6

THOMSON, JAMES (B.V.)

- Satires and Profanities (cloth) ... 1 6

WHEELER, J. M.

- Footsteps of the Past. Essays on Human Evolution, Oriental Religions, and European Customs and Superstitions. Paper covers ... 1 0
Cloth ... 1 4
Gospel Lies ... 0 1
Letters from Hell ... 0 1

MISCELLANEOUS.

Crimes of Christianity. By G.

- W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler
1. Christ to Constantine; 2. Constantine to Jovian; 3. Athanasius to Hypatia; 4. Monks; 5. Pious Frauds; 6. Pious Frauds—concluded; 7. The Rise of the Papacy; 8. The Crimes of the Popes; 9. Ignorance, Vices and Quarrels of the Early Church; 10. The Jew Hunt; 11. The Jew Hunt—concluded; 12. The Crusades; 13. The Crusades—concluded; 14. Witchcraft; 15. The Inquisition; 16. The Inquisition—concluded; 17. Protestant Persecutions in Europe; 18. Christian Missions.
Vol. I., Nos. 1 to 9 ... 1 0
Vol. II., Nos. 10 to 18 ... 1 0

Jewish Life of Christ. By G. W.

- Foote and J. M. Wheeler. A work of extraordinary interest.
Cheap edition ... 0 6
Best edition (cloth) ... 1 0

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