

# THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.  
Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. VII.—No. 10.]

MARCH 6, 1887.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 188.



THE HOLY SPIRIT SHOP.

*It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.—JOHN VI., 63.*

## GOD'S EARTHQUAKES.

*"Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of Hosts with thunder, and with earthquake."—ISAIAH XXIX., 6.*

GOD moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. He created the world, and fitted it up for man's residence. Yet it is in many respects remarkably ill-suited for the purpose. Some parts of the world are too hot, and others too cold. Some are too dry, and others too wet. A little judicious mixture of these extremes would have been decidedly preferable. Why should one nation be praying for sunshine while another has too much? Why should one nation be praying for rain while another is deluged? All these phenomena are perfectly natural, and a scientist never thinks of complaining. But surely a theologian must look upon our climatic and other arrangements as a serious reflection on Providence, or at least as one of those mysteries that will be cleared up in the fulness of time. He may not openly say so, but he thinks so all the same; and the proof of it is that he every now and then drops on his knees and reminds the deity that certain changes are very desirable.

Europe has recently been startled by the reports of a ruinous earthquake in the south. It was not so disastrous as the terrible convulsion which wrecked Lisbon and slew

sixty thousand people over a century ago, yet it has wrought havoc enough and inflicted tremendous misery on thousands of families. What could be more distressing than the spectacle of that poor demented head of a family circle, numbering twenty-two persons, who were all buried under the ruins of their dwellings with the sole exception of himself? Who can measure his anguish? Can the rest of his life be anything but pure bitterness? It would have been more merciful if the calamity had overwhelmed him with all he loved.

Of course the earthquake is as natural as a summer breeze. Each is the necessary effect of physical causes. But surely, if God intended the earth as man's dwelling-place, he should have let its crust cool and settle down firmly before putting his tenant on the estate. If that was out of the question, he should at least give notice when he is going to work an earthquake, so that his children might get out of the way. That is the least that could be expected. Yet his celestial highness gives no warning. He is the same reckless being as of old, when they called him a great and terrible God, and a consuming fire. In an instant, without a sign, he scatters desolation around, and men are no more than insects under a giant's footfall.

Twenty years ago such an occurrence would have set all the sky-pilots tongues a-wagging in their myriad

pulpits. We should have been told that the earthquake was a punishment for the sins of mankind. True, it would not have been the sinners who suffered, but what would that matter? Christianity is a vicarious system, and the Atonement is based on the innocent suffering for the guilty. Never did the clergy feel any surprise at God's slaughtering a few thousand foreigners because Englishmen had aroused his displeasure. The fact was flattering at once to their vanity and stupidity, which are the chief factors in every religious system.

Nowadays, however, the sky-pilots are inclined to sing smaller. Whatever they may believe, they hesitate to tell us that earthquakes are miracles, worked for a pious object. Science would laugh at them, and the people would snarl. For the most part, therefore, they hold their tongues, feeling that their safety lies in silence.

Yet when the earthquake rocked and split, the people showed how religion is associated with terror. At Nice the panic-stricken mob flocked into the little church of Our Lady of the Vow, erected by the inhabitants in gratitude to the Holy Virgin for their escape from the last visitation of cholera. Women wailed, men groaned in prayer, and the confessionals were thronged. While they were at their devotions the second shock came, and as the earth trembled they fell into an agony of fear. Even in the sacred edifice, full of saints, saturated with the Holy Ghost, and under the special protection of God's Mother, they were wild with alarm. Every man and woman of them believed in the efficacy of prayer as a religious tenet, but *instinct* told them that though the very air was stirred with supplication the forces of nature would hold their way.

At Bajardo, a small town of fifteen hundred inhabitants, the whole population—men, women and children—rushed into the parish church and implored the divine protection. While they were on their knees the answer came. A fresh shock rent the massive walls, and the edifice collapsed, burying them all beneath its ruins. Many were extricated by human aid, but three hundred mutilated corpses were left to prove the utility of prayer and the mercifulness of God.

When the Lisbon earthquake occurred, Voltaire wrote a famous ode, in which he asked the theologians to reconcile such calamities with their doctrine of a benevolent providence. Instead of answering him, they went on relying on the orthodox old argument of persecution. But surely some reply should be made. Instead of facing the problem of evil, however, the theologians content themselves with saying "it is a mystery." Yes, but the mystery is of their own creation. Scientifically there is no more mystery in death than in life, in disease than in health, in pain than in pleasure, in misery than in welfare; just as there is no more mystery in a volcanic eruption than there is in a bubbling spring. The mystery begins when you set up a theory inconsistent with the facts. Such a theory is that of a God of infinite goodness in the presence of unmerited suffering and unavoidable evil.

The recent earthquake was not, and could not have been foreseen. It was like a bolt from a clear sky. If it resulted from the operation of the blind forces of Nature, there is no more to be said; but if it was an act of God's free will, we should not be far wrong in calling him an almighty devil.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### BIBLE GIANTS.

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—GEN. VI, 4.

UNTIL comparatively recent times the existence of races of giants was almost universally believed, and the belief was considered to be confirmed by the testimony of the Bible. The abnormally long lives of the patriarchs are given in definite figures, and it was only natural to suppose that when men lived to be from four to nine hundred years of age their period of growth and consequent bulk must have been in proportion. As late as 1718 a French Academician named Henrion published a work in which he endeavored to show by the most rigorous logic that there had been a gradual diminution of man's height since the days of Adam, who was 123 feet 9 inches, while Noah was 103 feet, Abraham between 27 and 28 feet, Moses 13 feet, Hercules 10 feet, etc.

In Smith's *Bible Dictionary* no less than six races of Bible giants are mentioned. They are as follows:—

(1) The Nephilim, translated "giants" in the passage at the head of this article. In the Revised Version the word is retained without translation, but we are referred in the margin to Numbers xiii., 33, where the sons of Anak, in whose presence the Jews appeared to be but "as grasshoppers," are also called Nephilim.

(2) The Gibborim, translated "mighty men" in the same passage (Gen. vi., 4), though the same word is used for giant in Job xvi., 14. There has been much controversy as to who were these giants, and which were the mightiest giants, the sons of God or their offspring. Dr. John Gill, in his Commentary on Genesis vi., says: "that there were giants in these early times is confirmed by the testimony of many Heathen writers; such were the Titans that made war against Saturn, begotten by Uranus, who were not only of bulky bodies, but of invincible strength, as Apollodorus relates," etc.

(3) The Rephaim (Gen. xiv. 5, Deut. ii. 10). Og, king of Bashan, whose conquest is often referred to in the Old Testament, is said to have been of the remnant of the Rephaim or giants (Joshua xiii., 12). Numerous are the marvels related by the Rabbinical writers of Og, whose bedstead (or rather *coffin*) of iron was, according to Deut. iii., 11, nine cubits in length and four in breadth, or thirteen-and-a-half feet by six. We do not know if these were the somewhat unusual proportions of the giant, but if one of the Rabbis is to be believed who modestly asserts that Og's legs were three miles long he must have tucked himself up somewhat when he retired to rest. During the Middle Ages there was said to have been found near Jerusalem a mighty cavern inscribed in Chaldaic letters, "Here lies the giant Og." Nothing was found in it, however, except a large tooth, weighing four pounds and a quarter. The precious relic was offered to the Holy Roman Emperor, as a favor, at two thousand dollars, but he had his doubts and did not close with the bargain. It is curious that the *rephaim*, translated "giants" in several places, is in Job xxvi., 5, translated "dead things."

(4) The Anakim or sons of Anak. Numbers xiii. relates how, when the chosen people came to their country, they found the grapes so large that a single cluster had to be borne on a staff between two men, while the giants themselves were so prodigious that "we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight"—a tale that forcibly reminds us of the early travellers' tales of the Patagonians, who are found to be but slightly above the average height. Goliath of Gath, "whose height was six cubits and a span" (1 Sam. xvii. 4), or 9ft. 6in., and whose coat weighed five thousand shekels of brass, is said to have been of the Anakim and also Ishi-benob, "which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight" (2 Sam. xxi., 16). Saph, and the "man of great stature that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes" (2 Sam. xxi., 20) were of this race.

(5) The Emim (Gen. xiv. 5, Deut. ii. 10) were also "great many and tall, and accounted giants."

(6) The Zanzumim (Deut. ii. 20, 21), are also said to have dwelt in the land of the children of Ammon that also "was accounted a land of giants."

Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, bk. 5, ch. 2, § 3, says, speaking of the conquest of Canaan, "There were till then left the race of giants, who had bodies so large and countenances so entirely different from other men, that they were surprising to the sight and terrible to the hearing. The bones of these men are still shown to this very day." Josephus here gives us the clue to the origin of the fabulous legends; for that they are fabulous everything tends to prove. Human bones could not bear the weight of the bulk of the supposed giants; the evidence of ancient mummies, ancient armor, and ancient measures, as well as all evidence from anthropoid apes, prove that man has not diminished in size. The most stunted tribes are at least four feet, while the tallest, the people of Paraguay, do not exceed six feet and a half. The few abnormal exceptions that are occasionally exhibited do nothing to prove there was ever a race of giants. They are invariably sterile or have smaller offspring.

Three causes may be assigned as giving rise to the legends;—1st, exaggeration and mistake; 2nd, giant

graves; 3rd, large animal remains. There can be little doubt that the Jews, who boasted of having killed five hundred thousand chosen men in a single day (2 Chron. xiii. 17), and who made Samson slay a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, did not underrate the size of their adversaries. It is quite possible that some of the stories of giants and dwarfs found in most mythologies are connected with traditions of hostile tribes, the weak being stigmatised as puny and the strong described as gigantic. The old custom of burying chiefs with their wives, slaves and provisions, and erecting over them huge cairns or burrows, has given rise to many such traditions of giants. Even more important has been the discovery from time to time of huge animal remains. St. Augustine, for instance, (*De Civ. Dei*, xv. 9) in proof of the former existence of giants, appeals triumphantly to a tooth he had seen, a hundred times larger than ordinary teeth. Probably it was from the jaw of an elephant. A huge jaw and teeth found in excavating the Hoe at Plymouth were recognised as belonging to the giant Gogmagog, who in old time fought his last fight against Corineus, the hero of Cornwall. The passage in Josephus suggests that when the Hebrews, in ploughing up the earth came across any huge animal remains, they ascribed them to the ancient gigantic inhabitants of the land, who were destroyed by their valiant forefathers. The stories of giants, like those of witches, devils, gods, and sons of gods, must be classed in the vast category of Bible superstitions.

J. M. WHEELER.

## ACID DROPS.

W. S. JACKSON, of Beresford Street, Walworth, committed suicide by taking cyanide of potassium. By his side was found a written paper which ran as follows: "Almighty Father, Thou who knowest the privations they have endured, help, I implore Thee, help my poor unfortunate sisters. Alleviate their sufferings and console them in their distress. I humbly pray Thee to deal mercifully with me, a miserable, despairing suicide. Jesus, receive my soul." We suppose Talmage had such cases as this in his mind when he preached on the connexion between Atheism and suicide. The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide while of unsound mind." The verdict should have been "Suicide while crazy with religion."

WHETHER there is any connexion between Atheism and suicide or not, there certainly is a strong connexion between religion and selfishness. Mr. Jackson rushed off into as much glory as the Lord will "mercifully" provide him with, and leaves his "poor unfortunate sisters" to the care of the same being. Now, either he thought the Lord *would* assist them or he thought the Lord would *not*. If he held the former opinion he should have waited, like a sensible man, and shared in their good fortune, until his own affairs mended. If he held the latter opinion his conduct was mean and contemptible. He should have struggled on and tried to alleviate their lot himself, especially as they had been supporting him while he was out of employment.

HERE is another proof of how Atheism leads to suicide. Early last Sunday morning a poor woman, named Mary Adams, was prevented from jumping over Waterloo Bridge with her two children. She bitterly complained of being interfered with, and said she and her children could only go to Heaven once, and they would have been there then if she had not been pulled back. Suppose the poor creature had said something about "Hall of Science" instead of "Heaven," and something about "Bradlaugh" or "Foote" instead of "God," what a rumpus there would have been in the religious press, and how many sermons would have been preached on the frightful consequences of unbelief!

MR. GLADSTONE, in his recent *Nineteenth Century* article, spoke of Great Britain as possessing "a strength such as that she may almost war with Heaven." Mr. G. B. Skipworth, of Leeds, remonstrated with the ex-premier on his using such an irreverent expression, whereupon Mr. Gladstone replied: "Sir,—The expression which has perplexed you is figurative, and refers to a passage in an ancient author. But it may also bear a literal meaning, if, as I apprehend, all sin is war against Heaven."

SIN, if it means crime, is war against mankind. Certainly that does not pay, in the long run, either the sinner himself or the people he wrongs. But if sin means simply a snubbing of the celestial powers, we venture to say that Great Britain can indulge in it with perfect impunity. We will back Great Britain against heaven any day. After reading Milton's account of the big battle which ended in Satan's overthrow, we have not the slightest hesitation in saying that our generals would beat the

archangels hollow, while our troops would settle the heavenly squadrons before breakfast.

ACCORDING to Canon Freemantle, a Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford said a few weeks ago that "The field of speculative theology may be regarded as almost exhausted. We must be content, henceforth, to be Christian Agnostics." Christian Agnostics is good. So are round-square, bitter-sweet, long-short, and thick-thin.

THE Socialists have been enjoying themselves in their own peculiar fashion at St. Paul's Cathedral. There was a certain amount of disorder and interruption, but the marshals, aided probably by the knowledge that there was an ample force of police in reserve, succeeded in keeping some sort of order among the new worshippers. A percussion cap was exploded by one demonstrator, a cushion was flung over the heads of the congregation by another, and the Archdeacon's sermon was frequently met with emphatic exclamations. A large proportion of the audience joined in singing the Old Hundredth, so that apparently it is not hostility to religion that makes the Socialists annoy the church-goers with their presence and their interruptions. We deny the right to turn religious worship into a socialist demonstration, just as we should deny the right of Socialists to turn a Free-thought meeting into a demonstration of quite another character. We would no more think of disturbing religious worship than the spectators at a theatre. A stranger who goes to a church, or a mosque, to a theatre or a Secular hall, must behave according to the rules and proprieties of the place into which he intrudes.

BURNS, the Socialist, droning a tune cheek by jowl with a person on the steps of St. Paul's, is a sight for gods and men. "Oh, what a surprise!" But this is a world in which the unexpected always happens.

ON the whole we never heard of a greater farce than the Socialist muster at St. Paul's. What "the unemployed" and their peculiar champions expect to get by going to church is like the peace of God—it passeth all understanding. Of course, it is a capital advertisement for Hyndman, Burns, Champion and Co., who are really beating General Booth in his own line of business. But will it feed the hungry or clothe the half-naked? Will it revive business, freshen the labor market, or increase the prosperity of a single man, woman or child?

THE dignitary who occupied the pulpit at St. Paul's, and preached to the people gathered by the Social Democratic Federation, was almost as farcical a figure as Mr. Burns on the steps outside. He told his congregation, on the authority of Jesus Christ, that there would always be rich and poor, a statement which they very naturally resented. But he forgot to tell them that Jesus Christ also advised the rich to sell all they possess and give the proceeds to the poor. Christianity is a pick-and-choose sort of thing after all. Just as the Devil can cite Scripture for his purpose, so a Christian can always find texts to suit his interests.

PERHAPS the crowning joke of all was the exploit of probably the only person in the whole gathering who was thoroughly in earnest. The City Prophet turned up, commenced his harangue at the same moment as the preacher, and was promptly taken out by the police for a mouthful of fresh air. This poor devil, who is a kind of modern Jonah, has been frequently in the hands of the gentlemen in blue. He says the Lord has commissioned him to warn the City of London against the wrath to come; and perhaps he is inspired after all, for he acts very much like inspired men have acted in every age and clime.

WHILE dozens of social problems press for solution, and half-fed and half-educated people are off on a false scent after the millenium, there are well-educated men with pretensions to common sense, who devote their time to discussing the question whether salvation is possible after death. Prebendary Leathes, the Rev. Principal Cairns, and the Rev. Dr. Landels, say "No," while the Rev. J. P. Hopps, the Rev. John Littledale, and the Rev. Edward White say "Yes." Men of ability waste their time on these kingdom-come problems while the vital problems of this world are becoming more and more difficult. Nero fiddling while Rome was burning was, after all, an agreeable spectacle compared with these seraphic gentlemen in white-chokers, who discuss theological moonshine while thousands are crying for bread.

LAST Sunday the Bishop of Ripon delivered the first of the Baunpton Lectures at Oxford. Among other things, he said that "the law of sacrifice was essential to progress." Perhaps so. But how much has the Bishop of Ripon sacrificed? His income is £4,500 a year. If this is sacrifice, sacrifice is a paying business.

THE Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control has issued a pamphlet on *The Demand for Dis-establishment in Wales*, which amply bears out Mr. Gladstone's declaration that the past history of the Welsh Establishment is a story of "gross neglect, corruption, nepotism, plunder."

THE Roman Catholic Archbishop of Edinburgh announces that he has taken steps towards having Mary Queen of Scots canonised as a saint, on the ground that she died for the cause of religion. We dare say Mary was quite fit company for some of the saints, and as she certainly was an unfortunate woman we may overlook her somewhat shady morality. As for her death, Froude gives his opinion (*History of England*, vol. xii., p. 257) that she was "a bad woman disguised in the livery of martyr, and if, in any sense at all, she was suffering for her religion, it was because she had shown herself capable of those detestable crimes which in the sixteenth century appeared to be the proper fruits of it." Swinburne, in his essay on Mary Queen of Scots, alluding to Froude's charge that she died with a lie on her lips, remarks: "But the God of her worship, the God in whom she trusted, the God on whom she had been taught to lean for support of her conscience, would no more have been offended at this than the God of Dahomey is offended by human sacrifice." A worthy queen for a worthy God, and a worthy saint for a worthy Church!

THE Duke of Marlborough has the appointment of thirteen Church livings, and he keeps a chaplain in addition. We should think the duke's chaplain must be a nice, easy-going man. We noticed some time since that he recommended the nation to purchase the duke's pictures at a very high figure. Perhaps he was afraid that if they were not sold his own situation might not be permanent. But evidently his grace could not dispense with his chaplain, who, we suppose, may be considered a sort of keeper of the duke's conscience.

THE *War Cry* for Feb. 26 says: "It is very probable that the Devil takes more interest in the officers of the Salvation Army than he does in any other sect of men or women under the sun." Apparently the Army are familiar with the counsels of Satan. But there, it is only their vanity.

A JEWISH Lodge of Freemasons propose to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee by rebuilding the temple of Solomon upon the original site. We earnestly hope these Jewish Masons will address themselves to the noble task of going to the Holy Land and personally performing the work. By the way, they will first have to settle where the site of Solomon's Temple actually was.

ALEC. CALDERWOOD, said to be the son of a Glasgow town-councillor, is a nice pious young man. He passed himself off as a clergyman at Belfast, got a lodging with a clergyman, arose early in the morning, and commenced reading the Bible aloud, turning over the leaves of the holy book with his right hand, while he coolly rifled the parson's trousers pocket with his left. He has since been arrested for swindling at Hull.

W. HOWIE, late master of the Carcolston Board School, Nottingham, writes to the *Schoolmaster* complaining that, although he bears a high character, he was dismissed by the vicar, the Rev. A. E. Auchinleek. A requisition sent to the Board and signed by "every parent" was rejected because the vicar rents the school to the Board and threatened the withdrawal of the school unless Mr. Howie was dismissed.

ANOTHER letter entitled "Look Before You Leap" says that at the school, 1 Argyle Street, Bath, since July, 1884, no less than ten masters and mistresses have had charge. The teacher's residence is damp, unhealthy, with scarcely any means of ventilation, and has already been the cause of the deaths of four of its inhabitants. There is positively no garden attached to the house, and the school closets are literally "in touch" with the teacher's back door. During the absence of the vicar from home, the school is "managed" by his housekeeper, and woe betide the unfortunate teacher who fails to treat this lady with the respect due to her exalted position! The consequences, in one case, were *immediate expulsion*.

THE Glebe Lands Bill, which has passed the second reading in the House of Lords, is one deserving some attention by the people's representatives. Under pretence of facilitating "the acquisition of land by cottage laborers and others," it proposes to allow incumbents to sell the glebe lands attached to their churches, both of which are national property, provided the assent of the bishop, the patron and the land commissioners, is first obtained. No doubt the bill is intended to "dish" the advocates of Disendowment, but perhaps the Church may overreach itself. The Archbishop of Canterbury expresses his regret that the straitened circumstances of many incumbents rendered such a bill necessary, and most assuredly the parsonage will not become quite so desirable a place of residence when the lands which were formerly attached to it are occupied by "cottage laborers and others." Moreover, Parliament in permitting the Church to alienate its land may take good care as to where the money from the sale is placed and how spent, and it may have an eye on future dealings with other portions of national Church property.

SOME years ago Mr. Shirley Baker went out to the Tonga Islands as an agent of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. By dint of push among the natives he managed to be appointed premier, and some two years since he induced the king (a man

of eighty-seven) to start a State Church, into which, it is said, three-fourths of the people were dragooned. The persecution of the dissentients caused Baker to become very unpopular, and an attempt has been made upon his life. For this six natives have suffered death, five more were sentenced, and thirty awaited their trial; but the British Consul put a stop to further bloodshed. It is surely time Mr. Shirley Baker was looked after, and a little closer supervision of missionaries in other parts would not be out of place.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has decided to revive the extinct Jerusalem bishopric in order to provide a berth for Archdeacon Popham Blyth. The Jerusalem bishopric was established over forty years ago in conjunction with the Prussian government, the Anglican and Lutheran Churches alternately appointing to the office. The scheme is chiefly remembered as having been the immediate occasion of the secession of Cardinal Newman from the Church of England. The whole affair has been such a farce that Bayard Taylor, the American traveller and poet, tells us, in his book on *The Land of the Saracen*, how, not being able to make any converts at Jerusalem, converts were brought thither at the expense of the English missionary societies for the purpose of forming a Protestant community, the converts costing at the rate of four thousand five hundred pounds each. As the *Westminster Review* recently pointed out, the English mission in Jerusalem has been largely supported by garbled reports, and the German government got so tired of the farce that upon the death of Bishop Barclay they refused to appoint anyone in his place, so that the holy field is left to Archbishop Benson and his nominee, for whom he appeals to the public to raise £1,500 a year.

THE writer of "Powder and Shot," in the *Weekly Times*, speaking on the peace policy nominally enjoined by Christianity says: "If there is any evidence so utterly damning to the character of the majority of Christians, it is the cool impudence with which they ignore the cardinal doctrine of their founder, and which, so far as I know, only the Quakers honestly and fearlessly proclaim."

THE *Christian Commonwealth* tells us no man is really wise and good or powerful or successful unless he loves, obeys and imitates the Lord Jesus Christ. Bismarck, then, is not powerful, for he does not turn the other cheek. Bessemer is not successful, for he does not sell all he has and give to the poor. Garibaldi was not good, for he rejected Christianity. The only way to be really wise, etc., is to walk on the sea, cast out devils into swine, live the life of a mendicant friar without wife or family or home, and imitate all the various follies of which Christ was guilty! Does the editor of the *C.C.* ever think of imitating his Lord and Master *practically*?

SPURGEON, preaching on the text "Lead us not into temptation," draws a nice distinction. He says God tempts no one, but simply leads into temptation. Evidently the authorised version of Gen. xxii., 1, is wrong. It should not read "God did tempt Abraham," but "God did lead Abraham into temptation."

THE Rev. Joseph Parker has apparently not been as successful as he desired in Scotland. He said he could perceive no sign in the newspaper press that he was in a Christian country. The *Scotsman* suggests that this was probably because the name of Joseph Parker was not prominently advertised there.

JOSEPH PARKER has been preaching from the text, "And Enoch walked with God and was not, for God took him." Joseph tells us a good deal more than God has chosen to reveal in his holy book, but he does nothing to enlighten us as to why Enoch promenaded with the Deity or to explain where God took him to.

THE Rev. W. H. Harwood, of Sunderland, had a marked copy of last week's *Freethinker* sent to him with a letter from Mr. J. Rutherford, secretary of the local N. S. S. Branch, inviting the reverend gentleman to receive a deputation from the committee with a view to arranging for a "face to face" debate between himself and Mr. Foote. Mr. Harwood has not condescended to reply. He appears to be as courageous a champion of Jesus Christ as the eleven apostles were when they "all forsook him and fled."

A Theological Correspondence Association has been started with the object of teaching theology through the post at the rate of ten lessons for a guinea. We should think the money was worth it. Evidently theological professors are on the sharp look out for a job.

THE Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, in speaking in a mission room at Camberwell, was not ashamed to say that at Harrow "they had introduced single-stick and boxing among the other secular subjects that were dealt with in their mission-rooms." This is muscular Christianity with a vengeance. Let this movement be extended, and we shall by and bye see Jemmy Smith holding a distinguished place in the Christian Church and boxing for Jesus in the front of the altar. There will be few empty churches then, unless they want too much gate-money.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 6, Lecture Theatre, Working Street, Cardiff; at 11, "Is Christianity True?" at 3, "Where is God?" at 6.30, "An Hour in Hell."

Wednesday, March 9, Maidstone.

MARCH 13, Milton Hall; 17, Borough of Marylebone Radical Club 20, Hall of Science, London; 22, Walworth; 27, Hall of Science, London.

APRIL 3, Manchester; 10, Birmingham; 17 and 24, Hall of Science, London.

MAY 1, Camberwell; 29, N. S. S. Conference.

JUNE 5 and 12, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

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

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—V. G.

J. ROGERS.—Thanks for the pamphlet. We do not understand your question.

W. JACKSON points out that in regard to Mr. Allsopp's proposed prize essay, mentioned in "Sugar Plums," p. 61, "our leading men may not be able to find time for this work, and our rank and file may not have the necessary tact and ability." The warning may be necessary, but of course no one will be responsible for the prize-winner's views save the writer himself.

W. SCHWEIZER.—Your cuttings are always welcome.

J. BRITCHER.—We appear to have been somewhat misled. We should be sorry to do Mr. Bushnell or any other Christian an injustice, and we should be happy to insert any brief correction that he or his friends may forward.

W. T. LEEKEY.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

W. ROSSITER.—Sorry we cannot hear your lecture in consequence of being out of town. Glad to know you keep our paper before the public.

J. H. THOMAS.—Thanks for your interesting though rather warm letter. You will have a much better notion of the Debate when you read the verbatim report, which will make a book of nearly 200 pages.

A. E. WRIGHT.—(1) We haven't the slightest idea, or the slightest care, whether Moses died on that mountain or not. As to whether he was buried by God you had better ask the Almighty undertaker yourself. If you don't meet him till Judgment Day, put the question then, and ask Moses if he tells the truth. (2) Mr. Forder will supply you with any number of dozens of *Was Jesus Insane?* at 9d. for 13.

T. F. SANSON.—What you inquire about is not in the Bible. Mr. Foote was quoting from Jewish and Oriental writers. You will find a good deal on the subject in Baring Gould's *Legends of Old Testament Characters*, Vol. I.

R. W.—The subject of Slavery shall be dealt with in our next issue.

J. PRITCHARD.—See answer to J. E. D. We don't trouble our head about *Justice*. The opinion of "Quelch, the Tyrant-queller," is of infinitesimal importance. Mr. Foote's Debate with Mrs. Besant will soon be in print. The report is revised by both disputants.

W. CARTER.—Pleased to hear from you. The verses certainly seem to show that J. R. Waller has found Jesus or something like it. If Mr. Waller has changed his opinions, we shall be happy to let him explain the change in our columns. When he took the chair for us at South Shields after our liberation from Holloway, he said he had no doubt that some of his writings in the *Freethinker* had contributed to our imprisonment. If he is converted or perverted he is in duty bound to enlighten those he may have helped to lead astray.

G. F. MARGETSON.—Glad you found Mr. Wheeler's article useful. The reverend gentleman's letter is amusing. We haven't space to say all we think of it, but we should like an hour's bout with him before a public audience.

G. GROVE.—The opening of the fourth Gospel is "In the beginning was the Word." The original word is *logos*. That was a term of the Platonic philosophy three centuries before Jesus Christ was born or thought of.

A. S. WRIGHT.—Mr. Forder will supply you with tracts such as you require at 6d. per 100. You ask us how we account for the miracles of Jesus. We never saw them, don't know anybody who did, and never read about them except in writings composed long after the time, which contradict each other right and left. The Pagans had their miracles as well as the Christians. Miracles still happen as much as they ever did, where there is plenty of credulity. Miracles do not produce faith—faith produces miracles. People who believe in ghosts sometimes see one. Sceptics never do.

ALPHA.—Shall appear.

J. W.—You merely repeat yourself without making any advance. We understand your interpretation of the passage, but we reject it for the reason already given. You appear incapable of understanding ours. With respect to J.C. we refer you to what we said before.

J. LANGFORD.—Your cuttings are always welcome. We do not see anything for us to notice in Mr. Bushell's decease.

J. E. D. says that there is a "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children" at Liverpool, which has been established over three years. Our correspondent asks us what is the sin against the Holy Ghost. Nobody will know till the Day of Judgment. The Ghost is remarkably reticent upon the point. In the absence of authentic information all sorts of theories have been held, but we decline to pledge ourselves to any of them.

E. ANDREWS.—We are obliged for the cuttings. We noticed Bishop Ullathorne's pastoral letter last week.

ALPHONSO.—You had better apply to the London University.

T. C. G.—The best edition of Mosheim is in four volumes by Murdoch and Soames. The text is translated faithfully, and the notes are very valuable. The Debate between Mrs. Besant and Mr. Foote is being hurried through the press as rapidly as possible.

G. WACKERBARTIL.—Scarcely up to the mark.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Thinker—Western Figaro—Beaver—East Lancashire Echo—Boston Investigator—Lucifer—Jus—Liberty—Ironclad Age—Evening News—Echo—Hull Daily Mail—Burton and Derby Gazette—Liverpool Evening Times—South Wilts Express.

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.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE State authorities of New Jersey have further postponed the trial of Mr. C. B. Reynolds for blasphemous libel until next May. They would probably like to see the matter quietly set aside, and in the meantime are reported to be on the outlook for some evidence that Jehovah, the party libelled, has been a resident in the state of New Jersey.

At a meeting of the New England Freethinkers' Convention, held at the Paine Memorial Hall on Paine's birthday, Mr. Wake-man, on behalf of some New York friends, presented Mr. Horace Seaver, the veteran editor of the *Boston Investigator*, with a hickory cane made from a tree growing by the grave of Thomas Paine.

WE understand that the Manchester Hall scheme is meeting with a fair amount of success. But much more support will be needed, and we trust the Manchester Freethinkers will lose no time in responding to the appeal. Even Freethinkers in other parts of the country might render some assistance. The affair is in good hands, and will not fail for want of proper management.

THE Sunderland Branch of the N. S. S. is working well and increasing in numbers. It is now nearly seventy strong, and is causing a good deal of stir in the town.

PROFESSOR HÆCKEL has left Jena for the coast of Asia Minor, where he intends to dredge and study the lower forms of animal life in the Levant.

A NEW volume of poems by George Meredith has been placed in the hands of Messrs. Macmillan and Co. for early publication.

THE Lord's Day Observance Society have had a nice little snubbing, which we hope will do them good. A deputation waited on Mr. Plunket, the First Commissioner of Works, and protested against the permission that had been given for Sunday boating in the public parks after two. There were the usual ravings about desecrating the Sabbath and disorder and interference with religious worshippers, and making the working man do seven days' work for six days' wages. Mr. Atkinson said he would rather see the Government defeated than the Sabbath interfered with. Mr. Plunket consoled the deputation with the assurance that he saw no reason for cancelling the present salutary rule which allowed the enjoyment of a healthy and harmless recreation on Sunday afternoon just as anyone who had the opportunity could reach the Thames and enjoy recreation of the same kind there. The bigots retired defeated and vowing vengeance in the shape of a Sabbatarian crusade of greater virulence than ever.

*Jus*, a new weekly organ of Individualism, is well written and edited. The number for Feb. 22, lying before us, contains a thoughtful leader on "The Sphere of Government." It points out that the tendency has been to diminish Government interference in religion, although there still remains on the statute books laws relating to oaths and blasphemy which imply that the State considers itself bound to punish offences against what may be called the national religion. *Jus* is well worth reading, and may be commended to our Socialist friends.

THE *Hereford Times*, in reviewing Mr. Jennings' book on Mr. Gladstone, which is called *A Study*, says he "might just as well call Mr. Foote's attack upon Christianity a 'study' of that religion, or Victor Hugo's *Napoleon the Little*, a study of the late Emperor of the French." Really the *Hereford Times* puts Mr. Foote in excellent company, and if he has studied Christianity as thoroughly as Victor Hugo studied Louis Napoleon, he probably knows a good deal more about it than the editor of any newspaper in England.

## SOME RELIGIOUS STORIES.

## NO. 3.—THE INCANDESCENT INFIDEL.

THIS remarkable case is so well authenticated by pulpit utterances as to be beyond suspicion. Any person who doubts its truth can easily obtain a persistent refusal of the names and addresses of numerous and absolutely unimpeachable witnesses by merely writing to the Rev. Dr. Talmage, of Brooklyn Tabernacle.

In the winter of the year 18—, a certain American farmer named —, having been ruined by the loss of all his sheep in a snowstorm, fell into a desperate state of ingratitude towards the divine author of his calamities. On his arrival at the town of — in the state of — he was overheard blaspheming in the public market place by scores of horrified witnesses who can testify with one accord that he actually called aloud upon his God to damn him if he couldn't manage the weather better himself! The profane wretch—who must of course have been an infidel—actually invoked immediate personal damnation if he were not wiser than the Almighty! So frightful and daring a challenge had never—or hardly ever—been heard before in Christian lands! The God of heaven, as is well known, always accepts such a challenge at once—at least in Christian story-books, which of course are as guileless and almost as infallible as the Bible they support. God at once visited the reckless fool with personal damnation, the personal hell-fire, that he cried for. "And while he was speaking his lower jaw dropped, smoke issued from mouth and nostrils, and the heat of his body was so intense that it drove back those who would come near."\* This was evidently no mere purgatorial flame but an instalment direct from the lake itself. The parsons were accordingly sent for, and before long a whole regiment of them had assembled; but they had to keep a respectful distance for fear of being burnt up before their time. A procession of priests then came to the rescue, and were about to put the fire out with holy water. But before they had properly blessed a sufficient quantity of the unregenerated liquid supplied by the Protestant water company, and had duly consecrated the fire-engine with which they proposed to administer it from a safe distance, the parish surveyor interfered and stopped them. Being very much worried with the snow problem and observing that all the snow within twenty yards of the glowing blasphemer was already melted, he thought it a pity to waste the wonderful supply of caloric thus afforded. So with the help of long iron rods, which were renewed with fresh ones as the ends melted off, he utilised the red-hot infidel by adding him to the coke devil-fires with which an attempt was being made to thaw some snow-heaps that blocked the thoroughfares. So efficacious was the new fire from below that by industriously carting it about from street to street as required, the whole town was entirely freed from snow within forty-eight hours. The sulphurous fumes emitted, however, were becoming intolerable and the general climate quite tropical. The "smoke-jack"—that is the individual who gets his living by informing the police of smoky chimneys—insisted that the incandescent blasphemer should be made to consume his own smoke. Failing in this, he was promptly removed outside the suburbs and left to blaze away at his leisure.

Next day his relatives sent in a bill to the municipality for the use of their late lamented brother. In consideration of the great services rendered, this little account was cheerfully defrayed—the strenuous objection of a horror-stricken Roman Catholic member, who positively shuddered at the employment of such unholy means, being laughed out of court as hopelessly out of date in so practical an age and among so practical and go-ahead a people. The infidel meanwhile continued to grow hotter and hotter till he was only manageable by means of asbestos ropes, and it was proposed to start a company for utilising him on a large scale, but the public were naturally afraid of burning their fingers over such an enterprise.

At length he was sold off cheap to the enterprising proprietors of the *Great Eastern*. Our red-hot infidel converted that time-honored failure into a grand pecuniary and moral success. For ten years he worked her engines without the

aid of any other fuel. The firm of Barnum, Talmage Spurgeon and Co. hired the vessel as a show for the glory of God and the conversion of souls in every port in the world at a shilling a head. As a floating religious bazaar the only drawback was the melting temperature and the strong smell of brimstone which pervaded the furnace room or stoke-hole where the visitors were shown the blazing proof of God's power and wrath in the shape of the incandescent infidel who so daringly invoked damnation and got it. Forty million souls were thus brought to Christ and two million pounds into the pockets of the pious caterers for God and the public.

On one occasion the Archbishop of Canterbury, in full canonicals, officiated by desire as head showman for a special exhibition before her most gracious Majesty the Queen. His lawn sleeves, however, caught fire, and if he had not been "put out" by a sailor, who promptly dashed a bucket of bilge water over him, the consequences might have been serious. In a subsequent thanksgiving sermon he remarked how powerful baptism was in saving us from the works of the Devil, even when that baptism was most inadequately administered by totally inexperienced hands. Her Majesty, who had been thoughtfully assured beforehand that it was neither Darwin nor Gladstone who was frizzling below deck, nearly fainted away from heat and excitement, and returned at once to Balmoral to restore her nerves for the arduous task of doing nothing at a million a year in wages and perquisites.

On another occasion Cardinal Manning—who grieved that so conclusive and so long-wished-for a confirmation of the teachings of his Church should be monopolised by Protestant heretics—tried to sprinkle some extra strong holy water in the direction of the burning body, but the great heat converted the consecrated liquid into holy vapor before it could reach its intended destination. Singed as he was in his attempt to get close enough to work a special miracle on behalf of his Church, he next tried to extinguish the unholy fire by reciting the service for exorcising the Devil, but was unceremoniously removed by the Protestant showmen, who threatened an action for heavy damages for loss of business and of souls if their speculation was thus spoiled by his interference.

The red-hot infidel has now become white-hot, for the temperature of genuine hell-fire always increases and never diminishes. He will evidently melt the iron boilers soon, in spite of the water within; and the dazzling rays he emits are becoming almost blinding through so extensive a rise in temperature that our present pyrometers are incapable of measuring it. The American Government wishes to purchase the incandescent blasphemer for thawing a route to the North Pole. The London Municipality, more practical in its aims, wishes to outdo Eiffel's proposed four-legged iron tower at Paris by erecting a still more monstrous structure, two thousand feet high, in the midst of London, with the brilliant infidel mounted on the summit as a grand improvement on the lime-light and electric light. As the gas companies would oppose the parliamentary bill for this municipal improvement, it is more probable that the glowing blasphemer will be mounted as a perpetual light or beacon-fire on the gigantic statue of Liberty overlooking New York harbor—unless indeed Christians object to that illustrious fate as too complimentary for a vessel of wrath, and as too dangerously destructive of the moral lesson conveyed to the world by the warning example of God's fiery wrath against scepticism and profanity.

W. P. BALL.

Do good to those that hate you; pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.—*Jesus*. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works.—*Paul*.

A YOUNG man living in Arkansas, wrote to his father in Davies county, Ky., some months ago the following. He said: "A Campbellite preacher once came into these parts and one Sunday afternoon went to see some of the families down in the Lake settlement. At one house he asked the lady where her husband was. She replied: 'He is out hunting.' 'What,' said the preacher 'Has he no fear of God?' 'Oh, no!' she replied, 'he has his gun and dogs with him.' The preacher then inquired, 'Have you any Campbellites about here, as they call them?' She replied: 'I really don't know, my husband hunts and kills all sorts of varmints and stretches their skins on the side of the house. You can go and look at them and see for yourself.' The preacher, of course, did not examine the "varmint's" skins to find a Campbellite, but he no doubt concluded that they needed a missionary in the Lake settlement.

\* See "Talmage on Blasphemy," in the *Freethinker* for November 7, 1886.

## RANDOM NOTES FROM CHRIST.

I AM considerably pained at the tenor of the "Old One's" letter in your last issue, and assure him, that instead of attempting to crawl round to his right hand side to push him from his tottering throne, I am using all my persuasive powers to prop up his crumbling hierarchy. If he'll only pay me a visit on this earth whilst I am here (if it does no other good it will give the four and twenty elders a holiday) he shall be shown praying-shops or picture galleries, and I'll defy him to find many representations of Jehovah. Who ever pays any attention to the dad? No doubt he'll hear many jokes cut at his expense. But as for being serious about "the Father," why it's all my eye, and therefore I have to look to my own interests, for am I not the heir-at-law. If I was to stick as tightly to heaven as he does, it might make life easier. Father's old-established concern does not seem monotonous to him, but I seize with gladness every opportunity of again being on my travels, and am pleased to give him any pleasure by performing the same old stale trick of infantile incarnation, and adult crucifixion and ascension, in any planet he may send myself and my virgin mother to; but to send us to wrong planets—to arrive at some that have scarcely cooled, causing ma to hop like unto a drawing-room tiger on sultry bricks; to arrive at others that have cooled so confoundedly that the landscape presents nothing more cheering than ice-creams and snowballs—(mother's too old for snow-balling)—is not this enough to make even the third part of a god grumble? And besides, the old girl is not so young as she was—her travelling trunk is more bulky, more things having to be packed—false front curls, extra set of patent masticators, besides those artificial necessities for plumping up the figure.

The old man should appoint an assistant, then he could devote more time to the quaffing of ambrosial nectar (the recipe given him lately by old Jove whilst on a visit). Besides, lately we have had to put up with the most horrible and noisome smells, dad having returned to his old liking for "sissled flesh." He says it has a sweet savor to his nostrils. I have reasoned with him, asking him to tickle his olfactory organ with snuff, promising him a box for his waistcoat pocket. But no! he persists in having the fat of the inside of beasts burnt on an old altar he's rigged up. It's a pure case of atavism, putting me very much in mind of the converted cannibal on a visit to this country and witnessing the departure of a cargo of plump and sleek-looking oleaginous missionaries—the aforesaid ex-cannibal being unable to prevent his hand gently rubbing his tum-tum and smacking his lips, thinking of those dear old times of "long pig" with white sauce.

The old dad's loss of memory and consequent wrong directions to the Virgin old lady and yours truly, is certainly attributable to his multifarious daily occupations. Some time is taken up in checking his calculations of the number of hairs on individual craniums, noting whether an increase or decrease has taken place. No doubt, sir, on this very planet you have noticed how prone the inhabitants are to baldness. Why this alone is a sign of the old man's growing senility. He causes this baldness so that his labors may be less—brilliantly polished "bladders of lard" (as your assistant demon designates them) with only a fringe of twelve or so hairs, that seem to stand out with astonishment at being left, being easier for Jehovah to tick off in the heavenly ledger than a human cocoa-nut with a covering like a door mat.

Then there's those confounded sparrows—not one falling to the ground, but what its heavenly father knoweth of it. As his age increases, he tries to get me to look after these young jokers. I've asked him to make these sparrows immortal, then, perhaps, they'll have no cause to fall; but he refuses, saying the idea is too awfully sublime to think of a London sparrow being immortal. I am sorry to say I let them fall—it seems their business; but yet I have never seen a dead London sparrow; I suspect they are translated.

My ponderous verbosity has got rather beyond the limits at first intended, as at this season of Lent, I am very busy, having to send in my annual statement of those who get the largest quantity of fish behind their waistcoats and those who actually fast. I can't see the utility of these calculations, but Jehovah demands it, together with the return of those gospel-shops that burn the most fat on their altars in the shape of candles. The dad persists that such observances are purely his, and show respect, although I am continually telling him they were practised in the pagan world long before the birth on this planet of yours truly. I trust, Mr. Editor, this long explanation will satisfy the old man and keep him quietly in heaven, as the daily papers show you what a devil of a temper the "old un's" is in, flinging rocks about at Monte Carlo, or, in the words of the classical writers of America "playing hell and breaking things."

SUNDAY-school Teacher: "Johnny, do you understand the parable of the shepherd and his sheep?" Johnny: "Yes, sir." "If you little children are the sheep, what am I?" "A big sheep, sir."

ONE of our muscular parsons, the other Sunday, had not altogether removed from his mind the recollections of the previous day's cricket, and much to the amusement of those present at the morning service, solemnly closed the sacred volume with, "Here endeth the first innings."

## A BRIDE OF CHRIST.

CATHERINE, of Sienna, an Italian saint, who lived between 1347 and 1380, was espoused to Christ in a special manner at the age of seventeen, the same age at which Jahveh was smitten with the charms of the Virgin Mary. In early youth she was so devoted to religion that she thought of taking boys' clothes in order to become a Dominican monk. In consequence of her devotion, Christ came to her cell in person and placed a marriage ring on her finger. The bridal scene forms the subject of a large number of old Italian paintings. The Rev. John James Blunt, in his *Vestiges of Ancient Manners and Customs Discoverable in Modern Italy*, p. 11, relates that an inscription in the convent at Sienna records, "that under this roof St. Catherine was married to Jesus Christ on the day of the Carnival 1364, in the presence of the most blessed Virgin Mary, of King David, who played upon the harp, of St. John the Evangelist, St. Paul and St. Dominic." Another inscription records, "that in this house St. Catherine one day felt an amorous longing (*amorose smanie*) to see her divine husband: that two very beautiful angels appeared to her to comfort her; but that she, turning to them said, It is not you I want, but he who created you." The reverend gentlemen asks who can help being reminded of the interviews between Bacchus and Ariadne, etc. But is not the Christian story of the Incarnation quite of a piece with these other myths?

## REVIEWS.

*Jacob the Wrestler.* By HUMANITAS. London: Freethought Publishing Co. 2s.—This writer is favorably known to Freethinkers by his thoughtful writings. His present volume deals with the history of Jacob the supplanter, who wrestled with the Lord or his angel for a whole night, in the longest and most stiffly contested match on record. Every incident of the patriarch's career is examined, sometimes we think over minutely, but this defect is compensated for by pungent observations and racy humor. The book is interesting reading, and should have a good sale. A Freethinker might lend it to a Christian friend with good results.

*People's History of the English Aristocracy.* By GEORGE STANDRING. London: R. Forder.—Mr. Standring has collected much information, and presented it all in a very interesting manner. His style rarely flags. Radicals who begin his book will go through it. There is, however, a slight want of historic perspective; noblemen of two or three centuries ago being too much judged by present-day standards. Nor do we think Mr. Standring's judgment is always sound. When, for instance, he says that the great Duke of Marlborough "had no superior qualities of mind or intellect," he is flying in the face of obvious facts. John Churchill was far from being honest, but he was a very great man.

*Man in Search of His Soul.* By GERALD MASSEY.—This is the fifth of Mr. Massey's published lectures on Religion. It describes, with great ability and power, the growth of Animism, and ends by hoping that Spiritualism will supersede Christianity. We hope not, but we have much pleasure in recommending Mr. Massey's pamphlet to the attention of our readers. The price is 1s. Copies can be had from the author, Villa Bordighiera, New Southgate, London, N.

*Our Corner.* March. Freethought Publishing Co.—Mr. Bradlaugh opens with a terse paper on the Fallacies and Dangers of Socialism, which Mrs. Besant promises to reply to. We do not envy her the task. Then comes "Facts for Socialists," by the Fabian Society, which is ostensibly a mass of incontrovertible figures, but when looked into it turns out to be a mass of sophistry, which the Fabians must surely see through themselves, unless they belong to the class of people who are "too jolly clever by half." Mr. Robertson concludes his very able and interesting study of the Art of Tennyson.

*Socialism and Sex.* By K. P. London: W. Reeves.—The author appears to have done some thinking without arriving at sound ideas, and some reading without arriving at the truth. The sentimental and over-strained rhetoric of the peroration will perhaps explain the writer's defects and deficiencies in treating the important theme of sexual morality and progress. There is one thing, however, to her credit; she recognises the law of population as a fact, and sees it will have to be dealt with. For the rest, without discussing her Socialism, we cannot help thinking that her free-love theories would lead to social anarchy. The sexual passion is the one which above all others requires stern discipline.

*The Way to be Happy.* By a PRESSMAN. Marks: 72 Houndsditch, London.—Contains nothing very novel, but gives some sensible hints on the subject.

*English Philistines and their Allies.* London: G. Vickers.—This is a political satire in verse, written by an ardent Gladstonian, on the Liberal Unionist. The author has some vigor and some command of language, but there his qualifications end. A shilling is a heavy price for his effusion.

A LITTLE child once asked his mother the question, "Mother, what part of heaven do people go to who are good, but not agreeable?"

"THERE is something that has preyed heavily on my mind since our engagement, dear," he said; "but I am almost afraid to tell you of it." "What is it, George?" the young woman asked anxiously. "I am a somnambulist." "Oh, is that all?" she exclaimed, with a sigh of relief, "I have always been a Methodist myself, but of course when we are made one I shall expect to attend your church."

### PROFANE JOKES.

THE rain falls *not* alike on the just and unjust, for the simple reason that the unjust usually has the umbrella belonging to the just.

AN exchange says the Sandwich Islanders believe that Beelzebub walks the earth in the form of a woman. And now and then you will find a man in this country who believes so too, and that he has married the woman!

WHEN the Prodigal Son returned home and the fatted calf was killed and placed before him on the table, he turned up his nose at it, and said: "Great goodness! haven't you got no other kind of meat but that? I allus did hate veal!"

A YOUNGSTER while reading a chapter in Genesis, asked his father if the people in those days used to do their sums on the ground. It was discovered that he had been reading the passage "And the sons of men multiplied on the face of the earth."

AN Irishman who recently waited at the Cardinal's table in Dublin on a Friday, when there were seventeen courses of fish, was quite unable to repress his astonishment. "Bedad!" he exclaimed, "if that's what ye call fastin', it's meself that could stand Lent all the year round!"

"Wiry," exclaimed the deacon, "the principles of the Anarchists are older than the Christian era. The Bible teaches 'em," "What?" exclaimed the shocked parson. "Yes, sir," howled the deacon; "Noah was an *artist*, and all his sons, and all the best people in the world, and—" But the parson had fled.

FIRST PASTOR: "You have a paid choir, I believe." Second ditto: "Yes, and a very good one." First pastor: "I don't believe in them. It is wrong in principle, and is an extravagance a church should not sanction." Second ditto: "That's what I thought, my dear brother, but it got so in my church that we were compelled to pay the people to stay and listen to a volunteer choir or pay a choir to sing, so on the score of economy we concluded to hire a choir instead of a congregation."

**MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL COMPANY (Limited).**  
Registered Offices: 20 KENNEDY STREET MANCHESTER.

#### PURCHASE OF HALL.

The Directors have recently entered into a contract to purchase excellent premises in Bloomsbury, Rusholm Road, and appeal to the Secularists of Manchester and the vicinity for *prompt assistance* to enable them to complete the purchase. Full particulars appeared in the *Freethinker* of February. Prospectuses and forms of application for shares (£1 each) may be obtained from the undersigned at the Registered Offices of the Company.

GEORGE PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

Ready early in March.

### IS SOCIALISM SOUND?

A VERBATIM REPORT

(Revised by both Disputants)

OF THE

### FOUR NIGHTS' PUBLIC DEBATE

BETWEEN

Mrs. BESANT & Mr. FOOTE.

Cheap Edition, in paper covers ... 1/-

Best edition, printed on superior paper and bound in cloth ... 2/-

Orders should be sent to Mr. Forder in advance to secure an early supply.

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

### PAMPHLETS by ARTHUR B. MOSS.

ONE PENNY EACH.

#### Bible Horrors, or Real Blasphemy.

Emphatically the best pamphlet to put into the hands of sensitive Christians!

**Bible Saints.** When you have read this pamphlet you will probably exclaim, "A man may smile, and smile and be a villain." Or, "O most upright judge; some Jews have come to judgment."

**Man and the Lower Animals.** This pamphlet demonstrates that the lower animals think and reason, and that some of them possess powers approaching those of man.

D'RONTERRE O'BRIEN'S great work, "The Rise, Progress and Phases of Human Slavery," published at 3s. 6d., can now be had for ONE SHILLING, nicely bound in cloth (lettered) demy 8vo. Should be read by every reformer.—Freethought Publishing Co., 63 Fleet Street; R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street; and Bookstall, Hall of Science.

### NOW READY. SALADIN THE LITTLE

BY T. EVAN JACOB, B.A.

TWOPENCE.

R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter Street, E.C.

NOW READY. NOW READY.

Colonel Ingersoll's GRAND NEW LECTURE

### SOCIAL SALVATION

Sixteen Pages. Price One Penny.

"Brilliantly trenchant style."—*Commonweal*.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

NOW READY. NOW READY.

New Edition of

### THE SHADOW OF THE SWORD

By G. W. FOOTE.

With the facts and figures brought up to date and comments on the military condition of Europe and the prospects of peace.

WHAT THE PRESS SAID OF THE FIRST EDITION.

"Ablely written. . . The author deserves thanks for this timely publication."—*Echo*.

"A trenchant exposure of the folly of war, which everyone should read."—*Weekly Times*.

"A wonderfully eloquent denunciation of the war fever."—*Birmingham Owl*.

"Presents us with some startling truths that are well worth preserving."—*The People* (Wexford).

PRICE TWOPENCE.

### BIBLE ABSURDITIES

PART II. OF THE BIBLE HANDBOOK FOR FREETHINKERS AND INQUIRING CHRISTIANS.

Edited by

G. W. FOOTE & W. P. BALL.

Containing all the chief absurdities from Genesis to Revelation, conveniently and strikingly arranged, with appropriate headlines, giving the point of each absurdity in a sentence.

In Wrapper, price Fourpence.

ALSO

### BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS

Price Fourpence.

PRINTED IN PARALLEL COLUMNS.

### LETTERS TO JESUS CHRIST.

On his Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, and Miracles.

By G. W. FOOTE.

In Neat Wrapper. Price Fourpence.

SECOND EDITION.

### WAS JESUS INSANE? By

G. W. FOOTE. A Searching Inquiry into the Mental Condition of the Prophet of Nazareth—an Important and much-neglected subject. One Penny.

### COLONEL INGERSOLL'S LATEST LECTURES.

Myth and Miracle - - - 1d.  
(Full of Poetry.)

Live Topics - - - 1d.  
(Full of Points.)

Real Blasphemy - - - 1d.

### SECULAR SCHOOLS, FAILSWORTH.

THE COMMITTEE intend holding a BAZAAR in aid of debt (£300), at Easter next. Since the erection of the Schools in 1880 the members have raised about £430 towards the school expenses and reduction of debt. In making this appeal towards an extinction of the debt we should thankfully accept any contributions which may be sent.—H. Taylor, Secular Schools, Failsforth, Manchester.

Just Published. Fancy Wrapper. 176pp. Price 1s. THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY. By GEORGE STANDING, editor of the *Radical*.—Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter Street.

PROGRESS.—Vols. I. and II., neatly bound in red cloth, published at 7s., reduced to 3s. the two. Postage 6d.—R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street.

Price Threepence.

## PROGRESS

THE

Freethinker's Magazine,  
EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

The MARCH Number contains

God and Humanity.—II. By G. W. Foote.  
Sarpalus of Mardon.—II. By James Thomson (B.V.)  
A Bible Community. By J. M. Wheeler.  
The New Sociology. By James Leatham.  
The "New Sociology" Criticised. By W. P. Ball.  
Brief Freethought Biographies. By J. M. Wheeler.

### BIBLE HEROES

A NEW WORK

By G. W. FOOTE.

No. 1.—MR. ADAM.

No. 2.—CAPTAIN NOAH.

PRICE ONE PENNY EACH.

Nos. III. and IV. in the press.

### SOME MISTAKES OF MOSES.

By R. G. INGERSOLL.

The only Complete Edition published in England; faithfully reprinted from the Author's American Edition. Accurate as Colenso and fascinating as a novel. Destined to hold a permanent place in Freethought literature.

WITH A BRIEF INTRODUCTION BY G. W. FOOTE.

A Handsome Volume of 136 pp.

Paper Covers, 1s. Bound in cloth, 1s. 6d.

### 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.

TO FREETHINKERS.

A TRIAL SOLICITED. BEST STYLE, FIT & WEAR.

H. HAMPTON,

TAILOR, 14 Gt. Castle Street, W.

(A few doors from Regent Circus)

Post Free for One Shilling

SHORTHAND WITHOUT COMPLICATIONS. New Phonetic System, by A. JAMES, Parliamentary Reporter. The only simple and easy phonetic method. No other book required. Address A. James, 5 Crofton Road, Camberwell, London, S.E.

### 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 GRAVESEND ST., E.C.

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, Nervousness, Biliousness, Costiveness, 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. 1jd. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post for 15 or 36 Penny Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

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