

# THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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## GOD AND HIS GUEST.

*And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water.—EXODUS XXXIV., 28.*

[Of course God gave Moses something better than mere bread and water. An old man of eighty on the summit of a bleak mountain needed something a little stronger, and Jehovah as an hospitable host must have entertained him accordingly. Such at least is our artist's interpretation of the text.]

## INFIDEL HOMES.—II.

MR. WATKINSON asks whether infidelity has "produced new and higher types of character." Naturally he answers this question in the negative. "The lives of infidel teachers," he exclaims, "are in saddest contrast to their pretentious philosophies and bland assumptions." He then passes in review a picked number of these upstarts, dealing with each of them in a Watkinsonian manner. His rough-and-ready method is this. Carefully leaving out of sight all the good they did, and the high example of honest thought they set to the world, he dilates upon their failings without the least regard to the general moral atmosphere of their age, or the proportion of their defects to the entirety of their natures. Mr. Smith, the greengrocer, whose horizon is limited to his shop and his chapel, may lead a very exemplary life, according to orthodox

standards; but his virtues, as well as his vices, are rather of a negative character, and the world at large is not very much the better for his having lived in it. On the other hand a man like Mirabeau may be shockingly incontinent, but if in the crisis of a nation's history he places his genius, his eloquence, and his heroic courage at the service of liberty, and helps to mark a new epoch of progress, humanity can afford to pardon his sexual looseness in consideration of his splendid service to the race. Judgment, in short, must be pronounced on the sum-total of a man's life, and not on a selected aspect. Further, the faults that might be overwhelming in the character of Mr. Smith, the Methodist greengrocer, may sink into comparative insignificance in the character of a great man, whose intellect and emotions are on a mightier scale. This truth is admirably expressed in Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*.

"Not the few inches of deflection from the mathematical orbit, which are so easily measured, but the *ratio* of these to the whole diameter, constitutes the real aberration. This orbit may be a planet's, its diameter the breadth of the solar system; or it may be a city hippodrome; nay the circle of a gin-horse, its diameter

\* *The Influence of Scepticism on Character.* Being the sixteenth Fernley Lecture. By the Rev. William L. Watkinson. London: T. Woolmer.

a score of feet or paces. But the inches of deflection only are measured: and it is assumed that the diameter of the girth, and that of the planet, will yield the same ratio when compared with them! Here lies the root of many a blind, cruel condemnation of Burnes, Swifts, Rousseaus, which one never listens to with approval. Granted, the ship comes into harbor with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all-wise and all-powerful: but to know *how* blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe, or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs."

We commend this fine passage to Mr. Watkinson's attention. It may make him a little more modest when he next applies his orthodox tape and callipers to the character of his betters.

Goethe is Mr. Watkinson's first infidel hero, and we are glad to see that he makes this great poet a present to Freethought. Some Christians claim Goethe as really one of themselves, but Mr. Watkinson will have none of him. "The actual life of Goethe," he tells us, "was seriously defective." Perhaps so, and the same might have been said of hundreds of Christian teachers who lived when he did, had they been big enough to have their lives written for posterity. Goethe's fault was a too inflammable heart, and with the license of his age, which was on the whole remarkably pious, he courted more than one pretty woman; or, if the truth must be told, he did not repel the pretty women who threw themselves at him. But there were thousands of orthodox men who acted in the same way. The distinctive fact about Goethe is that he kept a high artistic ideal always before him, and cultivated his poetic gifts with tireless assiduity. His sensual indulgences were never allowed to interfere with his great aim in life, and surely that is something. The result is that the whole world is the richer for his labors, and only the Watsons can find any delight in dwelling on the failings he possessed in common with meaner mortals. To say that Goethe should be "an object of horror to the whole self-respecting world" is simply to indulge in the twang of the tabernacle.

Carlyle is the next sinner; but, curiously, the *Rock*, while praising Mr. Watkinson's lecture, says that "Carlyle ought not to be classed with the sceptics." We dissent from the *Rock*, however; and we venture to think that Carlyle's greatest fault was a paltering with himself on religious subjects. His intellect rejected more than his tongue disowned. Mr. Watkinson passes a very different criticism. Taking Carlyle as a complete sceptic, he proceeds to libel him by a process which always commends itself to the preachers of the gospel of charity. He picks from Mr. Froude's four volumes a number of tid-bits, setting forth Carlyle's querulousness, arrogance, and domestic storms with Mrs. Carlyle. Behold the man! exclaims Mr. Watkinson. Begging his pardon, it is not the man at all. Carlyle was morbidly sensitive by nature, he suffered horribly from dyspepsia, and intense literary labor, still further deranging his nerves, made him terribly irritable. But he had a fine side to his nature, and even a sunny side. Friends like Professor Tyndall, Professor Norton, Sir James Stephen, and Mrs. Gilchrist, saw Carlyle in a very different light from Mr. Froude's. Besides, Mrs. Carlyle made her own choice. She deliberately married a man of genius, whom she recognised as destined to make a heavy mark on his age. She had her man of genius, and he put his life into his books. And what a life! And what books! The sufficient answer to all the Watkinson tribe is to point to Carlyle's thirty volumes. There is the man. Such work implies a certain martyrdom, and those who stood beside him should not have complained so lustily that they were scorched by the fire. Carlyle did a giant's work, and he had a right to some failings. Freethinkers see them as well as Mr. Watkinson, but they are aware that no man is perfect, and they do not hold up Carlyle, or any other sceptic, as a model for universal imitation.

Mr. Watkinson's remarks on George Eliot are simply brutal. She was a "wanton." She "lived in free-love with George Henry Lewes." She had no excuse for her "license." She was "full of insincerity, cant, and hypocrisy." And so on *ad nauseam*. To call Mr. Watkinson a liar would be to descend to his level. Let us simply look at the facts. George Eliot lived with George Henry Lewes as his wife. She had no vagrant attachments. Her connexion with Lewes only terminated with his death. Why then did they not marry? Because Lewes's wife was still living, and the pious English law would not allow a divorce unless

all the household secrets were dragged before a gaping public. George Eliot consulted her own heart instead of social conventions. She became a mother to Lewes's children, and a true wife to him, though neither a priest nor a registrar blessed their union. She chose between the law of custom and the higher law, facing the world's frown, and relying on her own strength to bear the consequences of her act. To call such a woman a wanton and a kept mistress is to confess one's self devoid of sense and sensibility. Nor does it show much insight to assert that "infidelity betrayed and wrecked her life," and to speculate how glorious it might have been if she had "found Jesus." It will be time enough to listen to this strain when Mr. Watkinson can show us a more "glorious" female writer in the Christian camp.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

## SOME RELIGIOUS STORIES.

### NO. 6.—THE WICKED NEWSPAPER BOY AND THE PIOUS EVANGELIST.

'Twas Christmas Eve. A wicked infidel newspaper boy named Tom Goodheart was passing by a frozen canal, whistling and thinking of anything but the solemn event of the morrow, when he heard the cracking of the ice, followed by a shriek and a splash. A head then emerged from the water and a boy's hands were seen wildly clutching at the edges of the broken ice. "Gaud bli' me, if there ain't a feller a-drownin'!" cried the wicked boy, and he left off whistling, pulled his hands out of his pockets, threw down the ungodly newspapers from under his arm, and was on the ice in two ticks, trying to rescue the drowning boy, whose half-stifed cries and impotent struggles were of the most frantic description. But the profane rescuer who took his Maker's name in vain so glibly and so shockingly was doomed to find that the hand of flesh cannot save without the hand of Gaud. Jesus can walk on water; the infidel cannot walk even on ice—Gaud be praised! Unsustained by faith, the wicked newspaper boy felt the treacherous ice break under his feet. He too, with a cry of dismay, sunk into the cold and pitiless waters. But Gaud in his wisdom did not mean to let the occasion pass unimproved. Such an incident should not be totally wasted. The Rev. Silas Godliman, a noble evangelist and savior of souls, was close by all the time. He saw the whole scene, heard the dreadful profanity of the wicked newspaper boy, and beheld his rash and godless reliance on his own poor unaided efforts. Unlike the wretched newspaper boy, our shining evangelist knew that if a sparrow fell to the ground or a boy into the water, it was the Almighty's will that it should be so. Who would presume to interfere with his sovereign will? Who would dare to stay him in his judgments on prayerless profanity and arrogant self-will? Not the Rev. Silas Godliman, certainly. Falling on his knees at a safe distance from the water's edge and casting his eyes passionately to heaven, like a true and faithful Christian, he briefly but powerfully pleaded at the throne of grace for mercy for the lost one's soul. What beautiful charity, what noble thought for others, the true Christian ever displays! Comforted by these reflections and sustained in all his trials by the amplest trust in him who doeth all things well, Mr. Godliman now calmly remembered that he had a most important prayer-meeting to attend. If Gaud in his wisdom took the boys' lives, at least the mothers' souls should be saved, for this was a matter of *infinite* importance. Moralising solemnly and thankfully upon his own blessed safety in Christ from the fate divinely and wisely accorded to the unconverted lads now silent under the quiet water, the reverend philosopher "walked away" to peacefully and piously fulfil his many duties among the poor people whom he loved so well and for whom he was always ready to sacrifice so much. All Christians can find holy comfort in the salvation accorded to so bravely pious a soul! When vulgar street-boys shout after the zealous evangelist, "Who ran away from the drowning boy?" he rises superior to their ungodly cries and rough peltings, and passes on in benignant silence. Like Christ his master, he answereth not his persecutors.

When hardened blasphemers of riper age call him a cowardly skunk, he forgives them with a Christian smile inimitable in its depth of meaning! He resents not such abuse. All saints must suffer, and the reproaches of the Gentiles are but compliments and blessings to the elect. His heart is full of silent gratitude to the Gaud who saved his blessed carcass from a watery grave and his precious soul from the destruction accorded to the unbelieving and profane, who care only for each other and despise the power of Christian prayer and Christian resignation.

Oh, that all infidels would take warning from wicked Tom Goodheart's untimely fate! If he had displayed faith in God like the eminent Christian whose steadfast and prayerful example he so despised, he too would have been preserved by the Lord as a monument of the divine help which never fails the true believer. Cold, cold, was the water through which his last faint cries were bubbled forth, but his soul, alas, is in regions of a very different temperature. Oh, infidels, infidels, beware in time lest a like fate be yours for evermore!

W. P. BALL.

## ACID DROPS.

THE Italian clergy are attending to the earthquake question. They are organising a pilgrimage of atonement to the Sanctuary of Laghette, near Monaco. The civil authorities are pulling down the dangerous structures as a more practical means of avoiding danger from further shocks.

TALMAGE explains earthquakes thus:—"There is caged in the centre of this world an old lion of destruction, and he will not rest quiet much of the time, and he plunges against the bars of his cage. Last August he put one paw against the western hemisphere and that made everything rattle from Florida to New York, and now he puts his paw against the eastern hemisphere, and France and Italy rock from side to side. No one can chain the raging internal monster or bid him lie down except the one who made the lions crouch before Daniel in the Babylonish cavern."

THE *Christian Herald* tells a story of a conflagration at an oil works when a fireman foolishly turned the stream of water from his hose upon a burning oil tank. As he poured in water, which sank to the bottom of the tank, the burning oil rose and overflowed and spread blazing over the whole place till it "caused an explosion." The curious similitude drawn is this: "In the same way when the Pharisees of former days and the sceptics and atheists of our day, speak against Christ, and try to show that he was but as another man, they are pouring in water that just makes his divinity rise the more to the surface, until it shall overflow all bounds and every one shall see that Jesus is the Christ." The comparison is tolerably correct. Christianity is blazing oil that overspreads society and diffuses fire and ruin everywhere around. Society must beware of the conflagrations and explosions that blazing Christianity will cause if it is again let loose from the tanks in which it is at present confined by reason and common sense.

SOME of "General" Booth's underlings have very curious notions as to what is due to their neighbors. At Altrincham, recently, a detachment of the Salvation Army had a big parade. They congregated in Upper George Street and made a joyful, and at the same time frightful, noise unto the Lord with their unmelodious voices, tambourines, and a big drum. Mr. James Cowsil, an adjoining shopkeeper, went out and asked them to go away, as he had a daughter ill in bed. But they were too full of the Spirit to have any consideration for the suffering girl. Accordingly the police were sent for, but when they arrived the Salvation leader defied them in the name of Jesus, and the nuisance was continued. Fortunately the magistrates have taught these fanatics a lesson. "Private" James McDonald was fined 5s. and costs, which he paid. "Lieutenant" Jane Collier was fined the same amount, but declined to pay, and was taken to prison for fourteen days.

NEWS comes from America of a split between Moody and Sankey. Is Moody dissatisfied with Sankey's singing, or Sankey with Moody's preaching, or is their quarrel less about God than Mammon?

THE clergy are less fond than they used to be of defending the Rib Story. Many of them explain it away as an allegory, and others slide over it in discreet silence. There are still a few of the old-fashioned sort, however, who go the whole hog—we beg pardon, the whole rib. Such a one is the Rev. C. C. Collingwood, who has just published a volume entitled *The Bible and the Age*. In a scientific day like this he gravely tells the world, for the millionth time, that the bone Eve was made from was taken from the region of Adam's heart, because that organ is the seat of affection. Mr. Collingwood doesn't say which rib it

was. Perhaps it was the fifth. And that may be the reason why men have ever since been so ticklish about that spot.

NINNIES will never cease writing. The Rev. A. Smythe Palmer announces a forthcoming volume in which he will explain Joshua's great miracle on entirely new principles. Fancy an educated man with nothing better to do!

M. FALLET, director of an orphanage, has been sentenced to eight years' imprisonment, and the deprivation of civil rights for twenty years, for indecent assaults upon seven young girls. He was tried before the Criminal Court of Grandson, in the canton of Vaud. The State prosecutor brought out the horrid fact that the wretch had infamously made use of religion to lead astray the children committed to his protection. His own advocate, even, urged as an extenuating circumstance that "his crimes were not the result of deliberate wickedness, but the product of that peculiar degeneration of the moral feelings which has its root in the exaggerated pietism and excited religious monomania so often found in the Separatist sects, and which favor the unwholesome development of the sexual passions."

THE Rev. Mr. Ward, of Englewood, New Jersey, shot his wife and himself the other day. Mrs. Ward is recovering.

THE New York *Truthseeker* says that Sam Jones's bad grammar was more than Boston people could stand. Boston people are anxious to go to heaven, but they want to get there grammatically.

THE formation of Mother Eve's tomb on the outskirts of Djeddah shows her to have been a woman over thirty feet high. Small wonder that when she said "Eat," Adam ate.

MR. ROSENTHAL is boasting again of conversions of Jews at the East End. Considering the vast influx of German and Polish pauper Jews into London, and the fact that Mr. Rosenthal's mission sets converts up in business and shelters and maintains 164 inquiring Jews and Jewesses, we do not wonder that he can boast of a few converts, but whether they are worth boasting over is quite another matter.

THE *Times* some time since pointed out that over 25 per cent. of missionary funds were spent upon officials at home. "Why do the heathen rage?" asks the Psalmist. Perhaps if they got a larger percentage of the money raised for them they wouldn't rage quite so much.

ACCORDING to the *Official Year Book of the Church of England*, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the number of communicants of the Established Church is 1,181,915. The communicants of the united Nonconforming bodies—Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, etc.—amount to 1,533,131. It would appear that the number of those who in this Christian country actually observe the rite enjoined upon all Christians is something less than a tenth of the inhabitants.

THE Rev. W. M. Jones, of Mildmay, who believes in keeping the seventh day, writes to the *Jewish Chronicle* declaring that the true way of keeping the Sabbath, viz., observing Saturday, is spreading. He says that the inhabitants of Pitcairn Island all keep the Sabbath, the day commanded by God.

AT the same time we read in the *Truthseeker* accounts of religious persecution of the Seventh Day Adventists in Arkansas. It appears that a Mr. Swearigen settled upon a farm four miles from town. He was far away from any church, and, after having kept Saturday according to his conscience, worked upon his farm on Sunday. His labor and his faith were shared by his son, a lad of seventeen. The two were observed by their Christian neighbours, and reported to the grand jury, by whom they were indicted. They were tried, convicted, and fined.

HAVING no money, they were imprisoned for twenty-five days in the county jail. At the expiration of the sentence, the Sabbath-breaker's horse was levied on to pay the fine and costs, amounting to 38 dols. The horse sold at auction for 27 dols. A few days afterward the sheriff demanded 36 dols.—11 dols. balance due on fine and costs and 25 dols. for board for Swearigen and son while in jail. When told that the Adventist had no money, he promptly levied on the only cow, but was persuaded to accept bonds, and the amount was paid by contributions from friends of the same faith.

ANOTHER case was of a young married couple who moved into Arkansas from Ohio. They were Seventh Day Baptists. When the law allowing them to choose their own Sabbath was repealed in 1885, they continued the religious habit of keeping Saturday and working Sunday. An envious Christian neighbour observed them; the grand jury indicted the husband, and he was tried, convicted, and put in jail for refusing to pay the fine. Week after week passed by, the baby sickened and died because the mother had no means to hire physicians; the wife was prostrated, and, a day or two before the law was repealed and the husband released, she, too, died. He returned home only to meet his neighbors at his gate bearing her coffin to the graveyard—dead

of a broken heart and lack of care. Yet some people think Christian persecution is dead.

WE observe that the clergy and the denominational ministers are very active in working the Jubilee dodge. At Liverpool, for instance, the local Presbytery applauded the Rev. R. H. Lundry, who lauded the proposal for a memorial to the Queen for the women of England. There is, however, a little "shop" behind this loyalty. The object of the memorial is to secure the closing of public-houses on Sunday. It is quite natural that the sky-pilots should like that day all to themselves; but if drinking a glass of beer is not a crime, Englishmen should be free to do it on one day as well as another. Somehow the sky-pilots always take a trade view of these things.

"GENERAL" BOOTH proposes to commemorate the Jubilee by adding eight hundred officers of both sexes to the Salvation Army, and appeals to "the outside public" to subscribe £5,200 to defray the cost of training them for field work. There is nothing like plenty of cheek.

As Jubilee suggestions are all the rage, a Freethinking Bible-reader has discovered what he calls a Jubilee text to suit both Victoria and William the German. It is found in Jeremiah xiii., 18: "Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down; for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory."

"ANTICHRIST" furnishes a new solution of the number of the beast, which he says is an old one, referred to in the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*, one version of which says that the number 666 is the sum of the seven letters composing the name of Jeshu Natzr or Jesus of Nazareth. The names and numerical values of the Hebrew letters are: Yod, 10; Shin, 300; Vau, 6; Nun, 50; Yod, 10; Tsaddi, 90; Resh, 200; total, 666.

In answer to a Roman Catholic objection to the Protestant Bible, respecting the missing books therein referred to, the *Rock* says: "There is no evidence whatever that the alleged lost books were inspired writings dictated by the Holy Spirit." This is true enough, but exactly the same objection applies to the recognised books of the Bible. If, however, the Bible is inspired, then the twenty or more missing books there referred to or quoted as of equal or superior authority, must also share the inspiration, seeing that they are guaranteed by the other books and have quite as much evidence—that is none at all—in favor of the Holy Ghost theory.

THE Rev. Newman Hall has been discoursing to his congregation on the duty of cultivating a peaceable spirit. He dwelt on the frightful cost of armies and the brutalities of war, and urged that "it became Christian citizens to use their political influence to promote the brotherhood of nations." Of course it becomes them, but they are a terrible time in recognising the fact. Christianity does not promote peace. Nearly all the fighting in the world is done by the Christian minority. Even in Europe it is Christians who foment war, and Freethinkers who most vigorously denounce it. Is it not obvious that, if Christianity had a tendency to promote peace, war would have been ended long ago, for the Christians—at least in our part of the world—are in an overwhelming majority, and what they insisted on would have to be done?

CAPTAIN HOSKYNs shot himself at Pontefract barracks a few days ago. The papers state that he attended divine service the day before; in other words, he committed suicide within twenty-four hours of his audience with the Lord.

A PARSON at a Christian Conference at Sydney objected to the use of trams on the "Lord's Day" on the ground that a man named Jesus, in days of old, never took a tram on Sunday. Neither did he ever enter a church on Sunday. He went to synagogue on a Saturday instead.

RESISTANCE to tithes is spreading. The South Monmouthshire Tithe-payers' Association demand a deduction of 22 per cent. As they refuse to pay in full, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will have to distrain.

MR. J. C. N. Abbott deserves to have his name handed down to posterity for having discovered who was Cain's wife. A careful reading of the two first chapters of Genesis has shown Mr. Abbott that God made man and woman on the sixth day, and that on the seventh, being weary, he took a rest. Coming on the scene of his labors on the eighth day the man and woman were not to be found—"there was not a man to till the ground." So he set to work to manufacture another pair. Now Mr. Abbott's theory is that while God was nodding on the seventh day the man and woman created on the sixth day went to the land of Nod, where in due time Cain, the offspring of the eighth-day couple, followed them.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us a copy of the *Bath Herald* for March 18th, one item of which, appropriately marked with red ink, reports the inquest upon a laborer who died of starvation, the jury returning a verdict of "death from natural causes,"

while another column of the same paper reports that despite the agricultural and other depressions, the income of the Church Missionary Society is largely in excess of any previous year.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER, the Attorney-General, speaking at a meeting of the London City Mission, deplored "the fearful blasphemy of the anti-Christian publications spread in the poorer neighborhoods." Is he hoping the City will institute another prosecution and employ the services of Sir Richard Webster?

THE Rev. A. L. Greig, of the Paddock Congregational Church, near Huddersfield, lecturing on "Christian Answers to Social Questions," declares that "Jesus was the first real philanthropist." Mr. Greig is apparently unaware that philanthropy is a Greek word and that Plato used the word and inculcated the idea three centuries before Jesus is said to have been born.

MR. GREIG goes on to say that "Christ created the idea of humanity." Evidently he does not know that Gautama Buddha, at least four centuries before Jesus, inculcated "As a mother, even at the risk of her own life protects her son, her only son, so let there be goodwill without measure among all beings."

Two complaints appear in the *Daily News* of burial extortions practised by Christ's ministers. A workman had to pay his vicar 16s. for doing nothing at a funeral, the burial service having been conducted by a Nonconformist minister, to whom he paid 5s. Another person had to pay 21s. to the vicar and 2s. 4d. to the clerk, neither of whom officiated at the service. "Can this be just?" the correspondent indignantly asks. Well, of course not, but who expects anything better of Christian clergy? They commonly resist the opening of cemeteries until part of every fee received is handed over to them to compensate them for the loss of profitable business. Thousands of people thus pay burial fees to the Church without knowing it.

MR. BENTLEY and his dramatic company have been performing in the North of Scotland, very much to the disgust of the bigots of that part. At Dingwall great excitement prevailed, owing to the circulation of a hand-bill which commenced thus: "Bentley v. Christ.—Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." The result was that the theatre was crowded. We hope that pious persecutors may always overreach themselves, as in this instance. It should be added that Mr. Bentley is the son of the well-known Presbyterian bigot, Dr. Begg.

A BRADFORD Freethinker informs us that having attended some Sunday lectures of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, who spoke to crowded audiences, he resolved to make a tour of the churches and chapels and see for himself how they were attended. At the Bradford Old Church he found a congregation of 14 in the afternoon, and at the Roman Catholic Church 100 in the evening. There were 54 at the Unitarian Chapel, 21 at the Presbyterian Church, 25 at the Wesleyan Chapel, 20 at the Congregationalists, 34 at the Free Church, and 30 at the Salvation Army meeting. The other sects had numbers varying from 4 to 20. Yet, of course, Bradford calls itself a Christian town. As a matter of fact the special lecturers of the National Secular Society often address audiences numerous enough to supply the normal congregations of half the places of worship within a mile.

MR. POLLARD, a Quaker, has been lecturing at the Friends Meeting House, Mount's Street, Manchester, on Christianity and War. Mr. Pollard, of course, had no difficulty in showing that the wars in which Christians have indulged were opposed to the spirit of certain precepts of the New Testament, although, as he admitted, quite consonant with God's earlier revelation in the Old. But Mr. Pollard should be aware that there are other texts, as when Jesus declares he came not to bring peace but a sword, and enjoins his disciples "He that hath not a sword let him sell his garment and buy one." When Christians were weak they put forward the maxims of peace, but no sooner did they obtain the sword of power than they used it, not to defend their liberty or their rights, but to impose their creed upon others. The truth is Christianity as a whole gives no real guidance upon this or any other question.

DR. HUNTER, M.P., used to be very warm against the Blasphemy Laws. That was before Aberdeen sent him to St. Stephens. He is now editor of the *Weekly Dispatch*, in succession to Mr. Fox Bourne. Last week the paragraph about "Freethinkers as Jurors," which went the round of the Press, and was inserted in other weekly papers, was carefully excluded from Dr. Hunter's journal. He was very glad, however, to insert as a good bit of copy the Metropolitan Radical Federation's protest against the Jubilee. Probably he didn't know that the protest was drawn up by a Freethinker.

THE *St. Pancras Guardian* says that "Somebody should be placed to keep the lads from sliding up and down the iron rail outside Holy Trinity Church during divine service on a Sunday morning." The best plan would be to open the Board School playground, and let the youngsters caper about where they can amuse themselves without annoying their elders.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, March 27, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street; at 11.15, "The Jubilee"; at 7, "Christianity opposed to Morality."

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

MAY 1, Camberwell; 8, Portsmouth; 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.—F. J. W.

R. DUNN.—Pleased to find that, although a Christian, you are in favor of abolishing the oath. You say it is "mischievous, barbarous, and above all hypocritical." We agree with you, and regret that the Christian Evidence Society does not press this view at its meetings.

A. L. COX sends 10s. for Mr. Kemp, who has lost the sight of one eye through a brutal assault.

C. P. W.—Beecher's epitaph for Ingersoll, "Robert Burns," was a joking allusion to the fact that the orthodox consign the Colonel to blazes.

J. W. GLOVER.—We would rather not say.

YOUNG FREETHINKER.—Pleased to hear that the *Freethinker*, which at first shocked you, has since led you to discard the Bible as of divine origin. Tweedie, 377 Strand, London, publishes a number of teetotal works. No doubt you could obtain a catalogue by applying to him. Mr. Foote is not a teetotaler, but he is next door to it, and likely to stay there.

E. MOORE.—Although a Christian, you write us in a charitable spirit. It is very good of you to say "My heaven will not be complete without you," but we suppose you do not include the *Freethinker*. Does it not occur to you that if "God" is offended by our publications he can easily tell us so himself? Until he does so we cannot attend to the remonstrances of persons who never had any conversation with him on the subject. As to "risking our eternal salvation," we do our duty and take our chance. Probably if you continue to read the *Freethinker*, and especially if you continue to read the Bible, you will agree with us in the end.

A. E. WRIGHT.—Sorry we cannot oblige. If your friend wishes to become a minister without believing in Christianity, he will never obtain our assistance to play the hypocrite.

B. DAWSON.—Pleased to hear from you. Thanks for the Wesley cuttings, which we have returned. Glad to hear that you find the *Freethinker* "sustains its old standard of wit and humor."

J. T.—Thanks for your interesting letter. We knew some of the facts about the gentleman before, but not all of them. We certainly do not mean to act as his advertising agent.

W. T. LEEKEY.—Cuttings are always welcome.

W. DODD.—Professor Bain's *Logic* is a capital book, but a little stiff for beginners. Whately's *Logic* can generally be picked up second-hand for a couple of shillings. There is now a people's edition of Mill's *Logic* at 6s. We advise you to tackle these works instead of a little primer, which will only give you the skeleton of the subject. You must not expect, however, that studying logic will make you a logician. We would also suggest that you would derive more advantage from studying facts than from studying rules. There is science, there is history, there is sociology, as well as other fields of practical research open to you.

W. SCHWEIZER.—Thanks for your batch of cuttings.

A. W. PORRITT.—A pressure of other work has prevented Mr. Foote from writing his promised article on the Atheism of Julius Cæsar for *Progress*. It will appear shortly. The new Secular hymn-book is not yet published.

AGNOSCO.—Appears.

J. GRANGE.—We have never seen anything in thought-reading which did not admit of a very natural explanation; and as a matter of fact, many of the most eminent thought-readers pretend to no more than great cleverness. Your reverend correspondent may believe what he likes on the subject. You did not enclose the newspaper letter you refer to. We are not surprised at the clergy denouncing and endeavoring to ruin papers that give any latitude to political and religious heresy. Glad to hear that the editor was plucky enough to tell the sky-pilots that the way to "stop" heretical correspondents was to answer them.

J. K.—The naval authorities have no right to tamper with post packets containing the *Freethinker*. We have sent you the copy asked for. Let us know if it is intercepted.

CONSTANT READER.—(1) We don't know the age of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. The age of a lady no longer young is a ticklish question. (2) We cannot say whether Henry Broadhurst worked at the new law courts, but he did work as journeyman mason at one time.

J. EDMUNDS.—Thanks. The Rev. F. J. Beck is a nice sort of a man. He is positively shocked at the notion that there may be no hell. Perhaps he expects to be one of those blessed saints in heaven who will loll upon couches and watch their less fortunate fellow-men frizzling in hell below.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Pudsey District Advertiser—Jus—Chat—Western Figaro—Daily Chronicle—Echo—Truthseeker—Freethinker's Magazine—Boston Investigator—Liberator—Lucifer—Thinker—Huddersfield Echo—Bath Herald—Menschunthum—Hampshire Independent.

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 *Pall Mall Gazette* has published a list of the First Forty living English writers, decided by a *plebiscite* of its readers. An analysis of the list shows that 11 are orthodox, 9 heterodox, 9 agnostics, and 11 doubtful. A correspondent says, "Fifty years ago I doubt whether 10 per cent. of the foremost writers of the day would have been found in any but Class I. What will it be fifty years hence? Is orthodoxy likely to regain her lost ground?"

WE understand that though the *Rationalist* of New Zealand has ceased, its editor, Mr. Joseph Evison, will bring out a new paper, to be entitled the *Liberal*, and which promises to be superior, if possible, to its predecessor.

MR. SYMES is still actively engaged fighting theology in Australia. The *Liberator*, we notice, is treating its readers to more extracts from the *Freethinker* than formerly. Mr. W. W. Collins, who recently paid Melbourne a short visit, is lecturing again in Sydney, and Mr. Thomas Walker is busy combatting bigotry in Queensland.

THE Manchester Freethinkers are making headway with their Hall scheme, but there are still a good many shares to be taken up. By way of stimulating the interest of the friends of the movement in their district, they have reprinted as a leaflet our editorial appeal of a few weeks ago. A bazaar will be held on May 7 and 8 in aid of the fund, and Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, and Mr. Foote are all three lecturing in Manchester during the interim. A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together, is all that is needed.

DR. AVELING's *Darwin Made Easy*, the copyright of which belongs to us, is being reprinted. It will be bound in cloth, and sold as before at a shilling. Copies will be ready next week.

NUMBERS III. and IV. of *Bible Heroes* will be ready next Thursday, and the subsequent instalments of two Parts on the first of each month.

MR. FOOTE's *Folly of Prayer* has been out of print for some time. A new (the third) edition is in the press. It contains several pages of new matter.

THE American *Freethinkers Magazine* has removed from Salamanca to Buffalo, and the March number appears in a new cover, with T. B. Wakeman associated with Mr. H. L. Green as editor. Col. Ingersoll, who wishes the magazine "good luck," sends a paper entitled "The Truth of History," in which he deals with the report of his conversion to the Anglo-Jewish mania.

AFTER declaring that he never saw Mr. Hine, who is said to have converted him and five thousand other Atheists, Ingersoll says: "This letter, in my judgment, was published to be used by missionaries in China, Japan, India, and Africa. If stories like this can be circulated about a living man, what may we not expect concerning the dead who have opposed the Church?"

"NOTHING," the gallant Colonel continues, "is more wonderful than the credulity of the believers in the supernatural. They feel under a kind of obligation to believe everything in favor of their religion, or against any form of what they are pleased to call 'Infidelity.' The old falsehoods about Voltaire, Paine, Hume, Julian, Diderot, and hundreds of others, grow green every spring. They are answered; they are demonstrated to be without the slightest foundation; but they rarely die. And when one does die there seems to be a kind of Cæsarian operation, so that in each instance, although the mother dies, the child lives to undergo, if necessary, a like operation, leaving another child, and sometimes two."

MR. FOOTE AS A JURYMEN.

NOTHING fresh has occurred, as I hoped there would. I was in attendance at Mr. Justice Hawkins' Court all last week and the first day of this week, but my name was never called again. Perhaps there was some occult arrangement to keep my name out of the ballot, so that I might not be able to trouble the Court again. Had I been called into the jury-box a second time I should have thrown the onus of action on the judge, and as he had spoken about the "affirmation or otherwise" he might order me to take if he required me again, I should have politely but firmly pressed him to decide the matter of my competence to

swear as a juror, and protested against playing the part of jack-in-the-box if his lordship had declined.

Mr. Forder is summoned to appear as a juror in the same Court next Monday. We shall see what will happen then. Another Freethinker was summoned as a juror at the Middlesex Sessions House last Monday. After raising his objection, he was told to join the reserve jury in waiting, the judge remarking "We don't want to waste time." Perhaps not. But a juror is not a criminal. He is as much a part of the Court as the judge, and he is entitled to civil treatment and a proper regard for his time.

At present the judges evade the difficulty. Instead of dealing with the point of law, they put it by, and with it the jurymen, who wait upon their convenience, which is always opposed to his. But the matter cannot be allowed to rest here. Some means of checkmating the judges will have to be devised. We shall have to make ourselves *troublesome*. That seems the only way of getting our claim attended to. It must be done, but the precise method of doing it is a point for serious consideration.

G. W. FOOTE.

## THE CHURCH AND SLAVERY.

SLAVE-HOLDING, as we have seen, is not only not put in any catalogue of sins or "offences" given us in the Bible, although those catalogues are full and minute; it is, on the contrary, distinctly sanctioned by that book. Jesus preached non-resistance and subordination to the powers that be. Slave-holders were received by the Apostles into the Christian Church, and a fugitive slave was sent back to his master by St. Paul, who assigned as his reason that master's right to his services.

Following the Apostles, the Fathers of the Church have all authorised and approved of slavery. Saint Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who is said to have been taken in the arms of Jesus when a child, in his letter to Polycarp, chap. iv., says of slaves "Let them not desire to be set free from slavery lest they be found slaves to their own desires." Saint Cyprian (Test. lib. iii., cap. lxxii.) and Pope St. Gregory the Great (*Regul. pastoral.*, part iii., cap. v.) alike appeal to Paul to enforce the necessity of slaves accepting their condition of servitude. Saint Basil, after having cited the epistle to the Ephesians, says (*Moral Regul.* lxxv., cap. i.), "This proves that the slave should obey his master in all things with good heart and for the glory of God." He recalls the conduct of Paul in sending back Onesimus to his master, and desires that any slaves who seek refuge in monasteries should be admonished and sent back to their owners. Tertullian recommends Christianity because the slave has now fidelity (*Apologeticus* iii.)—that is, Christianity guarantees he does not escape. Saint Chrysostom declares that the slave who obeys his master's orders fulfils the precepts of God (*Epist. ad Titum.*, homil. iv., 2). Saint Isidore (*Epist.* iv. 12) declares slavery preferable to liberty, and prohibits abbots from freeing their slaves, because they are the property of the monastery.

But it is Saint Augustine who throughout the palmy days of Christianity was taken as the standard exponent of Christian ideas, and in his *City of God* (lib. xix., 14 and 15) he most precisely lays it down that slavery is of the order of nature, being the consequence of sin. The holy father says, "Subjection is the foundation of peace, the providers are rulers as the husband over the wife, parents over the children, and masters over their slaves. And those who are provided for must obey, as wives their husbands, children their parents, and slaves their masters. . . . For justly was the burden of servitude laid on the back of transgression. . . . Sin is the mother of slavery, and it is a happier servitude to serve man than lust. Penal slavery hath its institution from that law which commands the preservation and forbids the disturbance of nature's order." So that, according to this brighter light of the Christian Church, slavery is not a provisional institution, but a natural and immutable one.

The Church accordingly did not scruple to keep slaves itself. Priests, abbots, and bishops held slaves. Fleury, the Catholic historian, says "They were given entire villages where the inhabitants were slaves." Pepin, Charlemagne, and other kings and nobles made frequent gifts of lands and slaves to the Church. In the wills of grave bishops and abbots yet extant we read how they bequeathed their slaves like other possessions.\* The

Abbey of St. Germain de Prés owned 80,000 slaves, the Abbey of St. Martin de Tours 20,000.\*

St. Bernard, the last of the Christian Fathers, writing to the Abbot of Molêmes, (Ep. lxxx.) exhorts him to correct the slaves of the church confided to his care. St. Thomas Aquinas, the divine doctor and great light of the Church, contends that nature has destined certain men to be slaves. He invokes in favor of his detestable cause both human and divine laws, and even adds the testimony of Aristotle (*De regimine principum*, lib. iii., cap. x. tom. xiii.; Rome, 1570). The great Catholic bishop, Bossuet, declared that to condemn slavery was to condemn the Holy Spirit, which proclaimed its legitimacy.

It is true that certain persons from time to time gave their slaves freedom. Gregory the Great on one occasion manumitted two slaves, and much has been made by Christians of the circumstance. Yet the same Christian pontiff declared that slaves should be content with the position to which God had assigned them. Such exceptional cases as Christians freeing slaves were acts of benevolence, not acts of justice. Moreover, manumission was common in Pagan times. Lecky, in his *History of European Morals* (vol. i., p. 323), says:—

"The physician who tended the Roman in his sickness, the tutor to whom he committed the education of his son, the artists whose works commanded the admiration of the city were usually slaves. Slaves sometimes mixed with their masters in the family, ate habitually with them at the same table, and were regarded by them with the warmest affection. Tiro, the slave, and afterwards the freedman of Cicero, compiled his master's letters, and has preserved some in which Cicero addressed him in terms of sincere and delicate friendship. . . . Pliny poured out his deep sorrow for the death of some of his slaves, and endeavored to console himself with the thought that as he had emancipated them before their death, they had at least died free-men. Epictetus passed at once from a slave to the friendship of an emperor."

The Church, as M. Tourmagne in his *History of Slavery* declares, never once raised its voice against slavery as an institution, never denounced it as a sin, or suppressed it, as it might easily have done by excommunicating slave-holders. On the contrary, slave-holders have been received into the Christian Church from the time of Philemon till now. Moreover, the Church in council frequently prohibited the manumission of slaves.

Under the Christian emperors, Constantine and his successors, the line dividing slaves from freemen was more sharply defined than ever before. Constantine punished with death the free woman who united herself to a slave, and ordered the slave to be burnt. Slaves were interdicted by the Council of Loadicea from being received into the Church without the consent of their masters. The Council of Orleans (541) ordered that if two slaves took refuge in a church in order to be married they were to be returned to their owners. The same Council ordered that the descendants of slave parents might be retaken and replaced in the servile condition of their ancestors; and decreed that if a slave was set free on condition of becoming a Jew he should still be a slave. Indeed, the Christian legislation against slavery was simply directed against the enslavement of Christians by Jews. Thus the Council of Toledo (633) declared that if Jews had Christian slaves they must liberate them. The same Council declared that bishops might not free the slaves belonging to the Church, and that if they did so their successors might make them re-enter into servitude. It further enacted that a convert found speaking to a Jew should become a slave, and the Jew he spoke to was to be publicly scourged. Indeed, St. Thomas Aquinas said that the Jews, for their unbelief, are doomed to perpetual slavery to the Christians. The Jews had made large fortunes by slave-dealing. In consequence the Councils of Rheims (630) and of Toledo (633) both prohibited selling Christian slaves except to Christians. The truly pious monopoly in human flesh was reserved for the brotherhood of Christ. How far this Christian legislation was from the abolition of slavery we may see from the decree of the Council of Toledo (655) that the children of slaves should be slaves of the Church in perpetuity. Tourmagne shows that it was not by the influence of the Church, but of feudal institutions that slavery was mitigated into serfdom. By a decree of the Council of Pavia (1082) the serfs of the Church, even when born of a free

\* *L'Église et la Morale.* Par Dom Jacobus. Bruxelles, 1858; pp. 218-228, gives many instances.

\* A. Tourmagne. *Historie de l'Esclavage Ancien et Moderne*, Paris, 1880.

woman, could not inherit, and the Lateran Council (1179) proposed to reduce to slavery all vagabonds and others who furnished arms to the Saracens.

In a concluding paper I shall show that the modern Churches have equally defended slavery and that its abolition is in no sense due to Christianity.

J. M. WHEELER.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PURITY SOCIETY.

A PAMPHLET was given to me by a person in the street, entitled "Ten reasons why I should join the Church of England Purity Society." With my usual courtesy I read it. The pamphlet opened with a statement that from 1838 to 1886 so many tons of printed obscenity had been destroyed, remarking "that if we are not to be overwhelmed by this Java volcano of mud, we must make up our minds," etc., etc. And this Society has the unblushing impudence to flaunt its purity whilst it connives and assists in publishing, sowing broadcast, such unutterable tales as that of Onan or Tamar, such horrible filth as is to be found in the description of the Levite and his concubine, such terrible "studge" as David's lechery, such erotic stuff as Solomon's Song. For shame, you self-styled purists! Take a besom and clean your own Augean stable before you attempt the purification of your neighbor's, for your filth as surely taints and pollutes all whom it touches as does your neighbor's filth. Read excerpts from Romans, Kings, the Psalms, Judges, or in fact almost any part of your God's book to a room full of pure girls, and their male relatives would beat your prurient life out of you. Read to your own daughters such infamy as lies within the covers of your Bible; would you sully their fair lives with your God's filth? If you must worship a god, worship a clean one; the one you advocate wants purifying. Buy a plaster of paris one for fourpence; you can wash that when it gets sullied.

Your pamphlet also says that 70,000 children have disease handed down to them from their vicious parents. This disease is manufactured by your God; these desires of the parent are implanted by your deity, and to do so Jehovah must experience some enjoyment, some pleasure—some pleasure, forsooth! in denuding childhood of that sweet, healthful child life, the oasis to be looked back upon as the one time when freedom from contact with the rough world had not tarnished that sweet innocence we all love to remember—and yet God deliberately destroys the sweet purity of babyhood by striking it with a disease that is so foul, for no fault of its own, but because its parents had improper thoughts put into their minds by this terrible deity you worship. Cleanse your God, get him some other occupation, revise your deity's literature, make the filth less crude, expunge putridity; and my advice is, better than all, bury your nasty deity, sowing seeds of Freethought on his grave so that flowers of sweet smell and beauty may blossom and cover up that disreputable old lecher—Jehovah. X.

WHAT TO DO WITH JAHVEH.

POOR old man (beg pardon, "God")! he is 6,000 years old at least—and if he is much older where did he slip off too, for then God "created the heavens." He must be worn out now; so I would not like to hurt his feelings, if he has any.

"The Temples of Fò (the Chinese name for Buddha), and particularly the ministers of the idol temples, appear to claim the power . . . of curing diseases,—pretensions which of course often prove fallacious. A man, whose favorite daughter was ill, had paid large sums at a neighboring temple, and obtained, in return, promises of a speedy recovery, which were so far from being realised that the disease continued to make progress, till it came to a fatal termination. The father in despair having determined upon revenge, raised an action at law against the god, arguing, that having received much money under promise of effecting the cure, he had either pretended to a power he did not possess, or having the power had not exerted it. In either case the fraud was manifest. As the judge, however, delayed proceedings until he should receive instructions from Court, many remonstrances were made to the plaintiff upon the danger of prosecuting his suit against this supernatural defendant; but grief had made him reckless. A subpoena was issued against the god, and, the charges being fully proved, he was banished from the kingdom, and his temple demolished" (Comte. vol. iii., 105).

וְיִירָא should take warning, or he, the Savior, and the shady customer may have to follow the same course. For nearly 2,000 years the priests of the Most High have been robbing us. Where is the judge who would be so just as to declare this a case of "obtaining money under false pretences?" The time is coming, however, when the religion of to-day will be looked upon as the dark superstition of the past. "Behold it comes quickly; and its reward is with it, to give every man according as his work shall be."\* And we answer, "Even so come, Blessed Day!"

AGNOSCO.

This party who usually pays the highest compliments to the Lord, in his prayers, usually pays the lowest wages to the people he has in his employ.

BEFORE JEHOVAH'S AWFUL THRONE.

"With God all things are possible."—MATT. XIX., 25-26.

OUR old correspondent C. Kroll Laporte appears to have recently deceased. He sends us the following account of the result:

Mr. Laporte (who has shuffled off this mortal coil, appears before the celestial Trio, rubbing his eyes, *loquitur*): "Oho! Then you *do exist* after all! Well, a nice, small, compact family you are. A Father (no wife to bother his life); a charming Son, kind and soft; the Holy Ghost, a unique specimen. Well, gentlemen, all I can say is this: if you had only endowed me with sufficient reason to comprehend you, I would have joined in baaing your praises below. The loss is yours, not mine, for with my acknowledged abilities great glory would have been in store for you on earth. *Le beau malheur!* As it is, we must make the best of a bad job. I suppose you don't object to my occupying 'private apartments' in Elysium.\* I have been rather select and retiring all my life, and object to the society of converted murderers, of whom I perceive quite a host, headed by Henry VIII., the renowned founder of the Church of England. Besides—'*odi profanum vulgus et arceo.*' Excuse me if I do not join in any of your heavenly revels, for I hate noise."

Yahveh bawls out: "Hulloh! Michael! Apartments for Mr. Laporte at the very far end, where he won't be disturbed by the bleating of the Lamb and the lowing of the celestial cattle."

ACCORDING to the *Christian*, a member of a West End church died recently worth over £800,000, and all that he was ever known to give for special objects connected therewith was a five-pound note.

FATHER IGNATIUS, the "Church of England Monk," as he usually describes himself, hasn't a very high opinion of the Protestantism which founded the church to which he belongs. He speaks of "that terrible epoch of blasphemy, rapine, and murder, called the Reformation;" and he says "it was a lawless destruction of religion and morality, as its own principal promoters confessed before they came to die." He declares that the Protestant religion was founded "by murder, sacrilege, robbery, and the destruction of the liberties of England;" that it has filled our once peaceful Christian isle with rancorous hates and animosities; that it has robbed the British poor; and that "it has destroyed morality and introduced infidelity wherever it has succeeded in planting its poisonous feet." Father Ignatius, or more correctly speaking, the Rev. J. L. Lyne, is still registered on the *Clergy List* as a deacon. He preaches in churches under the auspices of various ministers of the established Protestant religion, and even with the sanction and approval of the Bishop of London. The descendants of the Reformers patronise the "Monk" who charges them with having "so infamously robbed God and his Church, and carried their diabolical schemes through by wholesale murder and sacrilege." Bishops bless the namesake and imitator of the founder of Jesuitism, who styles them "thieves and robbers," and usurpers who, "Judas-like," are "ready and desirous of betraying the flock of the Lord." Are these professors of Protestantism seized with a fit of brotherly toleration, or is it their sympathy with Romish doctrines that makes them so charitable to an enemy of the Protestant Church who assails it from within?

PROFANE JOKES.

"You ought to have your baby baptised, Rastus," said a member of the church to a colored father. "Yes, sah; but I can't afford de cost." "It doesn't cost anything." "I know it doesn't cost nuthin' fo' de mere act of baptism, sah; but yo' see, I owe de minister two dollars fo' performing de weddin' cer'mony a yeah ago, an' he might object, sah, to baptizin' a baby dat hadn't been paid fo'."

LITTLE DICK: "What do you think? I've got two baby sisters." Little Dot: "Two?" "Yes; they's twins." "Won't that be nice when they're big enough to play with; but, I say, Dick, I think there's some mistake about them." "Why is there?" "'Cause I've been praying for a little sister so long, and your house is close to ours and they look alike outside, and—oh, dear! I don't see why the angels can't be more careful."

A SCORCH minister, while visiting the families connected with his congregation, began catechising a small boy thus: "Well, my boy, can you repeat the twenty-third Psalm?" Boy: "No; I canna say that." Minister: "Well, then, can you say the Lord's Prayer?" Boy: "Na; I dinna ken it aither." Minister (quite shocked): "Dear me! Can't you say a hymn or something?" Boy: "Ow, ay; I can say a grace." Minister: "Come, let us hear you then." Boy: "Wow! Hoo can I say a grace anoo—whaur's the brose?"

SICK-PILOR: "I confess, sir, that I am somewhat surprised to hear you state that you are a church deacon." Talkative stranger: "Can't jedge a man by his clothes, you know, parson. I'm deacon in St. Jimmy's church, of Wayback, an' if ye ever come out that way I wish y'd drop in and give us a sermon. It's right next door to my gambling saloon." "My! my! I fear you much, very much, forget that you should carry your religion into your business." "No, sirc; I've sent circulars to every darned galoot in our congregation."

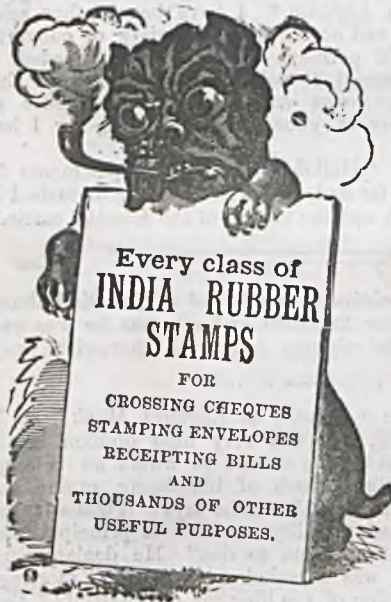
\* Rev. xxii., 12-20

\* John xiv., 2.

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**GEORGE PAYNE, Hon. Sec.**

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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.  
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