

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 192.



VISITING ANGELS.

"For of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead away captive silly women."—2 TIMOTHY III. 6.

"Be ye therefore wise as serpents."—MATT. X. 16.

INFIDEL HOMES.—III.*

WILLIAM GODWIN is the next Freethinker whom Mr. Watkinson calls up for judgment. All the brave efforts of the author of *Political Justice* in behalf of freedom and progress are quietly ignored. Mr. Watkinson comments, in a true vein of Christian charity, on the failings of his old age, censures his theoretical disrespect for the marriage laws, and inconsistently blames him for his inconsistency in marrying Mary Woolstonecraft. Of that remarkable woman he observes that scepticism "destroyed in her all that fine, pure feeling which is the glory of the sex." But the only proof he vouchsafes of this startling statement is a single sentence from one of her letters, which Mr. Watkinson misunderstands, as he misunderstands so many passages in Carlyle's letters, through sheer inability to comprehend the existence of such a thing as humor. He takes every jocular expression as perfectly serious, being one of those uncomfortable persons in whose society, as Charles Lamb said, you must always speak on oath. Mr. Watkinson's readers might almost exclaim with Hamlet, "How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us."

The next culprit is Shelley, who, we are told, "deserted his young wife and children in the most shameful and heartless fashion." It does not matter to Mr. Watkinson that Shelley's relations with Harriet are still a perplexing problem, or that when they parted she and the children were

well provided for. Nor does he condescend to notice the universal consensus of opinion among those who were in a position to be informed on the subject, that Harriet's suicide, more than two years afterwards, had nothing to do with Shelley's "desertion." Instead of referring to proper authorities, Mr. Watkinson advises his readers to consult "Mr. Jeafferson's painstaking volumes on the *Real Shelley*." Mr. Jeafferson's work is truly painstaking, but it is the work of an advocate who plays the part of counsel for the prosecution. Hunt, Peacock, Hogg, Medwin, Lady Shelley, Rossetti, and Professor Dowden—these are the writers who should be consulted. Shelley was but a boy when Harriet Westbrook proposed to run away with him. Had he acted like the golden youth of his age, and kept her for a while as his mistress, there would have been no scandal. His father, in fact, declared that he would hear nothing of marriage, but he would keep as many illegitimate children as Shelley chose to get. It was the intense chivalry of Shelley's nature that turned a very simple affair into a pathetic tragedy. Mr. Watkinson's brutal methods of criticism are out of place in such a problem. He lacks insight, subtlety, delicacy of feeling, discrimination, charity, and even an ordinary sense of justice.

James Mill is another flagrant sinner. Mr. Watkinson goes to the length of blaming him because "his temper was constitutionally irritable," as though he constructed himself. Here, again, Mr. Watkinson's is a purely debit account. He ignores James Mill's early sacrifices for principle, his strenuous labor for what he considered the truth, and his intense devotion to the education of his children. His temper was undoubtedly austere, but it is more than possible that this characteristic was derived

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

from his forefathers, who had been steeped in the hardest Calvinism.

John Stuart Mill was infatuated with Mrs. Taylor, whom he married when she became a widow. But Mr. Watkinson conceals an important fact. He talks of "selfish pleasure" and "indulgence," but he forgets to tell his readers that Mrs. Taylor was *a confirmed invalid*. It is perfectly obvious, therefore, that Mill was attracted by her mental qualities; and it is easy to believe Mill when he disclaims any other relation than that of affectionate friendship. No one but a Watkinson could be so foolish as to imagine that men seek sensual gratification in the society of invalid ladies.

Harriet Martineau is "one of the unloveliest female portraits ever traced." Mr. Watkinson is the opposite of a ladies' man. Gallantry was never his foible. He hates female Freethinkers with a perfect hatred. He pours out on Harriet Martineau his whole vocabulary of abuse. But it is, after all, difficult to see what he is in such a passion about. Harriet Martineau had no sexual sins, no dubious relations, no skeleton in the domestic cupboard. But, says Mr. Watkinson, she was arrogant and censorious. Oh, Watkinson, Watkinson! have you not one man's share of those qualities yourself? Is there not "a sort of a smack, a smell to" of them in your godly constitution?

We need not follow Mr. Watkinson's nonsense about "the domestic shrine of Schopenhauer," who was a gay and festive bachelor to the day of his death. As for Mr. Watkinson's treatment of Comte, it is pure Christian; in other words, it contains the quintessence of uncharitableness. Comte had a taint of insanity, which at one time necessitated his confinement. That he was troublesome to wife and friends is not surprising, but surely a man grievously afflicted with a cerebral malady is not to be judged by ordinary standards. Comte's genius has left its mark on the nineteenth century; he was true to *that* in adversity and poverty. This is the fact posterity will care to remember when the troubles of his life are buried in oblivion.

Mr. Watkinson turns his attention next to the French Revolution, which he considers "as much a revolt against morals as it was against despotism." If that is his honest opinion, he must be singularly ignorant. The moral tone of the revolutionists was purity itself compared with the flagrant profligacy of the court, the aristocracy, and the clergy, while Freethinkers were imprisoned, and heretics were broken on the wheel. We have really no time to give Mr. Watkinson lessons in French history, so we leave him to study it at his leisure.

It was natural that Voltaire should come it for his share of slander. All Mr. Watkinson can see in him is that he wrote "an unseemly poem," by which we presume he means *La Pucelle*. But he ought to know that the grosser parts of that poem were added by later hands, as may be seen at a glance in any variorum edition. In any case, to estimate Voltaire's *Pucelle* by the moral standard of a century later is to show an absolute want of judgment. Let it be compared with similar works of *his* age, and it will not appear very heinous. But Voltaire did a great deal besides the composition of that poem. He fought despotism like a hero, he stabbed superstition to the heart, he protected the victims of ecclesiastical and political tyranny at the risk of his own life, he sheltered with exquisite generosity a multitude of orphans and widows, he assisted every genius who was trodden down by the age. These things, and the great mass of his brilliant writings, will live in the memory of mankind. Voltaire was not perfect; he shared some of the failings of his generation. But he fought the battle of freedom and justice for sixty years. Other men indulged in gallantry, other men wrote free verses. But when Calas was murdered by the priests, and his family desolated, it was Voltaire, and Voltaire alone, who faced the tyrants and denounced them in the name of humanity. His superb attitude on that critical occasion inspired the splendid eulogium of Carlyle, who was no friendly witness:—"The whole man kindled into one divine blaze of righteous indignation, and resolution to bring help against the world." G. W. FOOTE.

TALMAGE'S tall story of the petrified blasphemer looks like a plagiarism of the yarn they spin in Brittany about the Druidical stones of Carnac. St. Cornelius being hard pressed by an army of Pagans, fled to the sea-shore, but finding no boat to escape in he uttered a prayer, which suddenly transformed his pursuers into stone. The Jabbernacle man can't tell a story worth a cent.

SOME RELIGIOUS STORIES.

NO. 7.—THE FAMILY BIBLE.

FROM his childhood Gottlieb Himmelberg was a pattern of piety to the juveniles of the village blessed with his presence. He never once played truant from Sunday School, and it was his highest delight to be occasionally permitted to gaze on the pictures in the Family Bible, and to read its sacred and seldom-opened pages. When the Prussians invaded his native state he, in common with all the other duly-trained male inhabitants of fighting age, was summoned to the active defence of his native fatherland. Poor Gottlieb's protests that he was a man of peace were treated with the most unseemly derision. Finally, a file of ungodly soldiers came to drag him from the inner cupboard, to which, shocked by their impious insults and imprecations, he had retreated for silent prayer and uninterrupted commune with his Almighty friend in heaven. In vain he protested that his conscience—or, as the soldiers said, his condemned cowardice—would not allow him to fight. His solemn appeals to the authority of the Book which commands us to turn the other cheek also, were made the subjects of profane jests and highly personal witticisms, such as faithful Christians too often have to endure. His solemn commands to the grinning soldiers, in the name of their Lord and Savior, to lay down their arms and leave vengeance to their God, brought upon him open kicks of so vigorous and painful a character that he felt it was God's will that he, like a sheep before the shearer, should henceforth be dumb upon the subject. One thing he could do: he asked and obtained permission to take with him his beloved Bible; for he knew that the Family Bible, if he could but carry it about with him constantly, would, by God's help, save him and keep him through all dangers. He remembered how even small Bibles carried in the breast-pockets always stopped bullets reaching the hearts of Christian soldiers confronting the foe; and although he had a presentiment that this form of protection might not be altogether the most satisfactory in the hour of danger for combatants of his own modest and retreating disposition, he trusted in God to devise his own methods in his own good time. The soldiers were astonished at the size of his pocket-Bible, as he termed it, and at his surprising affection for it. In their unbelieving folly they probably regarded him as a superstitious fool, and rejoiced in his clear, transparent piety as a convenient butt for their ungodly jokes and blasphemous brutalities. If he had ventured to remind them how Bibles had saved soldiers' lives, they would have retorted with mocking stories of soldiers whose lives had similarly been saved by packs of cards and tobacco-boxes, which they would frivolously assert had been just as efficacious in stopping bullets as Bibles and prayer-books. As if there could possibly be any true comparison! As Gottlieb did not wish to bring his Bible and himself into further derision, he remained silent; but he trusted, oh, how firmly, in the Holy Book; and his faith, as our readers will see, was not in vain.

Gottlieb's daily martyrdom of impious jeers and taunts was of short duration. Before the new repeating rifle had been in his hand a week the irresistible Prussians came suddenly upon the town at early dawn. The barracks emptied themselves of their living contents. His tormentors rushed headlong to the front to destruction; for so God had willed that their impiety should meet its fitting reward. But Gottlieb did not share in the rash rage and fury of these hardened infidels. He had a full and perfect reliance upon the God of Peace, and amidst the distant rumble of battle and the terrible trumpet-call of the bugler, he remained unmoved, patiently reading his Bible, upside down, in the darkest corner of the barracks, and trembling with the eager hope and never-failing joy that its precious contents poured into his enraptured soul. Such was the peace of soul he felt within that when a fiendish adjutant, with face all sweat and gunpowder, rushed in and thundered forth a whole avalanche of blasphemy and insult at him, he endured it, as a Christian should, without resentment or response. But when the enraged blasphemer pulled forth a revolver and thrust its cold muzzle into poor Gottlieb's ear, he went forth with Christian meekness as a sheep to the slaughter when the appointed hour is come. Hurried off as he was, clad in his soldier's overcoat and still clutching his Bible, he soon found himself in the open fields among the survivors of his regiment, who were still

desperately fighting in modern fashion, lying on the ground at full length, and taking advantage of every inch of cover from the storm of bullets whistling by. Gladly joining them in their attitude of comparative safety, and creeping behind a low earth-bank for preference, Gottlieb put his big Bible before him as a shield and a defence, and felt that even in that supreme hour his God had not entirely deserted him. Firing his cartridges away as rapidly as his hands, trembling with patriotic eagerness, would allow him, he felt there was no need to raise his head from behind his Bible to direct his bullets, for God would guide them whithersoever he would. Why need a mere mortal like Gottlieb presume to interfere with the divine will? As he lay thus on the broad field of battle, every shriek and oath that told of another comrade struck by a bullet made him feel how good God was in protecting *him*, and his reliance on God and his Bible was deeply confirmed. But the enemy were still advancing, rush by rush, gradually carrying everything before them. The final charge was in full swing when Gottlieb perceived, evidently by a direct inspiration from above, that he must trust in God and his own good legs—for Christians know that God usually works by means, and that when the time comes we must use the means he in his mercy provides. His rifle of course he must leave behind, but should he abandon his precious Bible? Never! Hastily thrusting it into his huge coat-tail pocket, he fled across the ploughed field with the valiant strides of a determined Christian. His few surviving comrades, surrounded on three sides, he saw were falling beneath the bayonet and the bullet. God who had selected him for preservation thus far would surely preserve him yet. The heavy Bible banged against his legs horribly, and sadly delayed his flight. But all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. His flight was but delayed for his benefit, and in order that even his enemies might be the unexpected means of providing the help that ever cometh from the Lord. Before him rose a stiff hedge over which he could not hope to jump. Grenadiers from each side were rushing to intercept him. One tall foe in his rear was already on the point of driving his bayonet home. Dashing straight at the hedge as his only chance, poor Gottlieb leaped straight at it. He saw the keen flashing bayonet of his huge pursuer, and in imagination felt it already passing through him. But God was with him—and God's Bible. The bayonet that should have pierced him proved his salvation, thanks to God's Holy Book—which is equally a sure shield and defence from bayonets in the rear as from bullets in the front. The astonished grenadier, instead of transfixing Gottlieb in mid-air as he expected, saw him rise uplifted upon the bayonet's point like a football on the toe of a practised player. On his bayonet remained no stain of blood, but only fragmentary signs of leather and printed paper. Once landed on the further side of the hedge in this unexpected manner poor Gottlieb was safe from immediate pursuit. Fighting, moreover, ceased shortly afterwards. The last position had been carried and the thoroughly beaten remains of the brave but numerically weak army surrendered to the overpowering forces of the enemy.

Gottlieb still lives, a standing monument of the mercy of God to sincere believers and a convincing proof of the inestimable value of the Bible when rightly used. The striking history of the providential manner in which God saved a soldier's life by means of the Family Bible which he had taken with him to the wars, became so well known and so copiously if not courteously commented upon in the district that Gottlieb was afraid of being uplifted on the horns of spiritual pride to an extent altogether unbecoming a humble Christian. To escape this dangerous form of religious fame he emigrated to America, where he felt the story would be less widely known. He took the Family Bible with him, and firmly believes that under similar circumstances it will render similar help to any of his posterity who may rely upon it as he did.

W. P. BALL.

THE Hackney Guardians have the interests of religion so much at heart that they set it far above any consideration for the temporal well-being of children who have fallen into their pious care. A Mr. Harding having asked permission to adopt a child—a relation in the second degree—at present under the care of the Hackney Guardians, the Rev. Mr. Cox opposed the giving up of the child on the ground that the applicant was an Atheist, and in this the majority of the guardians concurred, although the orphan's father had been a Freethinker. Nothing against Mr. Harding's character was alleged.

ACID DROPS.

ONE of our correspondents, Mr. Edward Bowles, challenged the Yankee Christian Evidence lecturer, Mr. H. L. Hastings, who boasts that he has demolished pretty nearly all the infidels alive, to hold a public debate with Mr. Foote. Mr. Hastings knows a trick worth a thousand of that. He prefers to vanquish infidels in their absence. Still, he was obliged to give some plausible reason for declining, so he hit upon this. "Mr. Foote," he said, "has called me a double-barreled liar, and I won't discuss with a man who insults me."

NOW what are the facts of the case? In our number for Dec. 26 we criticised Mr. Hastings' lecture on the *Inspiration of the Bible* in our "Acid Drops." Dealing with his slanderous observation that Thomas Paine "crawled despairingly into a drunkard's grave," we said that "the only proper answer to this statement is that Mr. Hastings is a liar." We said that, and we stick to it. Nay more, we will undertake to prove it anywhere and any time Mr. Hastings chooses. Does he think that he can slander every dead Freethinker with impunity? Is he to vilify men whose lips are sealed by death, and then to cry out with virtuous indignation when he is properly rebuked. He began the insult himself, and Mr. Hastings complaining that *he* is insulted is very much like a murderer reproaching the hangman for breaking the sixth commandment.

BUT how about the "double-barreled liar"? Well, Mr. Hastings had the impudence to say that he had received a letter in 1876 from a lady who saw Paine die in 1809, and he gave the name of Mrs. Benjamin, which was never heard of in connexion with Paine until Mr. Hastings invented it. For this we called him a double-barreled liar, and he richly deserves the appellation, at any rate until he retracts his infamous charges against a great man whose shoes he would hardly have been worthy to track.

THERE was no discussion after Mr. Bradlaugh's lectures in St. James's Hall, Manchester, last Sunday. The Lord's Day Observance Society served him with a notice that they intended to prosecute him and the proprietor of the hall, and Mr. Bradlaugh explained that his hands were too full at present to accept the challenge. The lectures were clearly legal, but if they were followed by discussion he might be subject to an indictment for keeping a disorderly house, and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

HERE'S a pretty state of things! Fancy a Freethinker prosecuted for *keeping a disorderly house* because of a little discussion after a Sunday lecture! We doubt whether Christian hypocrisy could go beyond that if it tried.

MR. BRADLAUGH is, of course, the best judge of his own business, and he was probably right in declining the challenge when he had no time to fight. But if the bigots keep up their little game, he or somebody will *have* to fight. The Freethought party cannot allow discussion to be stifled in this way. The Melbourne bigots tried to trip Mr. Symes in this fashion, but he managed to beat them. He took the money at the door himself, and then went on the platform and delivered the lecture. The prosecution followed, Joseph manfully defended himself, and came out of the contest with flying colors.

ST. OLAVE'S, in Old Jewry, is to be pulled down. Last Sunday afternoon there was a good congregation at the final service. When the final service is held in all the churches there are sure to be good congregations. Freethinkers would all go to see the farewell performance.

THE Afghans are being roused to a "holy war" against Russia. The promoters evidently know that there is nothing like religion for provoking the war spirit.

A PARAGRAPH now going the round of the press says: "There are 564 inmates at the Redhill Lunatic Institution—idiots who can absolutely do nothing for themselves. Fifty more admissions are to be made this year in honor of the Jubilee." There could hardly be a more appropriate commemoration of the Jubilee mania. But fifty vacancies will be strikingly insufficient.

THE Lord has nearly destroyed one of his own houses in Breslau. The church of St. Mary Magdalene caught fire, one of the steeples fell in, and the fire brigade had great difficulty in saving the interior of the sacred edifice.

MR. SPURGEON complains that several clergymen applied for shares in Guinness's and Allsopp's breweries. Mr. Palmer complains that Nonconformist ministers were quite as anxious to invest. And why should they not? Jesus Christ was a first-rate brewer himself. He turned water into wine on one occasion, and it might have been a common occurrence, although only one performance is mentioned.

THE Salvation Army at Whitworth announce a "Hand to Mouth Conflict," tickets 6d. each. Lieutenant Ward is to be

there with a host of blood-washed warriors, and Captain Fish with a band of devil-drivers. "Namdac Niatpac"—back-slang for Captain Cadman—is to lead.

THE Chicago Congregational ministers displayed the charity of their creed by refusing to send messages of condolence to the wife of the late Henry Ward Beecher, the ground of their opposition being based on the heterodoxy of Mr. Beecher's views regarding future salvation and punishment. This is the loving spirit of Christianity. The Chicago ministers know that in denying hell Mr. Beecher would deprive them of the most powerful instrument of their whole stock-in-trade, and they cannot forgive one of the profession who did so much to damage their business.

MR. SIMS, who is travelling in Spain, tells how the Spanish brigands, after robbing a train, are always careful to piously salute the passengers, "May you go with God," and, as the train moves off, they add, with touching simple piety, "and may we all meet again some day in God's big parlor."

MRS. STICKNEY, of Minneapolis, was so convinced by her minister, the Rev. R. A. Torrey, of the efficacy of faith-healing, that she had her dead daughter exhumed and endeavored to resurrect her by the power of prayer. She is of course convinced that she only failed through insufficiency of faith.

DR. FORBES WINSLOW has recently given an instance of cure through excitement which does much to explain the so-called faith-curing. During the panic at Nice at the late earthquakes, a relative of one of our late Cabinet Ministers, who was apparently struck down with paralysis, was, in consequence of her sudden fright, restored to the use of her limbs there and then. Many such cases have been recorded.

SIR CHARLES WILSON—who nearly got to Khartoum—has been lecturing to a Sunday School Union at Southampton. He emphatically pronounces the campaign of Joshua to have been skilfully conceived and admirably executed both in a military and political sense, whilst the exploit of Samson in turning foxes with lighted firebrands into the midst of the standing corn of the Philistines was a serious piece of warfare, and fraught with disastrous consequences to the enemy. If this Christian hero really admires a campaign of utter extermination of man, woman and child, and really approves of a policy of cruelty to animals for purposes of incendiarism, he is hardly suited for an age in which biblical methods of war and outrage are sinking into disrepute.

THE Home Secretary is still in a quandary with the Attleborough Burial Board, which dissolved itself rather than consecrate a part of their new cemetery. A new Board was elected, and this, too, has resolved that no consecration shall take place till after the passing of the Burial Grounds Bill, which will deprive consecration of its pecuniary consequences. Immediately the meeting was over all the members but one repeated the previous manoeuvre and resigned. Consequently Attleborough is still without a Burial Board to be proceeded against by the Home Secretary. Thus the poor persecuted Church is robbed of the fees she would like to exact in perpetuity.

THE *Bath Herald* reports that the Rev. G. B. B. Butterfield, formerly curate of All Saints', Lambeth, was fined at the Police-court for drunkenness. He was subsequently prosecuted by the workhouse authorities for wilfully neglecting to support himself and becoming chargeable to the parish. It was proved that he was in receipt of at least £1 a week and that he spent the money in drink. He was turned out of his lodgings on account of his drunken habits. The medical officer of the workhouse testified that he was suffering from the results of drinking, that he was on the verge of *delirium tremens*, and that if he were sober there was no reason why he should not earn his livelihood, as he was quite able-bodied. He was sentenced to a month's imprisonment.

MR. BRADLAUGH's brother, whose sole stock-in-trade is the family name, is "missionising" at Nottingham. He is announced as "Mr. Bradlaugh" without any initials, probably with a view to deceiving the unwary, who may fancy it is the member for Northampton. It is very curious also that his pious friends have posted on the walls an almost perfect facsimile of the bill posted by the N. S. S. Branch on the occasion of Mr. Bradlaugh's (*the* Mr. Bradlaugh's) last visit.

ONE of W. R. Bradlaugh's discourses is the Story of His Conversion, which is described in the bills as "intensely interesting." If W. R. B. told the *true* story of his conversion it would be intensely interesting indeed.

A NOTTINGHAM revivalist, named Thorpe, held forth last Sunday in the Wesleyan chapel at Dodsworth, where he is engaged for a fortnight's "stirring up." During his sermon he said the singing was only fit to send a baby to sleep, and he did not think it was possible to squeeze an Amen out of them if they were put under a mangle. Perhaps not, but we are very much deceived if some of them would not cry out "O Christ."

THE Sunderland bigots have scored a trumpety victory. Unable to answer the lectures of Messrs. Foote and Parris, they have put pressure on the proprietor of the New Assembly Hall, who declines to let it to the Secularists any more. He says he has no complaint to make, their meetings were very orderly, and they paid their rent more promptly than some of the Christians. But, for all that, he has no choice, and he *must close the place against the Secularists*. Such are the paltry tactics of bigotry! For the moment the Sunderland Branch is taken aback, but it will be heard of again before very long. The triumph of the bigots may prove to be as slender as their charity.

THE *Church of England Temperance Chronicle* prints what it calls a "blasphemous parody" from a publican's card. The worst items are "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for in my house they shall be gladdened with the best of spirits." "Thou shalt not be rude to my pretty girls, for Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." It asks was there ever a more outrageous and wanton attack on all that Christians revere than this? To parody any other literature is permissible, but to imitate the language of God Almighty is an outrageous and wanton attack on all that Christians revere.

THE *Christian Herald* has the following lying paragraph about Ingersoll: "An Infidel Gives Up the Fight.—The *Interior*, of Chicago, U.S., says that Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, the Bradlaugh of the United States, has left off fighting God, declaring, 'I have fought God long enough. I have given up fighting God.'" The *Christian Herald* then comments on the case. The lie appears to be going the rounds of the Christian press, and it has already got as far as Australia.

ARCHDEACON DENISON advertises in the newspapers that he will furnish applicants with information "in the matter of procuring genuine Cheddar cheese, and avoiding purchase of spurious, unsound, and unsavory imitations of it." What a subject for a grey-headed dignitary of the Church to trouble himself about while there are millions of souls on the brink of everlasting damnation! Instead of crying "Hell, Hell!" he cries, "Cheese, Cheese!" No doubt good cheese is better than bad preaching, and we should be glad to see the clergy cease their fooling in the pulpit and open provision stores. But while they take salaries for saving souls they should attend to that line of business. Mity cheese may be objectionable, but what is that to the worm that never dieth?

CHRISTIAN veracity, said Herder, deserves to rank with Punic faith. The Rev. J. Wilkinson, of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, declares that God has often sent him money for his pious enterprises when he was on his last legs. Once, when his funds were exhausted, a poor lady dropped in promiscuously and left a cheque for £50. Another time, when money was required to pay for 100,000 New Testaments in Hebrew for circulation among the Jews, a strange Scotchman sent a cheque for £3,000. Now comes the miraculous part of the story. Mr. Wilkinson had asked the Lord for £5,000. He had £750 in hand before the Scotchman's cheque came, and when the New Testaments were all printed the bill came exactly to £3,750! "The Lord," said Mr. Wilkinson, "never sends more than is actually needed, and he never sends less."

PERHAPS Mr. Wilkinson will tell us whether the Lord, who seems so anxious to supply the Jews with New Testaments, never sends more Israelites than are actually needed from the poorest and dirtiest Ghettos of Europe to deluge the labor market in the East End of London, and to take the bread out of Christian mouths. Anyhow, it seems tolerably clear, that the Lord might give them a bath and apply a small-tooth comb to their Hebrew locks before supplying them with New Testaments to read. Otherwise the pages of the sacred volume might swarm as the land of Egypt did after the third plague.

A POLICEMAN sends us a Christian Police Association card announcing the annual meeting at Exeter Hall, with Sir Charles Warren in the chair, and several sky-pilots in the list of speakers. Our friend in blue writes across the card "This is the rot we have to patronise." We sympathise with him, as we know the kind of pressure which pious head officials put on their subordinates. As for Sir Charles Warren, it is a great pity that he does not leave religion to the professional Gospel-grinders, and infuse a little more spirit and intelligence into the Criminal Investigation Department. It is simply ludicrous for the Chief Commissioner of Police to be sermonising at Exeter Hall while murderers with pony-carts are prowling about with impunity.

THE Corporation of Liverpool have recently been advertising for contracts for painting, the exterior of St. Michael's Church, Upper Pitt Street. This ought to be an answer to those who assert that the Established Church receives no support from the rates. At a public meeting, not long ago, it was stated that householders in a suburban parish had paid a *voluntary* rate after having been threatened with the bailiffs for non payment. The dealings of the Liverpool Corporation with the parish churches would afford fruitful ground to a competent investigator.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, April 3, New Secular Hall, Bloomsbury, Rusholme Road, Oxford Road, Manchester; at 11, "The Jubilee: a Radical Protest;" at 3, "Bruno, the Freethought Martyr;" at 6.30, "Let us Pray."

APRIL 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. H. 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.—R. W. Hearnden, W. Schweizer, C. W.

A. REUBENS.—Thanks for your note. Mr. Foote will visit Nottingham again as soon as possible, but there are many Branches, and all must have a turn.

W. C.—We are obliged. See "Acid Drops."

J. RUTHERFORD.—Glad to hear the Sunderland Branch has found a place for its ordinary meetings. Keep pegging away, and you will beat the bigots yet.

E. J. ROOSE.—Thanks. As our space is limited, we have stewed it down.

E. BOWLES.—You have acted very creditably in the matter. Mr. Hastings will never be short of an excuse. Debate is not his game.

P. F. M.—We noticed the Walter Bentley incident last week. Glad to hear that the *Freethinker* is enjoyed by many in your priest-ridden part of North Britain, but sorry they have to read it furtively. Still, any way is better than not at all.

A. M. BONHAM.—We think there is a pamphlet by Mrs. Besant on the Atonement. The N. S. S. has not published anything on the subject that we are aware of.

W. C. SAVILLE.—Only waiting for space. See "Acid Drops."

T. GREEN.—We certainly cannot send anyone to offer criticism after Mr. Hastings' lecture. We do not even know that discussion is allowed. Our impression is that he only allows questions. As to his having "invited the opposition of leading infidels," we believe it to be utterly untrue. At any rate we have never received such an invitation, nor have we heard of any one who has. If Mr. Hastings means business, let him hold a set debate with one of the "leading infidels."

YOUNG FREETHINKER—Such opposition is a waste of time, and often a nuisance. But we must keep our temper. No doubt the Almighty makes such persons, as he makes bugs and fleas, for some excellent reason which we don't understand.

T. W. LANE.—You say the fruits of the spirit are love, joy, and peace. Do you reckon our imprisonment in Holloway Gaol as one of these "fruits"? You say "great is the mystery of godliness." So it is, so it is.

E. MOORE.—We know nothing of God. If there is such a being, he will introduce himself when he wishes us to cultivate his acquaintance.

SIMPLE SIMON.—Always glad to receive cuttings.

AGNOSCO.—The House of Lords is not attracting much attention at the present moment, and the verse would therefore miss fire.

H. P. BOWDEN.—Obliged for the suggestion. It may be worked up if our artist sees his way.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Hampshire Independent—Hackney Mercury—Freidenker—Independent Pulpit—Jus—Boston Investigator—Western Figaro—Truthseeker—Liberal Ensign—Peterborough Express—Bath Herald—Bethnal Green Standard—New York Herald—Todmorden News—Weekly Dispatch—Echo.

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.

TO-DAY, (April 3) Mr. Foote delivers three lectures in the hall which the Manchester Freethinkers are endeavoring to purchase. The Company has just obtained occupation of the premises, and this will be a capital opportunity for the Freethinker in Manchesters and the district to see with their own eyes what kind of property it is in which they are asked to invest their money. Mr. Foote's lectures will be in aid of the Building Fund, and there should be a special whip up among the friends of the movement.

We are happy to announce that Mr. Bradlaugh's visit to Manchester last Sunday improved the position of the Secular Hall Company to the extent of nearly £200.

THERE was a lively scene at the London Hall of Science last Sunday evening. Mr. Foote lectured on "Christianity Opposed to Morality," and criticism was offered by Messrs. Tarry and Dunn, two of the Christian Evidence Society's lecturers whose

al fresco performances are familiar to many of our readers. Mr. Tarry had the first innings, and his peculiarly rambling style excited a good deal of risibility. Mr. Tarry loves his own jokes. Most of them are not original, but he has a foster-mother's interest in them for all that. The audience cried "No, No," when he innocently inquired if one of his points was not convincing. Thereupon Mr. Tarry exclaimed, "Well, I can only furnish you with arguments, I cannot furnish you with brains." In his reply, Mr. Foote said he was sorry that Mr. Tarry had been interrupted, and sorrier still that he had told the audience he could not supply them with brains, especially as the information was superfluous, since nobody could suppose he was capable of doing anything of the kind. Mr. Tarry will probably try another witticism in future.

MR. DUNN rambled as badly as Mr. Tarry, and in addition he was studiously offensive, for which he was properly reprov'd. Amidst his ramblings he introduced the *Crimes of Christianity*. When that work was publishing we offered five pounds to any Christian who could find in it a single substantial inaccuracy or misquotation. Mr. Dunn demanded the five pounds. He had found a gigantic blunder. It was the only one he had discovered in 288 pages, but it was big enough to overshadow the volume. Revelation II, 9, speaks of those "who say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." The word of had crept into the text; Messrs. Foote and Wheeler had written "of the synagogue of Satan." This was the gigantic blunder which Mr. Dunn had found in 288 pages. Of course he *didn't* get the five pounds.

By the way, this clerical slip was very natural, for in the very next chapter (iii., 9) Patmos Johnnie speaks of "them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie." The Revised Version renders ii., 9, "are a synagogue of Satan."

THIS trifling slip, the only one the Christian Evidence Society has been able to discover in a long impeachment of their faith at the bar of history, will be rectified in the new edition, which is in the press. The work will be published in two volumes. The first volume, a revised and enlarged reprint of most of the parts previously issued, will be published in a few weeks. It will be printed on good paper, bound in cloth, and sold at two shillings.

It is announced that thirteen counties will be represented at the forthcoming tithepayers' meeting at the Old Town Hall, Reading, on Saturday, April 2.

THE Dean of Peterborough has been "quite shocked" to see that people attend a confirmation at the Cathedral as if it were a theatre or a concert, and he laments to observe that "reverence to God and to holy things was dying out very rapidly." We regard this as good news. That the belief in bogeys is vanishing should only trouble those whose trade it is to deal in such articles.

DR. PANKHURST has obtained a verdict giving him sixty pounds damages for libel and forty shillings for slander against Colonel Hamilton, who issued the libel during a political contest, and who continued to employ it in spite of Dr. Pankhurst's complete contradiction. Colonel Hamilton found the accusation of Atheism and of blasphemous utterances concerning the Christian deity was too good a trick to abandon in a hurry whatever measure of falsehood it might contain. He now has to pay a penalty for his thoroughly Christian policy.

THE Liverpool Sunday Lecture Society has just brought a very successful first session to a close. The balance-sheet shows a substantial sum in hand.

COLONEL INGERSOLL, the "renowned infidel," as the *New York Herald* styles him, has delivered himself on the subject of the late Henry Ward Beecher. Beecher, he declares, tried to hide the dungeon of orthodoxy with the ivy of imagination. "Now and then he pulls for a moment the leafy curtain aside and is horrified to see the lizards, snakes, basilisks, and abnormal monsters of the orthodox age; and then he utters a great cry, the protest of a living throbbing heart." Ingersoll finds the real difference between himself and Beecher in the fact that "he says God, I say Nature."

THE *St. Louis Post Dispatch* says: "Two things surprise all strangers who visit St. Louis. One is to find all the saloons open on Sunday, the theatres giving performances, even matinées, the beer gardens crowded in season, the Sunday mail a municipal feature, and almost universal liberty as to the observance of Sunday. The other cause of surprise is to find that the Monday police dockets are unusually light. There is no more Sunday drunkenness in St. Louis than in cities where saloons are closed on Sundays. There is less disturbance of the peace, and in St. Louis more workmen are ready for work on Monday morning than in cities where their Sunday welfare is taken in charge by the law."

Jus also points out that in Dublin, in the poorer quarters, shops remain open all Sunday. Even in the very shadow of the two cathedrals buying and selling goes briskly on, and not of food and drink only, but of the less perishable articles of clothing and household stuff. In the matter of Sunday observance Catholicism seems more tolerant than Protestantism.

MR. SALT, who in the current number of *Progress*, refutes the fallacy that Shelley would have become a Christian if he had lived, has an interesting letter on Shelley's "Julian and Maddalo" in the *Academy* for March 26.

WE observe that Dr. J. R. Monroe, of the *Ironclad Age*, Indianapolis, has got to the end of his thirty-first volume. This means that the worthy doctor has kept the standard of infidelity afloat for thirty-one years. Dr. Monroe's paper is one of the most uncompromising of the American organs of Freethought, and it keeps up a running fire upon the bigots with unflinching *verve*, racy humour, and sound common sense. The *Ironclad Age* is one of the best-relished of our exchanges, though, we regret to add, it does not always come to hand as regularly as we could desire. Long may it continue in its useful and civilising career, and long may the genial doctor preside at the helm.

WAS SLAVERY ABOLISHED BY CHRISTIANITY ?

THAT Christianity destroyed slavery is a misrepresentation, unwarranted by the facts of history. No one ever thought of saying so before 1789, when "infidel France" proclaimed the equality of all men. On the contrary, slavery, as we have seen, was sanctioned by the Bible, and supported by the Saints, Fathers, and Councils of the Church, which itself held slaves as its property. It has lasted among Christian nations until our own time; and whereas Pagan slavery was a mitigation of barbarism by the practice of keeping instead of slaughtering opponents in war, Christian slavery revived the savagery of stealing men, women, and children from their homes. No worse system of slavery ever obtained than that which existed till 1862 in America. Was it abolished by Christianity? Read the burning testimony of Theodore Parker:—

"In some lands monarchy, autocracy, prelacy, appear in the public teaching as part of Christianity. In America it is not so. But it is taught that slavery is an ordinance of God—justified by Christianity. Thus as the public religion is elsewhere made to subserve the private purposes of kings, nobles, priests—so here it is made to prove the justice of holding men in bondage. There are no chains like those wrought in the name of God, and welded upon their victims by the teachers of religion. . . . Church members and clergymen are owners of slaves. Even churches themselves in some instances have, in their corporate capacity, been owners of men. In Turkey, when a man becomes a Mahometan, he ceases to become a slave. But in America a clergyman may own a member of his own church, beat him, sell him, and grow rich on the 'increase of his female slaves.'"*

"If," says that grand man, who was stigmatised as an infidel, and repudiated even by his Unitarian brethren—

"If the American Church, twenty years ago, could have dropped through the continent and disappeared altogether, the anti-slavery cause would have been further on than it is at this day. If, remaining above ground, every minister in the United States had sealed his lips and said, 'Before God, I will say no word for freedom or against it, in behalf of the slaveholder or of his victim,' the anti-slavery enterprise would have been further on than it is at this day."†

Theodore Parker pointed to the vast incomes of the Tract Societies of the Northern States; yet the Christian Church never issued a tract against slavery. Parker says—

"Nay, worse:—if it finds English books which suit its general purpose, but containing matter adverse to slavery, it strikes out all the anti-slavery matter and then circulates the book. At this day 600,000 slaves are directly and personally owned by men who are called "professing Christians," members in good fellowship of the churches of this land; 80,000 owned by Presbyterians, 225,000 by Baptists, 25,000 owned by Methodists—600,000 slaves in this land owned by men who profess themselves Christians, and in churches sit down to take the Lord's Supper in the name of Christ and God."

It is not only the heterodox Parker who testifies thus. The orthodox Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe says—

"The Church is familiarly quoted as being on the side of slavery. Statesmen on both sides of the question have laid that down as a settled fact. Infidels point to it with triumph."‡

Wilberforce asks—

"What witness, then, has as yet been borne by the Church in these slave states against this *almost universal* sin? How has she fulfilled her vocation? She raises no voice against the predominant evil; she palliates it in theory, and in practice she shares in it. The mildest and most conscientious of the bishops of the South are slaveholders themselves. . . . The bishops of the North sit in open convention with their slaveholding brethren, and no canon proclaims it contrary to the discipline of their church to hold property in man, and treat him as a chattel."*

Jay, in his "Reproof of the American Church," says—

"A reverend Professor of the Methodist Church has decided that it is perfectly lawful for an owner to separate husband and wife, and that if there be any sin in the case, it rests upon the shoulders of the slaves, who ought not to have taken vows which their condition disqualifies them from keeping. A Baptist association in Virginia have granted permission to a slave member to take a second wife, his first having been sold into another part of the country; and another association in Georgia is reported to have voted that a separation of man and wife, by sale or hire, to such a distance as precludes personal intercourse, is considered by God as equivalent to death."†

After further showing the horrors of slavery, Jay says: "Yet of this system the Episcopal Church is a mighty buttress, and certain of her bishops its reckless and unblushing champions."

The Harmony Presbytery of South Carolina resolved—

"That slavery has existed from the days of those good old slave-holders and patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (who are now in the Kingdom of Heaven), to the time when the Apostle Paul sent a runaway home to his master Philemon, and wrote a Christian and fraternal letter to this slave-holder, which we find still stands in the canon of the Scriptures; and that slavery has existed ever since the days of the Apostle, and does now exist."‡

The Rev. Bishop Meade, in his *Sermons to Slaves*, exhorts them thus:

"Your masters and mistresses are God's overseers, and that if you are faulty towards them, God Himself will punish you for it in the next world. . . . Now when *correction* is given you, you either deserve it, or you do not deserve it. But whether you really deserve it or not it is your duty, and Almighty God requires that you bear it patiently."

Nor was it only in the Southern States that slavery was thus taught. Theodore Parker declares: "Northern ministers in all the churches of commerce baptised it, defended it out of the Old Testament or the New Testament."§

In 1841 the Rev. Jonathan Davis, a Baptist minister from Georgia, visited the Northern States. Boasting that he was the owner of thirty human beings, and that he would wade knee-deep in blood to maintain his right to hold them, still he was everywhere received by the Northern Baptists with delight. In his letters he says the Abolitionists were in a small minority.

The Methodist Episcopal Church has been largely favored by the slaves. How that Church regarded the negro may be illustrated by the resolution passed at its Conference in 1840. "Resolved: That it is inexpedient for any preacher to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons in any State where they are denied that privilege by law.||

Parker Pillsbury gives abundant evidence of the churches and ministers holding slaves. The college church of the Union Theological Seminary, Prince Edward County, was, for instance, endowed with slaves, who were hired out to the highest bidder to raise the salary of the pastor. Mr. Pillsbury quotes many advertisements. Thus, at the death of the Rev. Dr. Furnan, an eminent Baptist, who maintained that "the right of holding slaves is clearly established in the Holy Scriptures, both by precept and example," the advertisement announces "a library of a miscellaneous character, chiefly theological, twenty-seven negroes, some of them very fine, two mules, one horse, and an old waggon."

When William Lloyd Garrison delivered his first anti-slavery lecture in Boston, not a single church, Catholic or Protestant, would open its doors to him. Abner Kneeland, the infidel who had been prosecuted for blasphemy,

* "History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America," pp. 421, 426.

† "Miscellaneous Works on Slavery," p. 428; 1853.

‡ "The Church as it is; or, the Forlorn Hope of Slavery." By Parker Pillsbury; pp. 13, 14.

§ Vol. v., p. 282.

|| Parker Pillsbury. "Acts of the Anti-slavery Apostles," p. 414.

* "Discourses on Slavery," Works, vol. v., p. 56.

† Works, vol. vi., pp. 233—234.

‡ Key to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," p. 538.

hearing of his proscription, kindly invited him to occupy Julian Hall, where Mr. Kneeland was lecturing, and in that infidel meeting, when a hearing was denied him elsewhere, Mr. Garrison gave his first anti-slavery lecture in Boston. Not only Kneeland, but Le Roy Sunderland, Geritt Smith, Parker Pillsbury, Elizur Wright, II. Brewster Stanton, and other prominent abolitionists were infidels. Frances Wright set an example by freeing her slaves at Nashoba. Ernestine Louise Rose lectured against slavery, not only in the North but in Charleston, the centre of the slavery district. Lucy Colman tells how often she was mobbed when speaking in favor of abolition, and frequently the mobs were hounded on by ministers against the "infidels."

Volumes upon volumes have been published by Christian ministers defending slavery as a divinely-ordained institution. At the risk of being tedious, I mention a few of the more recent: Rev. F. A. Ross, *Slavery Ordained of God* (Philadelphia, 1857); Rev. S. B. How, *Slaveholding Not Sinful* (New Brunswick, 1856); Rev. George D. Armstrong, *Christian Doctrine of Slavery* (New York, 1857); J. H. Hopkins (Bishop of Vermont), *The American Citizen* (1845); Rev. J. Priest, *Origin, Fortunes and History of the Negro Race* (1852); Bishop England's *Letters on Slavery* (1840); J. Fletcher, *Studies on Slavery* (1852); Rev. David Christie, *Pulpit Politics* (1862).

Professor Moses Stuart, of Andover, the most eminent American theologian since Jonathan Edwards, defended slavery from the Bible. He said: "The precepts of the New Testament respecting the demeanor of slaves and their masters beyond all question recognise the existence of slavery." I might multiply the testimony of divines, some of whom went so far as to declare that if Christ were living he would be a slaveholder; but I have already exceeded my usual limit without exhausting a tittle of the evidence that slavery was not abolished by Christianity.

J. M. WHEELER.

LIVERPOOL NOTES.

At the pro-cathedral of St. Peter, Liverpool, "Oratorio Services" have recently been given, to which admission is by ticket. No charge is made, but an "offertory" is taken between the first and second part of the oratorio. The cathedral authorities, however, complain of the collections as "meagre," and in a circular state that when the "Last Judgment" was given "about one-third of those present contributed coppers," and that "the average amount for each member of the congregation was a fraction over *threepence*." They add that "comment is unnecessary." We can agree with them on this point.

They have a new game at St. John the Baptist's Church, Toxeth Park, Liverpool. It consists of the curate continually lighting the candles and the churchwarden as persistently putting them out with an extinguisher which he provides for the purpose. This diversion was found to considerably enliven the proceedings.

The churchwarden has been summoned, and the vicar agreed not to put lighted candles, pending an appeal to the bishop, but last Sunday a fresh quarrel arose over the collecting bags, and the edifying spectacle of a violent struggle between a churchwarden and one of the vicar's adherents, resulting in the destruction of a money bag, was witnessed by the congregation. The vicar was afterwards hooted in the streets by an enormous crowd. Cannot the Lord's Day Observance Society prosecute him for keeping a "disorderly house"?

The churchwarden was fined 20s. for extinguishing the candle. Would the old question "Where was Moses when the light went out?" throw any light upon this church controversy?

SPURGEON has been telling a tale in which he likens some of the clergy to a negro minister who used to preach with considerable eloquence. Some one asked Sambo how he lived. He answered that he preached, and lived by speculation. "And what do you speculate in?" "Massa, I sell chickens." "Well," returned the other, "but where do you get the chickens from?" "My boys brings 'em in at night." "And where do your boys get the chickens from?" "Now, honey," the negro answered, "don't you inquire too much. The fact is I was going to inquire myself, but a revival burst up, and I have not had time to ask the boys about it, so we have gone on selling the chickens." Spurgeon thinks that the clergy don't trouble to inquire too closely where their chickens comes from. He is quite correct, especially where tithes are concerned, though he only meant his remarks to apply to the purchase of shares in great breweries by clergymen who ignore the great mischief wrought by drink.

REVIEWS.

Our Corner. April. Freethought Publishing Co.—Mrs. Besant replies to Mr. Bradlaugh's *Strictures on Socialism*. The gist of her answer is that he does not understand it. C. J. Rowe writes ably, and at great length, on *Imperial Federation*. Mr. J. Robertson deals with the grammatical slips of great writers. Mr. T. E. Jacob has an interesting statistical paper on *Free Will and Figures*, and A. Tallandier begins a paper on *Rabelais*.

The Birth of the Cross. A Treatise Showing the Pagan Origin of Christianity. By GEORGE WACKERBARTH. Ireton and Co., 92, Gracechurch Street, London, E.C. One Penny.—Although Mr. Wackerbarth by no means exhausts the question of the origin of the Cross—he neither alludes to it as the Nilometer nor as a simple sign against evil spirits—he vigorously states the case of those who believe that this symbol and much else in Christianity was derived from Pagan sun-worship. The pamphlet is illustrated with four cuts, illustrating the worship of Mithra, and concludes with a terse and trenchant impeachment of the effects of Christianity. The date of Sir William Drummond's *Ædipus Judaicus* is misprinted 1866; it should be 1826.

The Seven Souls of Man and their Culmination in Christ! A lecture by GERALD MASSEY. One Shilling. Villa Bordighiera, New Southgate, London, N. In his *Book of Beginnings and Natural Genesis* Mr. Massey has done much towards unearthing the past, and explaining ancient faiths, by showing that the types in which early man *tinged* his thoughts arose from necessity and for use. In the present lecture Mr. Massey applies his method to the Egyptian and other myths of the seven souls culminating in the Gnostic Ogdoad. We cannot say that we follow Mr. Massey throughout. We think for instance that the sacredness of the number seven may be traced rather to the lunar division of time than to the seven stars of the Great Bear; but we are convinced he is not only worth reading, but studying. As an illustration of the suggestive character of his writings take the following:

"The observation that blood, the first factor in primitive biology, was the basis used by nature in building up the future human being is probably the source and origin of the superstition that in building a city, fortress, bridge, or church, an enduring foundation must be laid in blood; whence the primitive practice of burying a living child, a calf, a dog, goat, or lamb—the lamb slain from the *foundation of the world* being a Mithraic and Christian survival of the same significance with the bloody and barbarous rite of the victim immured as a basis for the building."

The lecture is followed by a sharp retort upon an American spiritsit who has attacked Mr. Massey's scholarship. We are pleased to note his just rebuke of certain "authorities" who are Bible worshippers first and scholars afterwards, and whose bibliolatory puts out the eyes of their scholarship.

FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN.

W. C. SAVILLE writes: "In the matter of Bentley *v.* Christ it perhaps never struck you that Christ really alluded to theatres when he said 'Wide is the gate,' etc. But I declare unto thee that the text should read 'Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in *theatre*.' By transposing a letter or two of 'thereat' the prophetic value of the Lord's words is greatly enhanced."

SOME Christian dunce, without a gleam of humor, seriously rebukes us for issuing a Tract on the Death of Adam, in which the old fellow is represented as sitting in an arm chair. Who told you, asks the Christian dunce, that Adam *had* an arm chair? The poor blockhead goes through the Tract in the same vein. For such persons it is necessary to print a footnote after anything funny, after Artemus Ward's style—"N.B.—This is writ sarcastic."

CAPTAIN HENRY DRUMMOND WOLFF, son of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, has gone bankrupt for over £5,000. Of this amount £3,500 is unsecured, and the assets are nil. Mr. Bradlaugh's chief enemies in the House of Commons don't seem to be particularly favored by Providence. If Drummond Wolff had devoted a little less of his time and attention to persecuting Mr. Bradlaugh for his unbelief, he might have been able to attend to the training of his son in common honesty as well as in piety. Fowler, too, who wanted Mr. Bradlaugh "kicked" out of the House of Commons, is now shaking in his shoes over his own connection with the City scandals. Piety and corruption go well together, and we can quite understand why the holy alliance of these two influences was so anxious to keep out a bold and honest heretic. As to poor Newdegate, his final defeat, his losses, and his retirement into congenial insignificance, show that the Lord doesn't esteem a faithful servant at his right value.

THE Church House scheme fails to obtain even the shillings of the curates, but some of the Church dignitaries are expected to come down handsome, and, as everyone knows, there is more rejoicing in the Church when one wealthy sinner drops a hundred pounds than when ninety and nine hand in a sovereign a piece.

PROFANE JOKES.

WIFE: "I don't see how you can say that the Rev. Mr. White-choker has an effeminate way of talking. He has a very loud voice." Husband: "I mean by an effeminate way of talking, my dear, that he talks all the time."

OMAHA man: "Seems to me you folks badly need civilising." California man: "Eh, how so?" "I saw in the paper the other day that a stranger in Oakland visited every bookstore in hopes of buying a Bible, and could not find one in the place." "Oh, that's on account of the climate." "Climate?" "Yes, folks are so healthy there they never think of Bibles."

FIRST Charleston lady: "Ise gwine to chutch to tank de Laud dey ain't no mo' 'erquakes. Ain't yo' gwine too, my sister?" Second lady: "No, no, my sister, I no gwine! Will you attend de brick chutch?" First lady: "De brick chutch fo' tru', but don' yo' trus' de Laud?" Second lady: "I trus' de Laud, aw my sister, I trus' um, but I neber fool wid um."

A FORMER minister of Stewarton, in Ayrshire, used to preach the same sermon (on "The Ten Virgins") year after year in a neighboring parish on the Monday after the communion. At length an old clerical friend gave him a pretty strong hint to choose a fresh subject by expressing his belief that "his ten virgins must now be pretty auld maids."

LITTLE Johnnie had been to church and heard a very obese parson. On the way home he remarked—"What a norful stomach that preacher had. Didn't seem right, though, for him to git off that joke." "What joke?" interposed his father. "Why, don't you know?" returned Johnnie, "when he put his hand down on the part where his vest stuck out, and said 'Man wants but little here below.'"

In one of the largest Scotch Board Schools, a boy was sent by the junior mistress to the head-master for punishment. The lad came crying and rubbing his eyes, and was asked by the master what he had been sent to him for. "Telling a lee," said the boy. The master, to improve the occasion, asked him if he knew where all liars went to. "Yes," said the half-crying culprit, "Please sir, they gang to the heid-master."

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

Day is fine,
Church all style,
Preacher handsome,
Women smile;
Man in pulpit
Pounding book,
Married lady
Gives him look;
Look's returned,
Each one feels
Queer sensation
Down to heels;
Few days later
Daily press
Chronicles scandal—
Great distress;
Pastor's downfall,
Lady's bad break,
Irate husband
Follows in wake;
Hotel reached,
Registrar scanned,
Man and wife,
Scheme is planned;
Clerk leads way,
Nest still warm,
Birds have flown
The gath'ring storm;
Husband rushes
Out for train,
Arrives too late—
Foiled again;
Goes back home,
Heart is broke
By an ingrate's
Heartless stroke;
Reputation,
Love, and life
All are nothing—
Good-bye, wife!

T. M. HORNE.

Price Threepence.

PROGRESS

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- Shelley and the Christian Faith. By H. S. Salt.
- The New Sociology.—III. By James Leatham.
- The "New Sociology" Criticised.—II. By W. Ball.
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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, Failsworth, Manchester.
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