

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. VII.—No. 16.]

APRIL 17, 1887.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 194.



SALVATION SAL.

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days.—ACTS XVI., 16-18.

THE RISING SON.

GHOSTS are rarely seen nowadays. Just as they used to flee before “the bird of dawn,” so they flee before the rising sun of science, and vanish altogether when it ascends the heaven of truth. The fact is, and most people are beginning to see it, that ghosts are merely “phantoms of the heat-oppressed brain.” They are products of faith. It is with ghosts as with miracles. Seeing them does not produce belief in them, it is believing in them that makes people see them. Superstitious persons occasionally behold one. A sceptic never does.

There have been a great variety of ghosts in history. The Cock Lane ghost is remembered through its connexion with Dr. Johnson, and many more have “had their day and ceased to be,” giving place to fresh wonders for the gaping mouth of credulity. But the famous Jerusalem ghost still holds the field. It waits for Freethought to lay it with the magic words of common sense. Fortunately there are igns that it feels uneasy. It no longer challenges us with

the same frank audacity. It wears an apologetic sort of look when it meets us, as though it meant “Come now, you mistrust me; you fancy I’m an illusion, or an imposture, like other apparitions; but you are mistaken, my dear sir; I’m a real *bonâ fide* ghost, warranted authentic, and, if I may say so, several degrees above proof.”

This Jerusalem ghost is supposed to have begun its mysterious career eighteen hundred and fifty-four years ago last Sunday morning. Curiously enough, it was the son of a ghost, or at least they say so; and therefore it belongs to a ghostly family. While it lived in the flesh it inhabited the body of a Jewish carpenter named Jeshua or Joshua, the Greek form of which is Jesus. What became of the corpse when the ghost had done with it God only knows. There are some groggy pamphleteers, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who pretend to give an account of the business; but they are so terribly confused and self-contradictory that no sensible person can give them any credence. At one minute they write of a ghost pure and simple, that crept through keyholes, and came and went like a sunbeam. At another minute they

write of a man who invited his friends to feel his muscle, and joined them at a fish dinner. And yet again they work the man and the ghost into one figure, and make it act in a double capacity.

The most curious thing about this Jerusalem ghost is its fastidiousness. It was not a ghost that appeared to everybody and anybody. No one ever caught a glimpse of it except a few male and female friends. They told others, and they told others, and so the story spread. But we have not a single scrap of writing from a single one of the original eye-witnesses. All we possess amounts to this—somebody saw somebody who knew somebody that saw the ghost. The persons who were mixed up with Jeshua's death never got wind of the affair. The Roman governor who sentenced him to execution, and the soldiers who carried out the order, died in ignorance of the young fellow's posthumous performances; while the Jews amongst whom they happened laughed at the story then, and have laughed at it ever since. True, the laugh was sardonic when they were fined, imprisoned, hung, drowned, and burnt, for their obstinate incredulity. Yet they have always kept a stiff upper-lip and a wrinkle under the eyes as to the pretensions of that Jerusalem ghost. They still assert that it was simply a Cock Lane affair that never got properly investigated, and that it was only extensively credited far away from the spot or long after, when investigation was impossible.

One peculiarity of this Jerusalem ghost is that if you do not believe in it you will be damned. Such a terrible threat is a great hindrance to inquiry. No wonder, therefore, that most people thought belief was the right side, and settled the matter by saying Amen. Yet there were always a few sceptics who sniffed at the yarn. They had a very bad time of it, although one would think that disbelief in one of the many ghosts that have flitted about in the world was no very heinous crime. They were treated worse than dogs; nay, they were treated like devils. But they were the toughest of their race. They persisted in their scepticism, their numbers grew, and now they are a mighty host that all the popes and priests in the world are unable to suppress.

At this stage, when sceptics can breathe a little and look about them, it does seem an impolite way of addressing a gentleman to say, "Believe or be damned." The proper answer to such rudeness is, "Be damned yourself," and that is what the sceptics are beginning to retort on the ghost's friends. As a matter of fact, too, those gentry begin to see that they must modify their impudence. They say less about punishment, and more about reward. They withhold the menace, and offer a bribe. They put the stick behind their backs, and offer the sceptics an ounce of lollipops.

Another peculiarity of the Jerusalem ghost, and this the supreme one, is that it was no less than God Almighty himself, or at least a third part of that being, if infinity can be divided by three. The Deity who is supposed to rule, after having created, this illimitable universe, not only walked about like a man, worked at a carpenter's bench, ate, drank, attended to the meanest necessities of nature, was reviled, buffeted, spat upon, and finally executed as a malefactor, but actually flitted about like a hedgerow ghost for forty days afterwards, and finally ascended to heaven, where he cannot have arrived yet, even if he has been travelling all the time with the rapidity of light. Surely such a monstrous story should be attested by overwhelming evidence, especially if our salvation or perdition is to depend on whether we accept or reject it. But instead of this we have such evidence as would not suffice to render a village ghost-story plausible. If this Jeshua was indeed the Son of God, and wished to assure us of his Resurrection and Ascension, why did he not publicly appear to Pontius Pilate and the Sanhedrim? Why did he not give ocular and incontestible proof of his having burst the bonds of death? Why did he not invite the whole of Jerusalem, aye, and representatives of every foreign nation, to witness his flight to paradise?

Twenty such Whys might be asked, each as pertinent and each as difficult to answer. The civilised world is getting sick of this Jerusalem ghost story. A mighty roar of laughter is shaking the realms of superstition, fluttering all the ghosts, warning them to melt into thin air, and, "like the baseless fabric of a vision faded, leave not a wrack behind."

G. W. FOOTE.

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

(A.D. 54.)

(Scene—An upper chamber in Jerusalem. Present—Peter, James and John.)

PETER: Well, brethren, I am sorry to report that the contributions of the faithful do not flow in so plentifully—

JAMES: As they did after the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira, brother Kephas.

PETER: Well, curse it, you cannot grumble. We've made you first bishop of Jerusalem—bless you!

JOHN: It is all the fault of this intruding tent-maker, this Saul of Tarsus, who is coming here to-day. He arrogantly proclaims himself the apostle of the uncircumcision, denies our authority, and leads the people away from the holy law.

JAMES: Yea, brother Jochanan. He hath been marvellously successful in drawing away the faithful in Corinth and Galatia.

PETER: I'll soon put him down. I believe the poor man is cracked through a sunstroke he received on the road to Damascus; but leave me to deal with him and I'll put him in his proper place, so help me Moses.

JAMES: Let thy conversation be yea, yea, and nay, nay, brother Kephas. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not so to be.

JOHN: What manner of man is this deceiver and anti-christ?

PETER: A contemptible little hunchbacked, hook-nosed fellow, half Jew and half Gentile. They say he turned Christian because he was not allowed to marry Gamaliel's daughter. See how I'll put him down. I'll demand that he and his followers be circumcised, even as our blessed Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, was circumcised; you know that, brother James, and curse me if I won't circumcise them all myself.

JAMES: Admonish him with Christian charity, brother Kephas; know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall hide a multitude of sins, brother Kephas.

JOHN: Verily we must root out these interlopers who say they are Jews but are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan. But all in a spirit of brotherly love, brother Peter.

PETER: Here he comes. Mark how I'll put him down.

Enter PAUL.

PAUL (*aside*): So these are the men that seem to be pillars. The brother of the Lord and his favorite disciples!

PETER: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you, beloved brother Paul. It hath seemed mete to send for you, since divers false prophets privily bring in damnable heresies, claiming liberty from the law while they themselves are servants of corruption.

JOHN: Yea, and cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, teaching that circumcision and Sabbath observance are nothing, and permitting to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

JAMES: To be plain with you, brother Paul, you are accused of fomenting and abetting these heresies.

PAUL: I thank my God I am dead to the bondage of the law, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

JAMES: Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

PETER: Thou teachest that if we be circumcised Christ shall profit us nothing, and yet thou didst circumcise thy disciple Timothy.

PAUL: Didst not thou, Kephas, thou whited wall, first eat with the Gentiles and then withdraw, fearing them which were of the circumcision? And then other Jews dissembled likewise with thee, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

PETER: Am not I the appointed first apostle? Did not Jesus say to me, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona. Thou art Peter, and upon this Peter I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"?

JAMES: Am not I the Lord's brother, descended from David?

PAUL: I heed not your Jewish fables and genealogies.

JOHN: Neither did his brethren believe in him. Am not I the disciple whom he loved?

PAUL: He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. I receive not my doctrine of men, neither was I taught it but

by revelation. Your worship is of the flesh, fleshly. Think ye I worship according to the flesh? I worship no man Jesus, but the risen Christ, the Lord of glory, who hath appeared to me also as to one born out of due time.

PETER (*aside*): He means the sunstroke. (*Aloud*) Thou sayest things hard to be understood. Did not our Lord declare he came not to destroy the law, and that he was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? Did he not say that whosoever should break the least of the commandments of Moses should be least in the kingdom of heaven?

PAUL: I am not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles. Are you Hebrews? so am I. Are you Israelites? so am I. Are you the seed of Abraham? so am I, in labors more abundant, in prison more frequent.

JOHN: Far more frequent.

PAUL: As the truth of Christ is in me no man shall stop me of this boasting. I knew a man (whether in or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth) who was caught up into the third heaven and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

PETER (*aside*): Still harping on his sunstroke. He's gone clean daft.

PAUL: I thank the Lord the foolishness of man is the wisdom of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

JOHN: We must warn the faithful that if any man come and bring not our doctrine, he must neither be received into the house nor bid God speed.

PAUL: Though an angel of heaven preach any other gospel than mine let him be accursed.

PETER: Cursed be they which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray following the way of Balaam of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

PAUL: If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema-Maranatha.

JAMES: Now, brother Paul, wilt thou submit to be ruled by the Church?

PAUL: Shall I give place in subjection to the bonds of the weak beggarly elements of your law? No, not for an hour! I have been called unto liberty, but ye would bring us into deeper bondage such as our forefathers could not bear.

PETER: Well, brother Paul, to come to the real point, if you will only engage that wherever you go you will make collections, and send the proceeds to us, the Church which is at Jerusalem, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, shall go from us with you informing your converts they may go uncircumcised.

JAMES: Always provided they abstain from fornication and sacrifices to idols.

JOHN: And from eating black puddings and things strangled.

PAUL: As you will. I will depart on that condition.

PETER: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, beloved brother. (*Exit Paul.*)

JOHN: Meanwhile I will write to the Churches warning them against the blasphemies of them which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie, and are of the synagogue of Satan.

JAMES: We marked how you put him down, brother
J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

THE Rev. C. J. Whitmore, no doubt thinking that ministers and policemen have a good deal in common, has issued a bill headed "Ten Pounds Reward." It appears that he offers that amount to any Secularist who is able to "disprove the facts and answer the arguments" which C. J. W. will adduce in favor of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Of course the offer looks very generous, but Secularists don't want C. J. W.'s money, and much less to waste their time in trying to extract it. Still, if C. J. W. really desires a public debate on the Resurrection, he can be obliged, without betting on the business.

At the instigation of the Rev. Mr. Tetley and some other ministerial bigots, the Derby Burial Board has refused to allow Sunday funerals in the cemetery. The action of the Board has excited much dissatisfaction among the working classes of Derby, who believe that the Sabbath was made for man and not for the ministers.

MISS DARWIN, of Scarborough, cousin to Charles Darwin, believes firmly in evolution and in the plenary inspiration of the Bible. She contends that the Darwinian theory is notified by

Scripture. The man created in Genesis i. had no soul, she alleges, but long afterwards, in the second chapter, Adam was created and endowed with an immortal spirit. As the soulless men and women of the previous ages were not fit companions for him, God had to make him a special wife out of his own rib.

SPEAKING of the attempt to assassinate the Czar, the *Christian Herald* says: "This, and all similar events, are clearly traceable to the predicted going forth from Satan of the three frog-like spirits under the year-day Sixth Vial in Revelation xvi." The *Christian Herald* had better call itself the *Colney Hatcher*.

ST. JOHN the Baptist's Church at Liverpool has been the scene of further disturbances owing to the ritualistic tendencies of the vicar, who gave the churchwarden in custody for blowing out the candles on the altar. About four thousand people assembled, and the thirty constables who were escorting the vicar and his curate were quite insufficient for their task, notwithstanding they made a liberal use of their staves. The two clergymen had to take refuge in the Bridewell for an hour, until a force of a hundred policemen cleared the streets, and the vicar was sent off in a cab, which was vigorously hooted. Christianity is evidently a great source of harmony and good will, and Christians in their quarrelling only demonstrate the perfection of the universal love and brotherhood which it secures.

CHRISTIAN love and brotherhood of the usual kind also prevails in Belfast still in spite of the large force of police and soldiers now stationed there to compel the Christians to refrain from murdering each other wholesale. On Easter Sunday, being a specially holy day, the pious sectarians could not refrain from a little rioting. The police were violently stoned, and had to charge the crowd. The Protestant mob rescued a prisoner. One man was shot, and a policeman was knocked insensible with a stone.

A CHRISTIAN pamphlet or sermon on the Disposition of God tells a story of an Indian father who saved his guilty son from being burnt to death by offering himself as a substitute and being roasted to death over a slow fire. The pamphlet says that "a similar disposition fills the heart of God." Yes, one reflects—a similar disposition to that of the Red Indians who delighted in slow cremation of the living and who rejoiced in the sacrifice of the innocent for the guilty. If God the Son sacrificed himself, it was the wrathful God the Father who demanded the vicarious penalty; so that God the Trinity possesses opposite attributes. He is both judge and victim, besides being plaintiff, executioner, and vicarious defendant. But both Father and Son agree in inflicting eternal torments in hell, so that in the long run their characters are not so far unlike, although one of them may have gone through the farce of destroying sin, or of prepaying its eternal punishment in the cases of millions of men, by simply suffering for a few hours as a man.

THE same pamphlet revels in atrocious charges against those who reject God. It says, for instance, "Religion without God means civilised heathenism with a knife in its hand to put to death every man, woman, and child who is not useful to society." Because an eminent Positivist wants to encourage and multiply the good members of society and discourage or prevent the increase of the bad, the pamphleteer accuses Positivists of wanting to drown babes as we do the pups of a mongrel cur. Such outrageous methods of attack simply disgrace the Christianity they are intended to support.

It is evident from the following quotation from one of Talmage's sermons that he prefers delusion to the truth: "O, my Lord, my God, what a delusion, what a glorious delusion! Submerge me with it, fill my eyes and ears with it, put it under my dying head for a pillow—this delusion—spread it over me for a canopy, put it underneath me for an outspread wing, roll it over me in ocean surges ten thousand fathoms deep! O, if infidelity, and if atheism, and if annihilation are a reality, and the Christian religion is a delusion, give me the delusion!" Yes, a "delusion" that leaves ninety-nine persons out of every one hundred in hell must be a consoling delusion.

"A CHURCHMAN" writes to one of the Northampton papers complaining that several godly capitalists of that town dropped in at Divine service on Good Friday, but kept their factories in full swing. "There are plenty of Christians," he adds, "who would sell their Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and chuckle cynically as they gathered in the money. Is there any wonder that, under the circumstances, Secularism makes progress?"

Glad Tidings, a pious organ of "the coming age," published at Nottingham, has a long article on "The Editor of the *Freethinker* and the Bible." The writer calls us an "exponent of atheistic socialistic democracy." After that, his opinion that this is an "execrable paper" will command very little respect. We are not angry, however; for what can be expected of a paper which is far gone on prophecy, a subject which, as Bishop South said, either finds a man cracked or leaves him so?

THE Archbishop of York having written to Beverley that the seats in the church must be assigned to the parishioners

"according to their degree," a circular has been issued asking each person to state his rank, profession, or occupation, whether peer, baronet, knight, gentleman, yeoman, tradesman, artisan, servant, or laborer. Amongst the other questions are: Have you been presented at Court? What is the amount of your income, and how is it derived? Probable amount of your subscription to "Church Expenses"?

ARCHBISHOP BENSON has recently stated that he thinks it an "honor to sit in the chair of the Martyr Laud." Perhaps he would like to revive the method of that archiepiscopal persecutor, and crop the ears of dissenters. Hallam said he would "distrust anyone's attachment to the English constitution, who reveres the name of the Earl of Stafford," and certainly no one can have the slightest regard for religious liberty who reveres the name of his fellow "martyr" Laud.

POOR Newdegate is dead and gone. He was a tolerably respectable and highly sincere fanatic of the old school, but the world will not miss him in the slightest. He was a tedious and irrelevant old fossil, born some two hundred years too late.

MR. PROCTOR, who is travelling in America, mentions in the April number of *Knowledge*, that although Brigham Young has been dead nearly ten years, leaving a large number of inconsolable widows to testify to his loss, there are those to be found among the Mormons who assert that the prophet is alive again. When such things can find credence in the nineteenth century, how can we be astonished at tales of resurrections in the ages of faith and superstition?

THE Tithes Bill, which Lord Salisbury has introduced to the House of Lords, releases the clergy from the odium of distraining, and throws the responsibility of payment upon the landlords, who are to receive 5 per cent. for collecting the tithes of the tenants. The *Rock* thinks this deduction a "very objectionable" feature in the Bill, and one which cannot be defended on any ground. It also believes that every clergyman will lament, with Lord Salisbury, that the old barbarous method of collection has "created deep and almost incalculable differences between the pastor and many of his flock, and created spiritual differences which it will require years to heal."

ONE provision of the Bill, and a very insidious one it is, is that the tithes may be redeemed for twenty years' purchase. The Church will thus get the capitalised value of the national tithes, and will consider the money its own private property. Care must be taken that such sums are not withdrawn from the national control.

GIVING "A Glimpse of Russia" in the *Nineteenth Century*, the Countess of Galloway says: "A large monastery that we visited at Moscow was inhabited by a number of rough, dirty, bearded, long-haired monks. The monks are not priests, and apparently their only object is to live easily and comfortably without expense or labor." Religion appears to be much the same all the world over.

THE *Church Times* is incensed because Dr. Rigg, the Methodist, sneers at "digital contact," by which he means the infusion of the Holy Ghost by the bishop's laying on of hands. It declares "it is in the last degree indecent to scoff at a ceremony which has the most venerable history, and is in fact of Divine appointment." But is the divinely-appointed ceremony worthy of anything better than being held up to ridicule?

PETER's pence are not bringing in so large a revenue as formerly, and the Papal budget for 1887, it is said, will show a deficit of a million francs.

A SUNDAY faction fight between the followers of two rival Polish priests in Detroit has resulted in the injury of between one and two hundred men and women by missiles.

THE priests of Scio can't get in their tithes. The bishop has put a number of parishes under the interdict. The clergy must not baptise or marry or celebrate mass or bury the dead. This was a formidable measure in the Dark Ages, but even Greek Christians in Turkey are now beginning to laugh at its terrors. The people at Scio have conducted several funerals without the help of the priests, and they have appealed to the Porte to compel the priest on strike to return to their work. The quarrel between the Christian flocks and their pastors thus has to be settled by the head of the Mohammedan religion.

THE Hackney Guardians recently refused to allow Mr. Harding to adopt a child, a relation of his, on the sole ground that he was an Atheist. The St. Pancras Guardians now hand over a boy, aged fourteen, to a brother who has married his own step-mother, and who perhaps wants the boy's earnings now he is old enough to go out to work. "Our only duty," said the Chairman, "is to save the rates; we have nothing to do with morality." These decisions embody the ordinary Christian view that immorality is infinitely better than the most honest and virtuous Atheism.

A COUNTRY parson, who writes regularly in the *Church Times* mentions that he has seen ragged lumps of bread brought to the celebrant of the Lord's Supper covered with green mould, and that in another advanced church he found in the cruet very cheap claret of the most acrid description. They must be devoted celebrants who relish the body and blood of their Savior in the form of mouldy bread and vinegar.

THE following were among the answers given by American school children at examinations:—"Alias" is "a good man in the Bible." "There are a good many donkeys in theological gardens" (zoological gardens was in the boy's mind). "Every sentence and the name of God should begin with a caterpillar" (capital letter). "The two most famous volcanoes in Europe are Sodom and Gomorrah."

A BOOK has just been published entitled *The Beer of the Bible*. The only Biblical beer of which there occurs any direct mention is Beersheba; and here the two last syllables, "she" and "ba," seem to indicate the service of "bar-maids." For further information, and as to whether the reading should be "From Dan to Beersheba all is barrel," or not, we refer to the authorities of the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition at Albert Hall.—*Punch*.

MESSRS. TRUBNER & Co. are the publishers of the work entitled *The Beer of the Bible*, written by a person bearing the ominous name of J. Death (formerly of the Cairo Brewery). Mr. Death contends that the substance now rendered as that which is leavened (Exodus xii. 19) was really the Hebrew beer, resembling the Arab bread beer *boosa*—a fermented paste of the consistence of mustard. It does not matter much what *boosa* the old Jews were addicted to. That their beverages were quite strong enough to intoxicate is evident from the examples of the patriarchs Lot and Noah.

GOOD FRIDAY was chosen by a nameless missionary for proclaiming the Lord's Word to the worshippers in Westminster Abbey. Directly the Dean pronounced the benediction at the close of the afternoon service, this modern Jonah shouted "You are all going to hell, and will be damned." He was immediately seized by several ushers and policemen, and marched off to the police station. But it really seems a shabby way of treating the poor fellow. He merely told them, in a way to arrest their attention, what is a very important truth if any confidence is to be placed in the Bible. If the pious Christians who were startled by his shouting had stood unawares on the brink of a precipice, they would have forgiven anyone who hallooed to apprise them of their danger. Why, then, do they let poor Mr. Jonah number two be roughly handled when he tries to scare them from the brink of hell?

THE Rev. J. H. Davies, vicar of Bishop Burton, near Beverley, has committed suicide in a most determined manner. He first cut his throat, and as that did not kill him, he frustrated his medical attendants by starving himself to death. Another instance of the connexion between Atheism and suicide.

THE Emperor of Germany has been imitating Jesus Christ by washing twelve poor men's feet. This is supposed to be very pious, but it is only one of those pieces of cant by which the high and mighty make believe that they are full of humility. If Emperor William had given them a cake of soap and a towel apiece, it would have been more useful, but it would not have attracted so much attention.

SOME Australian blacks, after three years of missionary teaching, asked the divine "if no thin men were ever saved." The missionary then found that the native word which he thought meant "good" really signified "fat."

A CONSECRATED RAT.

"LA SEMAINE ANTICLERICALE" of Nevers reports a ludicrous account of a trial supposed to take place in the Middle Ages, the culprit being a rat who had eaten the consecrated bread which the curé of Blazat had left uncovered in his church. St. Thomas Aquinas called a council of theologians to decide whether the rat had within him the body, bones, soul, and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, or if it had become an ordinary substance as before consecration. Certain learned doctors held the affirmative, other worthy fathers held the negative, but upon praying for the illumination of the Holy Ghost it was found that the opinion prevailed that the Lord Jesus Christ must still be there. Then arose the question, what should be done with the rat. One proposed that it should be burnt, but St. Thomas remarked that this would be sacrilege as they could not avoid burning the consecrated host. Another proposed disembowelling the rat and taking out and cleaning the host from within, but it was pointed out that even while they were deliberating the consecrated elements were being assimilated with every portion of the animal, and it was finally unanimously settled that the curé of Blazat must eat the rat in order to become possessed of the body of the Lord.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, April 17, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, London, E.C.; at 7, "Let us Pray."

APRIL 24, Hall of Science, London.

MAY 1, Camberwell; 8, Portsmouth; 15, Bristol; 22, Ball's Pond; 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.—T. M.

E. MOORE.—Thomas Paine was a Deist. The term "infidel" is not applied by us, but by the Christians. We use it after them sometimes, but only satirically.

F. MULVEY.—We are much obliged. The matter shall be seen to.

VANATHEIST.—It is impossible to publish the *Freethinker* advertisements on a separate sheet. The expense would be great, and the advantage trifling to those who bind. Besides, advertisements are not easily obtained for a Freethought paper.

W. JACKSON.—Your letters should be addressed to the editor, and not to Mr. Wheeler. We do not return ineligible manuscript unless the writer asks us to do so in sending it, and encloses a stamped envelope for the purpose. Your letter was scarcely in our way, and you know our space is very limited.

HATER OF CANT (Kettering) writes: "Twelve months ago I was a prominent member of a body of Christians in this town. My wife and oldest son were also workers in the Lord's vineyard. But I saw there was something wrong, and I commenced to read your works, beginning with *Infidel Death-Beds* and then the *Freethinker*. I read the "Acid Drops" sometimes to my wife, which at first she resented; but after some of my persuasion, and some of your straight hits, she gave in; and for the last six months myself, my wife, and our three sons, have been Freethinkers."

F. E. SIMS.—The passages you quote from Bronterre O'Brien's book are extremely inaccurate. Christianity did not begin to abolish slavery immediately it was established. Whoever writes that "upon the complete establishment of Christianity direct personal slavery was abolished," is drawing upon his fancy and not upon history. Mr. Wheeler has lately been writing on this subject in our columns, and it will be treated at greater length in our *Crimes of Christianity*.

W. MANUEL.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops." Christians who have more leisure than is good for them, and less veracity than a Jew money lender, spend a lot of their time in converting Ingersoll. According to their own accounts, they have succeeded several times already, and no doubt they will convert him several times more before he dies.

E. BOWLES.—We are obliged, but H. L. Hastings is not worth another kick.

W. V.—Matter that serves for a paragraph is always welcome.

J. P. MORRIS.—You had better ask the Yankee evangelist himself. We should say he will avoid discussion as the Devil is supposed to shun holy water.

M. D. sends 5s. for Mr. Kemp. Our fellow prisoner is better, but he has lost the sight of one eye.

H. T. BAILEY.—Whitmore is a knowing old bird.

R. PIPES.—Pleased to hear from you, and hope soon to hear better news of Derby. There ought to be a good working Branch of the N. S. S. in that town.

A. WALKER.—Thanks. The first two jokes have already appeared.

W. CABELL.—Your inference in regard to Mr. Noyes is incorrect.

J. THOMPSON.—We have already reviewed Mr. Watkinson's letter at considerable length.

J. H. ROGERS.—Thanks for cuttings.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Lucifer—Liberty—Jus—Echo—Freidenker—Liberal Unionist—Radical—Malthusian—Outfitter—Truthseeker—La Semaine Anticlericale—Beverley Recorder—Wichita Eagle—Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—South Wales Echo—Western Figaro—Liverpool Link.

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.

MR. FOOTE spoke at No. 3 Platform in Hyde Park last Monday against the Tory Coercion Bill, and, as the *Daily News* says, "was heartily cheered." Mr. Labouchere presided.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* seems willing for once to give the Freethinkers a little credit. In its descriptive report of the Hyde Park Demonstration it notices that "Labouchere and Foote stood shoulder to shoulder on the same waggon." And in its leading article it says that "half the Freethinkers in London were in the park yesterday, and they were as enthusiastic for the Golden

Rule in politics as Michael Davitt, the Catholic, and Henry Broadhurst, the Methodist."

Two things strike us as strange in this last sentence. First, that the *Pall Mall Gazette* should fancy that the Golden Rule, which can be found in a dozen moralists before the time of Christ, has any special connection with Catholicism, Methodism, or any other sect of Christianity. Second, that any wonder should be expressed at Freethinkers being on the side of political justice. It was Thomas Paine who wrote the *Rights of Man* in reply to Burke, and narrowly escaped the hangman for doing it; and it was William Godwin who wrote *Political Justice* to defend the Golden Rule against the Tory tyrants who made England infamous in the early part of this century. More recently, it was the Freethinkers who were the first in denouncing Mr. Gladstone's fatal outrage on Egyptian freedom. Surely, then, it need not astonish anyone to find Freethinkers opposing the fresh attempt to trample on the liberties of the Irish people.

THERE were many cries in the Park of "Where is Bradlaugh?" Mr. Bradlaugh was away in the North of England fulfilling a lecturing engagement. No doubt he was sorry to be absent, but he will be pleased to know that he was universally missed.

THE third edition of Mr. Foote's *Folly of Prayer*, containing new matter, is now ready. Another pamphlet is also ready—*What was Christ?* This is a reply to John Stuart Mill, and was originally published under the title of *Mill's Christ*. Next week Mr. Foote will publish a new political pamphlet, in honor of the Jubilee. It will be entitled *Royal Paupers*, and will be very useful to Radicals. Besides dealing with the monarchy as a system, it will give full and accurate details of the cost of Royalty, from the top to the bottom of the scale.

"LET US PRAY" is the title of a new lecture which Mr. Foote will deliver this evening (April 17) at the London Hall of Science.

THE *Radical*, edited by Mr. Stranding, which, under one name or another, has reached its twelfth birthday, reprints the protest of the Metropolitan Federation against the Queen's Jubilee, and has a parody of Tennyson's Jubilee Ode from the pen of the veteran social reformer, E. T. Craig.

THE *New York World* says: "Mark Twain is said to be thoroughly Agnostic in his religious views." This is just what we should expect from the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Tramp Abroad*.

THE *Church Quarterly Review* for April has a paper on the Massoretic text of the Old Testament, showing that the text of the old Jew books is in even a more corrupt state than the New Testament.

MR. PROCTOR, in the April number of *Knowledge*, defends his article on the "Beginning of Christianity" from a clerical critic. He considers the date of the Book of Matthew as about A.D. 80. Luke came after, when the belief in the speedy approach of the end of the world had had a shock. Mark was "so manifestly compiled from the other two that its date may be set later than theirs," while John is a Gnostic composition evidently not written by a Jew, as the phrase "Bethany beyond Jordan" is alone sufficient to prove.

A NEW Freethinker's Union has been started at Zurich with the purpose of furthering Freethought by discussion and the circulation of literature.

WE wonder how the Duke of Argyll felt upon reading Professor Huxley's exposure of his science and logic in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*. We fancy the pompous little pedant is too hide-bound in his pachydermatous vanity to feel himself lashed, kicked, and sat upon. His reputation, however, will not long survive the dissection of that "summa" of pseudo-scientific philosophy "The Reign of Law." Anyone who has seen a barn-fowl strutting up and down a farmyard, and then observed a mastiff approach, can imagine the figure cut by his grace in his controversy with the professor.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY has some moderate words in defence of his criticism of Canon Liddon which are worth reprinting. He says: "Establishment has its duties as well as its rights. The clergy of a State Church enjoy many advantages over those of unprivileged and unendowed religious persuasions; but they lie under correlative responsibility to the State and to every member of the body politic. I am not aware of any sacredness attached to sermons. If preachers stray beyond the doctrinal limits set by lay lawyers, the Privy Council will see to it; and if they think fit to use their pulpits for the promulgation of literary, or historical, or scientific errors, it is not only the right but the duty of the humblest layman, who may happen to be better informed, to correct the evil effects of such perversion of the opportunity which the State affords them, and such misuse of the authority which it lends them."

GALILEO was right. The world moves. Twenty years ago, as we well remember, Good Friday was kept very much as a holy day. Now, it is very widely kept as a holiday. Instead of pulling a long face over the legendary woes of a young Jewish carpenter, who was dead and buried over eighteen centuries ago, they swarm into the country, and into various places of recreation. Certainly this is a more agreeable, and probably a more edifying use of their time.

By the way, as Jesus Christ's first death did so little good for the world, it is high time that he expired again. This time he should avoid "one-horse" towns like Jerusalem, and give up the ghost in London or Paris. The newspapers are always ready for a new sensation, and they would chronicle the second death of the second third of the Trinity with greater fulness and accuracy than the first performance obtained. Besides the people are getting frightfully sceptical, and their faith sadly wants a fillip.

A CHRISTIAN STORY.

LIGHT attracts moths from the surrounding darkness. Freethought frequently attracts the attention of Christian lunatics bent on extinguishing infidelity by messages from the Lord. The other day a gentleman suspected of belonging to this heroic but dreadfully tedious fraternity called at the shop in Stonecutter Street and wanted to see me. Fanatics are tolerably, or rather intolerably, plentiful, and as they drivel on by the hour, without the slightest capacity for hearing or understanding a reply, the best policy is to get rid of them as speedily as possible. But this one appeared quite sane and reasonable; in fact, he is described as resembling myself in build and personal appearance. He seemed perfectly harmless, and was as mild-spoken as a sucking-dove. He claimed to be a banker—a Christian banker, of course; and his manners and attire corresponded with his professions. How a Christian banker managed to sell all he had and give to the poor and yet continue in business, was evidently a problem that had not troubled him. Christ had not where to lay his head. His modern imitator's more frequent and pressing trouble probably was that he had not where to lay his hat.

One of our friends, it transpired, had sent this Christian banker a marked copy of my "Religious Stories" in the *Freethinker*, and he in return would much like to send me one of his. His name was immaterial; Mr. Ball would read his little pamphlet, he was sure, and it would do him good. Picking up one of the Freethought publications that lay on the counter, he expressed a hope that Mr. Forder did not sell many of these things, and was very sorry to hear that so much trade was done in literature of this kind. We didn't know how much harm we were doing. All the efforts that he and his fellow-Christians were making to turn this heathen city to God were being thwarted by us. It was lamentable to think of the enormous amount of mischief we were doing. Mr. Forder was too busy to encourage much more of this; so with a sort of paternal benediction or wind-up about Christ love you, Christ died for you, and so forth, our Christian banker took his departure to return to his joint worship of Christ and the Mammon that Christ so fervidly denounced.

The little yellow pamphlet thus left for my conversion is entitled "Long Odds." It has apparently sold well among the Christian public, for it is marked "Fifty-fifth Thousand." The story is written as if it were fact, and nothing is said to indicate that it should be regarded as a joke or a dream, or a work of imagination.

The banker, for it soon becomes clear that the pamphlet is his own composition and that he makes himself the hero of his story, commences his narrative with exclamations of wonder at the inexplicable absence of his cook, a respectable elderly Scotchwoman, who cannot be found anywhere. Then his valet rushes in again to tell him the coachman has gone off in the night, and hasn't left a trace behind. One might suspect an elopement, but there is evidently something much more solemn than this in the wind. Riding up to town by train as usual, our friend finds that everybody is wondering "what can have become of them all;" and he says he really believes he swooned away in his excessive consternation. Many people had disappeared, it seemed. The pointsman was missing, and a porter had to do his work. People looked ghastly, and dazed, and so forth. Everybody apparently knew by a kind of electric instinct that these missing ones were not on earth, but were gone straight off to another world bodily like Enoch, Elijah,

and Christ—and everybody trembled accordingly. From the first moment, says one speaker in the train, he knew what had happened; his boy had often warned him, and quoted to him the text, "I tell you in that night there shall be two men in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other shall be left." The banker says he had hitherto been an Atheist, but now for a thousand pounds he couldn't have said a word in answer to this appalling and solemn prophecy. He hoped it was all a dream, and pinched himself to see if he was awake. But it was all too true. Providence had snatched away a number of people during the night. If he had done it during the day, a scientific observation of the process of evanishing, or of being translated, would have been interesting. But God does not care to satisfy profane curiosity.

Cabmen and porters were scarce that morning. "The whole of society was unhinged; everybody had to do somebody else's work." At the bank everyone was silent from fear; but as each fresh clerk entered the counting-room "a low jeer went round"—why, one cannot readily perceive; but Christian stories are always true to nature. Business comes to a standstill. Shops remain shut. The innumerable vacancies cannot be filled. Our banker has to put up his own shutters, because his clerks—curious beings—have gone off without asking his permission, and have left him alone. He notices that the streets in the City have a "dismal Sunday appearance," and that some of the houses have been broken into. People, it seems, are so terrified that they leave business, and start stealing as a moral improvement. Dense masses of people rush through the main thoroughfares, hurrying they know not where. Some seem dazed, others almost mad with terror. Confusion reigns at the railway stations, and fearful accidents have occurred. The night is made more horrible with the lurid reflection of conflagrations; but people are so overcome with fright and despair that no one seems to mind if all London is burnt down.

Arrived at home, our banker finds there is no gas to light, and after vain attempts at lighting the burners, he helps himself to wine, and listens in the darkness to "voices" which are quoting texts to each other. Says one of the voices, "What haunts me are the words, 'Watch, therefore.' You can't watch now." The other answers, "I have ringing in my ears, 'Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,' and, of course, it isn't now; far from it." To these and other Scriptural references that follow in this part of the pamphlet the banker has considerably added annotations in his own handwriting, in which he gives chapter and verse for my special edification.

Suddenly the terrified banker, apparently awakening to a sense of religion born of all this fright, remembers that the secretary is "a religious fanatic," and goes to his room, lights candles, and reads his Bible, which was open at Proverbs. The following verses catch his eye, having been already marked by the "religious fanatic":—"Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." To guide me to the precious text in the Holy Bible itself the marginal writing adds: "1st chapter, verses 24 to 31." Our Christian banker must have a strange idea of Atheists if he thinks that texts in which God depicts himself as a mocking fiend can win their hearts.

Then the banker remembers that he once said to his secretary that God was a myth, whereto the secretary had replied that he might come that very night. The banker remembers that he laughed and said, "What odds will you take? I will lay you long ones." This originates the silly title of the pamphlet, "Long Odds," a title which is as irrelevant to the story as the story is to the facts of nature and daily life.

Other texts of the ordinary kind follow, and a number of them are seen hanging over the fire-place. With this the story ends, quite in the air, so to speak. The concluding words of the pamphlet run thus: "As I turned to leave the room these caught my eyes, and I said, well, I HAVE been a fool."

Heartily coinciding in the appropriateness and force of our Christian banker's farewell confession, and at the same time suggesting in as gentlemanly and soothing a manner as possible that perhaps it was not strictly necessary that he should have confined himself *entirely* to the past tense, I leave him with the assurance of my distinguished gratitude. He has not converted me, but he has

amused me a little. He means well, and that is something. I may as well plainly remind him, and others like him, that the idea of influencing Freethinkers by foolish tales of terror is too childish absurd for any but Christian simpletons who measure other people's corn by their own bushels. By trying to scare people with cock-and-bull stories in this pious fashion, Christian propagandists only make their religion ridiculous. They merely expose the follies and weaknesses of credulous believers, and show the paltry nature of religious motives. As I suppose this inspired banker thinks he is laying up treasures in heaven for himself, and benefitting me as well, I don't wish to rob him of his enjoyment. The more Christian story-tellers enjoy themselves in this way the more they will disgust sensible people with their Christian nonsense and their Christian terrorism.

W. P. BALL.

L A M E N T,
BY A TRIPARTITE ONE.

I sit up on high, in a place called "the sky,"
On a throne that's uncommonly hard;
I'm one and I'm three; but I really can't see
How the deuce it can be,
Though I am an omnipotent bard.
I sit and I think, till I'm driven to drink;
O, pity Jehovah the Bard.

I am Jesus and Jah; I am son and papa,
I am also a zephyr or draught.
And I ponder and dream o'er this puzzling theme
Till I "holler" and scream,
And the cherubim whisper, "He's daft."
The seraphim, too, and the rest of the crew
Shake their heads and assert that I'm daft.

I cannot but groan, for, from under my throne
Pierce lightning incessantly shoots;
And it sings my "bags" till they're tatters and rags,
And it's vigor ne'er flags
As it scorches me down to my boots.
I use ointment in vain—again and again,
I'm scorched from my head to my boots.

To make matters worse (though I kick them, and curse)
I am plagued by peculiar beasts,
Whose roaring ne'er ceases but always increases,
They'll tear me in pieces
I fear, for their barbarous feasts.
(I should be in a funk, if I didn't keep drunk,
At the thought of such barbarous feasts.)

The people up here are awfully queer—
They quarrel and tussle like fun;
And the twanging of lyres and scandalous wires
My tympanum tires.
Oh! pity the Father and Son!
The singing's still worse (once more let us curse,
O Vapor, and Father, and Son.)

Then it's O for the day when a bachelor gay,
Poor Jahveh was happy and free,
And it's O for the time of my vigorous primo
When I wallowed in crime,
And I wasn't split up into three.
Have pity upon an unfortunate one—
I mean an unfortunate three.

Ex-RITUALIST.

LETTER FROM JUNO.

THE following letter has come into our possession, but how we decline to state, only briefly hinting to our readers that we have an infallible way of providing reliable information for their amusement and instruction, from all the known planets of our system, together with the means of getting at the secrets of events going on in nearly every other system. Our informants are neither old deities who have had their nasal organ put out of joint by the more modern gods, nor are they those restless literary spirits who find a life of travel more congenial than that terrible and awful life in heaven, or the more gay and beautiful life in Hades. No! it is from neither of these sources—but enough, we would rather suffer the direful penalty of having to listen to two sermons by Parker than divulge. There is no doubt the letter was intended for publication, and we therefore publish it:—

Juno, Jubilee Year.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Don't confound my Juno with your Pagan queen of heaven. My Juno is that colossal planet which I am told you earthmen found out only a short period ago, and calmly write down in your books of astronomy as an Asteroid, little thinking that your earth to our view is a very one-horse affair. Try, therefore, and take this slander off Juno; publish to the worlds our diameter (nearly 150 miles); tell them of the importance we consider we are in the universe, the gigantic proportions of our people, nearly five and a-half feet high, and the very

happy state in which we live generally—although at present internecine war is at work, our world is torn and rent by two factions who malignantly hate each other, their difference of opinion being in connection with the Eucharist. These two factions are named the "Bolters" and the "Munchers," the first being of opinion that the body of their Lord should be bolted, and the opposition saying he ought to be munched or masticated. The Bolters contend it is an awful crime to divide God by chewing him, and the Munchers say that if a portion of Jesus is bolted choking may take place, entailing extra expense to the State in providing more coroners. The Munchers also contend that cheese and beer should be added to the Lord's supper; the other side stoutly affirming he should be bolted neat, also that the man who makes up the bread, or mixes the old fruity port at one and four a bottle, should have some Holy Ghost put into him by a real live bishop laying his paws on his rather thick roof and blessing him, whilst the other side say it's preposterous to think you can get anything very sacred into a baker, or even a faker of port wine. The Bolters are those who affect the eastward position, sleep with their heads to the east, and say that only proper reverence can be paid to the maker of such a magnificent planet as Juno by praying in an eastward position, for has not God, they say, taken the trouble to make two great lights, one to give light by day and one by night, besides throwing in little chips of light to ornament the great vault of the heavens, and all done for the especial behoof of Juno? The Munchers are certainly a rather low lot, for they have the impudence to say that our pastors are overpaid. Those godly men overpaid! Why, you should see our Bishop of Nincom, his appearance would almost paralyse a member of the simian tribe, his dress is so mysterious and awful, with his alb and chasuble, his crozier and pointed hat, seated on his electro-plated throne, with his acolytes around him, dressed almost as fearsome as their Boss. Can all this be properly kept up on a few paltry thousands a year? We know it pleases the Deity, who shows his approbation by now and then applauding in the shape of an earthquake or so—merely his jocular way of manufacturing angels for his kingdom.

The quarrel between the Bolters and Munchers has assumed such proportions that our greatest men have decided to lay the case before our august Sovereign. This will scarcely be decisive, as real live royalty became so expensive we were obliged to get rid of it. But the lowest class, together with the aristocracy, would have something to bend the knee to; so, to appease them, a magnificent lay figure was provided, with internal arrangement of clockwork, to be wound up and set going for fifty years. This present year is the fiftieth, and there will be a public winding-up of the beloved sovereign, all sorts of plans being afloat for commemorating this great public event. Sturgeon is going to have a jubilee baptising match. He proposes to dip one hundred neophytes, smoke a pipe under water, and consign three hundred sceptics to everlasting brimstone within the hour. Salvation Smooth is to have a jubilee drum parade, six hundred of his most muscular "captings" to parade the streets for forty-eight hours and wake up the sleeping consciences of the wicked, for the glory of "Gord" and the enlargement of the "Gineral's" exchequer. A "Church House" is to be built to teach young bishops department, so that they may be able to practise the art of wearing shovel hats, and gradually get used to the feeling of their legs in black gaiters and the wearing of the black apron in front, besides having to be taught how to simulate excessive fatigue when they go to take their meagre portion of filthy lucre once a quarter, as well as teaching them the knack of procuring a fresh supply of Holy Ghost and Apostolic Succession. This Church House will be particularly useful to those bishops who think of going out as missionaries, as they will be able to acquire a taste for soured missionary, that they may partake of the hospitality of the black potentates they visit, with the ultimate certainty of weaning them from their taste for missionary baked and missionary boiled, and gradually inculcating a taste for adulterated rum sent out by our brave black army, together with that Book of Books, "God's Bible," which will give the blacks such prurient joy when they have learned to read. Shall write more when interesting events occur.

REVIEWS.

The Jubilee: Moses and Mammon. Abel Heywood and Son, Manchester. (6d.).—Very vigorously written from the Radical standpoint, but the price is too high for popular circulation.

Jehovah and His Devil. By GORDON SCOTT. One Penny. Published by the Author, 19 John Street, South Shields.—Of the two mythical heroes dealt with by Mr. Scott, he gives the preference to the latter. The pamphlet is written with considerable power, and should enjoy a good circulation.

A PALE young curate was recently dismissed from his post for unclerical conduct in wheeling his baby through the streets in a perambulator with his wife by his side. There have been several cases of soldiers being punished for carrying parcels in the streets in the shape of their own offspring; clergymen, however, seem to be under still more stringent discipline.—*Fun.*

CLERICAL ERRORS IN WALES.

THE clergy imposed on the Welsh by the Established Church are usually ignorant of the language of the people whom they profess to teach the road to heaven. The blunders they make in endeavoring to use the Welsh language, in conducting public worship, are strikingly referred to by Mr. Richards in his *Letters and Essays on Wales*.

Bishop Burgess, in pronouncing the blessing in Welsh, used to say, "The peace of God which passeth all *vengeance*." A clergyman at Chapel Colman, while speaking of man's depravity, said, "every man is exceedingly *tall* by nature." He meant to say *blind*. The same clergyman, while officiating at Llandygydd, made "Hail, King of the Jews," to mean, "An old cow of straw, King of Ireland." Another, reading the words "These things are good and profitable unto men," gave the meaning, "These graves are good and worldly to men." Another clergyman, quoting the words "But the righteous into life eternal," rendered them "But to some chickens the food of the geese." Another, reading the words "Let us here make three tabernacles," was understood to say, "Let us here make three *pans*." A Pembroke clergyman, while reading the funeral service, made it say, "It is sown the body of a *beast*." A dean in North Wales, in repeating the triumphant passage, "Be thou exalted, O God of heaven, above the earth and firmament," gave it as, "Arise, O God, above the head of two hens, and the crow's egg also." Another dean, addressing his workpeople at their drinkings, said, "You are still *grazing*." His workpeople, not perceiving that the blunder was unintentional, thought their master treated them as brute beasts, and were much offended. A clergyman, reading the "Venite," "In his hand are all the corners of the earth," made it "In his hand are all the *afflictions* of the earth." Another, reading "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," said, "The *back parts* are sick, and the *middle of the back* faint."

PROFANE JOKES.

C. L. INGERSOLL confesses that one thing was created to be eternally lost—an umbrella. "What does 'Good Friday' mean?" asked one schoolboy of another. "You better go home and read your *Robinson Crusoe*," was the withering reply.

"Who made you?" was asked of a little girl. "God made me so big," she said indicating with her two hands the size of a new-born baby, "and I grewed the rest myself."

A LADY took her little boy to church for the first time. Upon hearing the organ he was on his feet instantly. "Sit down," said the mother. "I won't," he shouted, "I want to see the monkey."

THE Salvation Army stopped in front of a saloon in East Portland and began singing, "It is water we want, not beer," and the saloon keeper turned the hose on them. And yet they were not happy.

"No Bobby," said his mother, "you cannot go skating to-day. It's Sunday, you know." "Well ma," persisted Bobby, "can't I go if I'll just skate straight ahead, and not try to do any fancy work?"

RARE OPPORTUNITY.

A HUNDRED COPIES only of JAMES THOMSON'S (B.V.) SATIRES AND PROFANITIES.

Made up from sheets rescued from the stock lost in the fire last July.

Handsomely Bound in Cloth, 2s. 6d.

"Cannot be neglected by any who are interested in one of the most pathetic personages of our time."—*Academy*.

"As clever as they are often profane."—*Christian World*.

"Well worth preserving...flashes of genius."—*Weekly Dispatch*.

"Reminds one of the genius of Swift."—*Oldham Chronicle*.

"Keen, brilliant, nervous English...strenuous utterances of a man of genius."—*Our Corner*.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

THE WIFE'S HANDBOOK By Dr. E. A. ALLBUTT.

Fourth Edition. 6d., post free 7d. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, E.C.]

Price Threepence.

PROGRESS

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

The APRIL Number contains
A New Religion. By G. W. Foote.
Shelley and the Christian Faith. By H. S. Salt.
The New Sociology.—III. By James Leatham.
The "New Sociology" Criticised.—II. By W. P. Ball.
Sarpalus of Mardon.—III. By James Thomson (B.V.)
Religious Dances. By J. M. Wheeler.
Brief Freethought Biographies. By J. M. Wheeler

G. W. FOOTE'S WORKS.

Prisoner for Blasphemy. Cloth 2 6
A Full History of his Three Trials and Twelve Months' Imprisonment
Copies in paper covers, soiled... 0 6
Christianity or Secularism. Four Nights Public Debate with the Rev. Dr. James McCann
Paper covers 1 0
Bound in Cloth 1 6
Infidel Death-Beds... .. 0 6
Being a Faithful History of the Deaths of the most eminent Freethinkers of all ages, and a triumphant answer to the lies and misrepresentations of Christian apologists
Bound in cloth 1 0
Letters to Jesus Christ 0 4
The Shadow of the Sword. (2nd Edition) 0 2
An Essay on the Folly, Wickedness and Cost of War
Was Jesus Insane? (2nd Edition) 0 1

BIBLE HEROES

A NEW WORK By G. W. FOOTE.

- No. 1.—MR. ADAM.
- No. 2.—CAPTAIN NOAH.
- No. 3.—FATHER ABRAHAM.
- No. 4.—JUGGLING JACOB.

Ready Next Week.

ROYAL PAUPERS

By G. W. FOOTE.

A Radical's Contribution to the Jubilee-SHOWING
What Royalty does for the People AND
What the People do for Royalty
THIRTY-TWO PAGES.
PRICE TWOPENCE.
Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

IS SOCIALISM SOUND?

A VERBATIM REPORT (Revised by both Disputants) OF THE

FOUR NIGHTS' PUBLIC DEBATE BETWEEN MRS. BESANT & MR. FOOTE.

Cheap Edition, in paper covers ... 1/-
Best edition, printed on superior paper and bound in cloth 2/-

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

Now Ready.

THE BIRTH OF THE CROSS.

Twelve page pamphlet, with four illustrations. By G. WACKERBARTH.
PRICE ONE PENNY.
May be had of the Publishers, Ireton and Co. 92 Gracechurch Street, E.C., or of Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, E.C.

DR. GILES'S WORKS.

Hebrew and Christian Records. Two vols., published at 2s., and
Apostolical Records, 10s. 6d. The three vols. 10s. 6d., by post 1s. extra.
R. FORDER, 28 Stonecutter Street, E.C.

Progressive Publishing Co.'s LIST.

COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL
Mistakes of Moses 1 0
" " (in cloth) 1 6
Live Topics 0 1
Myth and Miracle 0 1
Real Blasphemy 0 1
Social Salvation 0 1
G. W. FOOTE & W. P. BALL
Bible Contradictions 0 4
Pt. I. of Bible Handbook for Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians
Bible Absurdities 0 4
Pt. II. All the chief Absurdities from Genesis to Revelation, conveniently and strikingly arranged, with appropriate headlines, giving the point of each Absurdity in a sentence
A VELING, Dr. E. B.
Darwin Made Easy (cloth) ... 1 0

NOW READY.

The Folly of Prayer - - - 2d.
Third Edition, with Fresh Matter.

AND

What Was Christ? - - - 2d.
A Reply to John Stuart Mill; 2nd Edition.

By G. W. FOOTE.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

DARWIN MADE EASY.

By Dr. E. B. AVELING (Fellow of London University).

Best popular exposition of Darwinism ever published.

Bound in Cloth, 1s.

Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter St.

Colonel Ingersoll's GRAND NEW LECTURE

SOCIAL SALVATION

Sixteen Pages. Price One Penny.
"Brilliantly trenchant style"—*Commonweal*.

Progressive Publishing Co. 28 Stonecutter St

MANCHESTER SECULAR HALL COMPANY (Limited).

Registered Offices: 20 KENNEDY STREET, MANCHESTER.

PURCHASE OF HALL.

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

GEORGE PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

W. J. RENDELL,

CHEMIST AND DRUGGIST,

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

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

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

Orders by Post promptly executed.

TO FREETHINKERS.

A TRIAL SOLICITED. BEST STYLE, FIT & WEAR

H. HAMPTON,

TAILOR, 14 Gt. Castle Street, W.

(A few doors from Regent Circus.)

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

Just Published. Fancy Wrapper. 176pp. Price 1s.

THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY. By GEORGE STANDING, editor of the *Radical*.—Progressive Publishing Co., 28 Stonecutter Street.

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

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