

# THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 199.



## DIVINE SANITATION.

*And he [the priest] shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water: And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times: And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet: But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house: and it shall be clean.—LEV. XIV., 49-53.*

## PRIESTLY MUMMERY.

WHEN the doctor has pulled a pious lady through a difficult confinement she goes to church and thanks God for his mercy. When a patient quits a hospital, where doctors and nurses have restored him to health, he is interviewed by the chaplain, who usually gives him a bit of paper, which he is expected to hand in at some gospel-shop on the following Sunday, in testimony of his gratitude to God Almighty. During such troubles the Lord is conspicuous by his absence. Everything depends on human resources. But when these have succeeded, a sky-pilot steps in and claims the credit for Jehovah. This certainly looks odd, but it is quite intelligible when you view it as a trick of the trade. The sky-pilots have their living to get and their order to maintain, and although they give the community nothing in return for all the cash they receive, they must make a pretence of doing so, or their bread-and-cheese, to say nothing of their meat, butter and eggs, would be in deadly peril.

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A striking illustration of this clerical trick occurred last week, when the Queen went to open the People's Palace. When the practical business was gone through; when the brilliant writer who conceived the idea was duly praised; when the people who found the money, and those who labored to promote the scheme, were properly honored; when her Majesty was about to wield the trowel; when nothing short of a miracle or an earthquake could make the People's Palace a failure; up stepped the Archbishop of Canterbury, dressed in full costume, to treat the company to a little of his pious blarney. The proceedings were instantly suspended while he offered a specially prepared address to the Lord, who, of course, knew every word of the document beforehand. We never remember to have read a more stupendous piece of humbug. The nation which pays a man fifteen thousand a year to go through such wretched mummery must have a great deal more money than sense. Even as a composition the Archbishop's prayer was miserably poor. Our printer's devil could have done as well; and even we, ignorant infidels as we are, could turn out

any quantity of better prayers at five shillings each; or, if that price is exorbitant, we might say twenty shillings a dozen. The substance of the Archbishop's prayer was extremely rich. He thanked God for the whole affair—subscriptions, objects, and everything. It was the coolest piece of impudence imaginable. No one but a priest could have risen to such a height of imposture.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's performance reminds us of an old story. An English nobleman arrived at Rome, which then swarmed with priests and beggars. His luggage was seized by many hands, and when he arrived at his hotel there was a long row of light porters, each of whom expected a handsome gratuity. His lordship feed them one after another, wondering when the procession would end. At last it terminated in the person of a venerable beggar, with bare head and a snowy beard, who was evidently too feeble to carry anything. "Well," exclaimed his lordship, "and what did *you* do?" The tottering applicant spread his dexter palm, laid it near his breast, made a dignified bow, and replied, "I also was there." The Archbishop of Canterbury resembles that mendicant. He did nothing to help the project, but "he also was there."

Turning from the Archbishop, let us look at Westminster Abbey. Seventeen thousand pounds has been voted by Parliament to fit the building up for one Jubilee service. Mr. Labouchere and other Radicals protested against this extravagance, but they were silenced by an overwhelming majority of flunkeys, whose loyalty to the Queen is something deeper than their piety to God. The Abbey will have to be shut for a long time in order to be turned, as Mr. Labouchere said, "into a race-course stand, under the auspices of some West-end upholsterer." Foreign and provincial visitors during that period will be unable to see a world-famous sight. Everybody's convenience is sacrificed to a piece of priestly mummery, on which enough money will be spent to relieve thousands of families in distress.

Let us devote a moment, in concluding, to the Rev. H. R. Haweis. This gentleman has just published a fanciful *Picture of Jesus*, full of falsehood and twaddle. Imagine Rénan's early notion of Jesus set forth by Talmage, and you have a fair idea of Mr. Haweis's performance. Right on the heels of this *magnum opus* he has burst out into a Jubilee Ode, which is given a conspicuous place in the hospitable columns of the *Echo*. Mr. Haweis may write odes, but he is not a poet; and if this is the best he can do, even under the delirious inspiration of loyalty, we advise him to stick to prose in future; or, if he must occasionally blossom in verse, like the romantic hairdresser round the corner, let him discreetly entrust the manuscript to Mrs. Haweis, with strict injunctions to "let him play the fool nowhere but in his own house." He describes the Queen as "Strong in God's might," which is more than slightly blasphemous. He also tells her that "No tale of want escapes thee, nor any cry of woe." Such disreputable pandering to royal vanity is worthy of a priest. Mr. Haweis belongs to a profession which is always flunkey at heart. How can those who preach a tyrant in heaven help crawling before kings and queenson earth?

G. W. FOOTE.

WHAT CHRISTIANITY WAS WHEN TRIUMPHANT.—The Ages of Faith were emphatically ages of crime, of gross and scandalous wickedness, of cruelty, and, in a word, of immorality. And it is noteworthy that in proportion as we recede backward from the present age, and return into the Ages of Faith, we find that the crime, the sin became denser and blacker. The temperature of faith rises steadily as we penetrate into the past, almost with the regularity which marks the rise of the physical temperature of the air as we descend into a deep mine; but a neglect and defiance of morality are found to ascend in a corresponding ratio. This, it must be owned, is an anomalous result, if morality be indeed so dependent on Christianity as is commonly supposed. James Cotter Morison, *The Service of Man*, p. 118, 1887.

THE CHRISTIAN DOGMA OF A FUTURE LIFE.—I need not say how puerile, barbaric, and irreverent appear to us the views of Christian Fetichism in their whole extent, comprising that conception of a future life which is fetich in being a transference of our present experience to other conditions. It is not "another life" that people desire and expect; but the same life in another place. Once regarded from the higher (exterior) point of view, the folly and practical mischief of this superstition became evident to a degree which it would startle some of my friends exceedingly to become aware of. The belief was no doubt of use in its proper day like every general belief, but its proper day is past; that which was a substantial faith (as when the early Christians looked for the millenium) is now (whenever it goes beyond the limited dogma) a personal fancy, a bastard conception of unchastened imagination, and a sentimental egotism.—Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography*, vol. iii., p. 327.

## A LOPSIDED RELIGION.

MODERN Protestant Christians repudiate the asceticism of their religion. It is difficult, however, to see how they reconcile their plea of making the best of both worlds with the injunctions of their master. He distinctly taught "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." He said "Labor not for the meat that perisheth," and declared "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." He enjoined poverty on his disciples. To a young man who asked him how he could enter eternal life, he replied that he must sell all he had, and give to the poor. Were his doctrines heeded no one would be industrious or thrifty, nobody would have any interest in acquiring skill, or in making the best of it when acquired. We should have to be content, as our remote ancestors were, with roots and nuts. That exemplary Christian, Dr. Johnson, was never more sensible or less a Christian than when, speaking from bitter experience, he said "Poverty is an enemy to human happiness; it often destroys liberty, makes some virtues difficult and some impracticable."

The same common-sense moralist declared that every man was a better man in proportion as he was fitted for the married state. Yet his divine exemplar was unmarried. He never enjoined his disciples to marry, but rather to leave father and mother, wife and child, to follow him. He distinctly recommended self-mutilation to all whose body caused them to offend, and plainly implied that those who had the nerve to use the knife upon their own bodies should do so (Matt v., 27-30, xix., 12).

We know a good deal of nonsense has been uttered about taking such passages figuratively, but they were not so taken by the people of that time. Marriage was contemned among the early Christians, and many *did* make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. Thousands *did* break away from all family ties in unnatural obedience to the injunction, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv. 26). Such doctrines, if generally adopted, would in truth turn the world upside down. They did suffice to destroy the civilisation of the Roman empire and to establish barbarism on its ruins. The doctrine of non-resistance to evil is another of Christ's teachings which is extolled as divine, but which is fortunately not practised. It would mean the subordination of the good to the evil and the dominance of the inferior. Legislation in India, says Sir Fitzjames Stephen, proceeds on the assumption that Brahminism and Mohammedanism are false. If it did not it would have to be founded on the Institutes of Manu or on the Koran. Legislation in England we may equally declare proceeds on the tacit assumption that Christianity is false. If it did not it would have to be established on the Sermon on the Mount, and abandon its soldiers, policemen, and courts of law. No civilised State has yet ventured on the Christian experiment. Talk of the anarchy of the Communists, it would be nothing to the anarchy of the Christians if they took the teachings of their Savior as the sole, exclusive and complete guide of their lives.

But it is sometimes said that Jesus and other moral teachers, in consequence of the too great inclination of the natural man to the things of this world, had to place their heaviest weights on the other side. That is, a divine being had to make an overstatement in order, as it were, to keep the balance even. We reply that exaggeration, contempt for flesh and blood, want of sympathy with all the elements of human nature, has indeed been the besetting sin of the Christian school of moralists. And the exaggeration has been harmful in two ways. Those most in sympathy with the ascetic spirit have been made narrow, bigoted, and acrid. Those upon whom such teaching had least influence, by force of inevitable reaction against an unpractical standard, have been tempted to throw over all restraints. Morality can be founded on nothing but a regard to the facts of human life. And Christianity overlooks or disparages the most important of these facts. Marriage, home-life, the training of children, the health of the body, the simple virtues of truth and justice, which latter is truth in action, are ignored. Oblivious that pleasure-giving acts are life-sustaining acts, it seeks to trample on the natural appetite for pleasure. It tacitly assumes that pleasure is

unprofitable and injurious, whereas pleasure is beneficial and only excess injurious.

It may be unworthy of an immortal being to dance, to play whist, or to look on while other immortal spirits are kicking up their heels and making bad puns in a burlesque; but it must be owned these little amusements give a zest to mortal life. It may be the sign of a carnal and worldly spirit to trouble oneself as to whether the skin is clean or dirty, whether the muscles are braced or flaccid, whether the nerves are in good order, whether the heart and lungs play freely and healthily; but it must be admitted the influence of the health or disease of the body upon temporal happiness is unmistakable. We are perfectly aware that, thanks to the growth of practical Secularism, Christians are giving up the ascetic features of their religion. But the Gospel texts remain plain and indisputable; and the whole history of monkery is a proof of the revolting excesses that naturally followed from the application of such teachings to the daily life of Christians. The history of Christianity is the history of an attempt to oppose this life to another, and it is in consequence the history of a lopsided religion.

J. M. WHEELER.

## ACID DROPS.

ACCORDING to the *Christian Advocate* Romanism receives in Ireland alone, out of the public funds, £687,000 annually; Roman reformatory and industrial schools in Ireland receive £112,000, and chaplains £11,000, and the interest of the State endowment of Maynooth College amounts at five per cent. to £21,000 per annum. This is pretty good for a self-supporting religion over which the State has no control and to which it is nominally supposed to give nothing.

AFTER eighteen centuries of Christianity, meetings have to be held in the most Christian city in the world to support a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The fact speaks for itself. Comment is needless. We may add, however, that it is doubtful if such a Society is needed in any Buddhist or Mohammedan country.

NINE fat beasts and twenty-five sacks of wheat have been seized at Hatherden, Hants, for tithes. What would the poor farmers do without clergy to teach them to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them?

THE Rev. Henry Inledon Johns, clerk in holy orders, was sentenced at Westminster to three months' hard labor as a rogue and vagabond. The prisoner was engaged during the latter part of last year by the vicar of St. Philip's, Stepney, who took him out of pure compassion and regard for his father, a clergyman of high standing, but he again gave way to drink, and appeared to be thoroughly degraded.

DR. ANNA BONUS KINGSFORD has discovered a new defence for the slaughter of the Canaanites, recorded as being commanded by the God of the Bible. She declares that the tribes which Moses destroyed symbolically represent the bad thoughts of his own people, their incredulity and their idolatry. The lady doctor does not make it quite clear whether she believes the literal narrative to be legendary or not. The recorded treatment of Og, king of Bashan, does not at first sight look very symbolical—"So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land" (Numbers xxi, 35). No doubt it is because the literal character of the Bible stories is repugnant to Dr. Kingsford's moral sense that she seeks to gloss them over with figurative interpretations.

AT the Dunfermline Police-court a carter at Jamestown, near Inverkeithing, was convicted of shebeening on a most extensive scale. The police found in the house thirty bottles of beer, three jars with whisky, and two gill measures. The evidence brought out the fact that a prayer-meeting was conducted regularly in one of the rooms of the house. Prisoner was sentenced to pay a penalty of £2, or undergo fourteen days' imprisonment.

AT a clerical conference in the West of England, the chairman, Canon Golightly, took up the question of infidel literature. He said that the clergy had no idea of the extent of infidel teaching in the land. He quoted passages from "infidel" periodicals, but asked the press not to report them. He also kept back the names of the journals, so that he might not introduce the "poison" into the minds of people who as yet know nothing of the periodicals in question. The Rev. J. P. A. Bowes said there were two kinds of infidelity, and that the more difficult kind to deal with was the silent floating unbelief of people who went to church and said their prayers mechanically, but with an undercurrent of doubt. If so, the clergy ought to be grateful to us for making their task easier. We convert the unassailable kind of infidelity into a form of "poison" which is easily met—so easily, in fact, that the speakers took extraordinary precautions that it should not be circulated.

THE Vicar of Stroud called attention to the half-crown magazines circulating among the wealthy, and containing articles by scientific men, the "poison" of which gradually permeated the minds of the readers. Mr. Playne said these articles were written by the foremost minds of the day, and that Protestantism was the logical source of infidelity. Mr. Libby, however, attributed the evil to the reaction against Roman Catholicism. Both these speakers were correct. The absurdities and immoralities of both forms of Christianity are the main causes of unbelief. The remedy adopted in a resolution was the institution of free libraries! These libraries however are, it appears, to be under the control of the rector or vicar.

THE *Stroud Journal*, ridiculing this conference, says: "The greater portion of the time was exhausted in deploring the fact that Tom, Jack and Harry prefer the *National Reformer* and *Freethinker* to their Bibles and Church. This, of course, is a sad state of things; but unfortunately for the cause of religion the editor of the *National Reformer* has shown himself to be so much better a citizen and statesman than many professing Christians that Tom, Jack and Harry persist in patting him on the back and reading his writings."

THE *New York Mercury* gives a shocking account of the life of the most popular preacher in America of thirty or forty years ago. The Rev. John Newland Maffit, it says, was for a while much more popular than Henry Ward Beecher has since been. His name was in everybody's mouth. Men believed in him and women worshipped him. Yet he was a consummate scoundrel. His very finest sermon was directed to the seduction of one of the young ladies of his flock, whose ruin he accomplished while visiting her father and mother as their favorite minister. Finally he was exposed and hunted down from place to place by a man who had befriended him in every way, and whose wife he seduced by way of showing his gratitude. Popular everywhere for a while in the pulpit, he could not hold out against this persistent exposure, and the popular saint at length committed suicide to escape the relentless persecution and the general condemnation of the press which had once glorified him as much as it now condemned him.

"EVERY minister," says the *Christian at Work*, "should be a 128th Psalm man." Well, if they ought to be, they are not. Most of them are 109th Psalm men in sentiment, and but two of three centuries ago were in practice.—*Truthseeker*.

IT is really too bad of the Rev. M. Baxter, putting us off in this way. Long ago—we think in his book on *Louis Napoleon the Destined Monarch of the World*—he promised us that we should see the speedy translation to heaven of exactly 144,000 living Christians, these being the only specimens extant. In the *Christian Herald* he now defers this long-expected pleasure until 1895-6. Well, we live in hopes.

LARGE posters again announce "The Second Coming of the Lord and the End of the Christian Dispensation." We are able to credit one half of the announcement—the second.

A Government commissioner is inquiring into the outrages at Tonga. A telegram in the *Melbourne Argus* says that all is quiet, the Wesleyans having been "totally exterminated" by their Free Church assailants. This was the method by which the Christian Churches secured peace and harmony in the past. In this case we think that the extermination of Wesleyanism does not refer so much to actual murders as to the Wesleyans being forcibly compelled to join the Free Church by floggings, clubbings, and the destruction of their property.

MISS MARY DUNN, of Newark, U. S. A., has been forced to give up an engagement to sing in a Protestant church at a good salary. The Roman Catholic priests are too jealous to allow her to save her health and earn a living by helping heretics.

DR. MCGLYNN continues to disregard the Pope's condemnation of his teachings. The Pope has summoned him to appear at Rome within forty days or be excommunicated. At a meeting of the Anti-Poverty League he announced his firm intention to continue the work he had begun. While still professing devout allegiance to the Church, he said that "Religion will never be right until we see a Pope walking down Broadway with a stove-pipe hat and a frock coat." At the meeting the name of Archbishop Corrigan was received with hisses, while a reference to Colonel Ingersoll was greeted with great applause.

BOOTH has opened a West-end mission for the conversion of dukes and earls. He says that long lines of carriages are driven up, and members of Parliament have been seen weeping. "What an awful lot it must be," he says, "to make a member of parliament weep." Perhaps it was onions.

THE Salvation Army seems to have bagged Lady Colin Campbell. The next catch will be the Duke of Marlborough.

THERE seems to be a falling off in the membership among the Wesleyans. There is, however, "an unusually large number of young men seeking admission into the ministry." Yes, and there

always will be while the cash holds out. All the young fellows without brains and energy enough to make their way in other professions flock to the kingdom-come business, and get their bread buttered by people who are a little sillier than themselves.

A NICE little balance would have been handed over to the Portsmouth Hospital as the results of the debate on the Inspiration of the Bible, between Messrs. Cowley and Googe, but for the fact that the Christian representative took half the proceedings for his travelling and hotel expenses. Would not our provincial friends do well to debate only with their local upholders of orthodoxy? The Christian ministers of Portsmouth ought to be ready to maintain their Bible without having to secure the services of a champion from London.

A BUTCHER named Perrett drowned himself in the Thames through religious mania. He had only been released a short time from a lunatic asylum. Among the articles found on the body was a much-used Bible.

A *Life of the Queen for Boys and Girls* is in preparation, under Her Majesty's personal revision. It is almost needless to say that the flunkey writer of this volume is a clergyman. His name is W. W. Tulloch.

THE Bishop of Manchester apparently wishes to earn a reputation as a fighting prelate. He has been telling the people at Blackpool that England must keep herself ready to fight Russia, Germany, and the United States, which will be a pretty tough job if they all come on at once. Nothing but the grace of God, he added, could keep us up to the mark. Well, the bishops are paid several thousands a year apiece to supply us with the grace of God, and if we haven't enough of that article when we get into difficulties we shall have to stop their screws, and perhaps imprison them as impostors.

PROFESSOR HUNTER should keep a tighter rein over the frisking scribes of the *Weekly Dispatch*. Referring last week to Mr. Bradlaugh's Oaths Bill, one of them remarked that when the Bill passes "it will be unpleasant for those gentlemen who now contrive to escape serving on juries by averring that they are Agnostics." As a matter of fact, they contrive to do nothing of the sort. They are kept in attendance at the court day after day, without the intervals of release which other jurymen enjoy. Their avowal of unbelief is not a gain, but a loss; and the observations of the *Dispatch* simply add insult to injury.

WE need scarcely say we have no sympathy with imprisonment for any form of opinion, and we are glad to see that a bill substituting the more effective sentence of deprivation for that of incarceration in the case of contumacious Ritualists, has been read in the House of Commons. But the Rev. J. Bell Cox is not so hardly treated as the High Church organs endeavor to make out. He has two rooms, which have been made as comfortable as possible, the tradesmen to whom the order was given having had *carte blanche* to provide everything of the best. He receives and answers letters and papers, and has as many visitors as he can wish. It was, moreover, open to him to have resigned his church at any stage of the proceedings against him, and to have set up a tabernacle for himself or have gone over to Rome, just as he and his congregation wished. He, however, preferred to defy the law, instead of submitting to the powers that be, and we cannot see that he has much cause to complain.

It is said that the Church of St. Margaret's, Liverpool, at which Mr. Cox officiated, is not in receipt of any endowment, but is supported by the congregation. But the church itself is national property, and in ministering there Mr. Cox knew he must submit to national law. If his imprisonment teaches the ministers of the Church of England that it is not altogether such a delightful thing to be under State control, it will not be without its utility.

THE truth is the Church desires all the advantages of a State establishment without its inconveniences. Mr. Cox, no less than Father Keller, desires to set the Church above the Law, and in this he has the sympathy of the great majority of clergymen. The *Church Times* declares "the Victorian Persecution" has reduced the Jubilee to an absurdity, and one of its clerical correspondents reports his intention to notify to his congregation that in consequence of a faithful priest suffering imprisonment for obedience to the Church's law, the 21st of June will be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation.

PROCEEDINGS for assault are (according to a Reuter's telegram) being instituted against Archdeacon Colley, of Pietermaritzburg, consequent upon blows exchanged between him and a churchwarden at a stormy vestry meeting at St. Peter's Cathedral, during a scuffle for possession of the books and records.

CHRIST CHURCH, Oxford, having refused to make an abatement of 10 per cent on its tithes, has been attempting to collect the full amount from the farmers of Meifod, a Montgomeryshire village which is a favorite resort of anglers. Neither at Welshpool nor at Shrewsbury could an auctioneer be found willing to undertake the sale of the produce seized, and a man had to be

brought all the way from Birmingham. When he found out the kind of work he had to do he threw up the task, and spoke at a meeting, expressing his warm sympathy with the farmers. Christ Church is likely to lose more than ten cent. in expenses.

THE attempt to distrain on six farms at Meifod, Montgomeryshire, caused some extraordinary demonstrations. A thousand farmers and laborers attended, all armed with stout sticks. The auctioneer was guarded by forty policemen and bailiffs. The live-stock could not easily be seized in face of the threatened hostilities, as it was not on the farms but had been turned loose on the hills. The auctioneer gave up the distraint as a bad job, and withdrew rather than provoke a serious conflict. He was then loudly cheered.

THE Rev. Mr. Devine, Catholic curate of Kilkelly, in the parish of Kilmare, in the diocese of Achonry, has been summoned to appear before Judge Boyd, in the Bankruptcy Court, Dublin, to answer a charge of obstructing the officers of the Court. It is alleged that the reverend gentleman received rents at Kilkelly in connection with the Plan of Campaign.

NEARLY three years ago we wrote an article on "Brummagem Liberalism," in which we pointed out that it was mostly skin deep. We were denounced, as we expected to be, for telling the truth; but our statements were never impugned. Birmingham halls are almost entirely closed to Freethinkers. This is a notorious fact, and it has just been emphasised in a startling way. Mr. Bradlaugh was to lecture in Birmingham last Sunday, but all the halls in the town, except the Museum Concert Hall, were closed to him, although he was going to avoid religion. The Gaiety Concert Hall had been engaged and a deposit paid, but the proprietor, Mr. J. C. Holder, instructed his solicitor to interfere and the contract was broken. Mr. Holder is a big brewer, and is bent on maintaining the old Beer and Bible League.

ONE of the Birmingham papers inserts some correspondence on the "blasphemous" lectures delivered at Baskerville Hall by the National Secular Society's lecturers. Mr. H. P. Aston is one of the writers. He "fears" that any attempt to suppress blasphemy would be "worse" than a failure, but he would like to see the thing done if it could be. Another writer asks what the clergy are about, and why the lectures and placards are not prohibited. Another, signing himself Volvox (it should have been Mesopotamia), urges that it is not persecution to silence Freethinkers. Fortunately Mr. Herbert Card, secretary of the N. S. S. Branch, is able to reply to these gentry, to whom his letter must be a bitter pill.

FATHER R. HUNT, a Catholic priest, was found drunk in Old Haymarket, Liverpool, last week. He was locked up, and on the following morning was fined 5s. and costs. The case was heard before the usual charges, and the money promptly paid by others of the black-coated fraternity.

THE editor of the *Victoria Jubilee Journal*, published at Manchester, has received a copy of the *Freethinker*, a few cuttings from which would have made his own paper interesting; but, instead of feeling thankful, he put it in the fire, and he expresses a pious wish that he could serve us in the same way. Well, he can try, if he likes. We are quite willing to favor him with an interview for the purpose.

ALL Atheists should be guillotined, shrieks this pious ninny. Scratch a Christian, and you find a bigot.

A LADY went to Christ Church, Marylebone, on Friday, May 13, for the "churching of women" service. The rector was absent altogether, and the curate never turned up till twelve o'clock, when the service should have been over. Finding only one mother willing to thank the Lord, he galloped the words so that she could not understand them, and went home to more congenial occupations. Had the doctor been as negligent as the priest, the poor lady would have had a bad time.

#### OBITUARY.

WE regret to record the death, on May 8th, at Liversage, of Mr. Richard Stringer, of West Hartlepool, aged fifty-one. Mr. Stringer had been a prominent member of the Stalybridge Branch of the N. S. S., and was one of the oldest members of the West Hartlepool Branch. He was a staunch Freethinker to the end. He leaves a widow and family to mourn his loss.

WE have to record the death of the Rev. C. J. Whitmore, for many years one of the most prominent opponents of "infidelity" in North London. Mr. Whitmore, we believe, could claim that he was the first working man who became a minister of the Presbyterian Church in England. In debate Mr. Whitmore was rough and acrid like his own Confession of Faith, but we believe that he was earnest and sincere, which is more than we can say for some living champions of the same cause. Unfortunately he is best known by a tract on "Converted Infidel Leaders," the majority of the said leaders being unknown outside Mr. Whitmore's own circle of information.

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Sunday, May 22, Ball's Pond Secular Hall, 36 Newington Green Road, N., at 7.30, "Ghosts and Gods."

MAY 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.—C. M., R. Fox, W. Schweizer.

J. M. says: "Having read your *Royal Paupers*, I think it will be a great eye-opener, and hope it will go through several editions." We thank our correspondent for the cutting.

F. HILTON.—Sorry to hear there has been delay. We have spoken to Mr. Forder.

W. KNIGHT writes: "I had occasion to visit the American Exhibition on Saturday last (7th inst.) It was then an immense carpenter's shop. Hundreds of workmen were busy erecting stands, counters, stalls, etc. I could not imagine how it could be opened on the following Monday. I have since discovered that they continued working throughout the whole of Sunday. Yet it was opened on Monday with prayer!"

J. MORREHEAD.—You enclosed a stamp, but we cannot undertake to answer such letters through the post. Put your question a little more concisely. History, Literature, Religion, and Science, are very extensive subjects. What branches do you mean? As to cheapness, you will find good books expensive. If you want Encyclopædias we will refer you to some.

L. H. POST.—It may serve as a suggestion for our artist, but it is far too rudely drawn for reproduction as it stands.

J. P. BILLOT.—You give no address. Besides, we make it a rule not to notice the delinquencies of the pious until they get into the newspapers or the courts. We have no wish to play the part of a Paul Pry.

W. BARROW.—The Rev. George Bishop's opinion of Huxley isn't worth a rush. It is a pigmy's opinion of a giant. When he says that Huxley doesn't know the Bible, he simply shows his ignorance of Huxley's published writings. Perhaps he hasn't read much since he became a Christian. We are glad to hear from you as a recruit; also glad to learn that Freethought is spreading around you, and that the *Freethinker* is "looked forward to and enjoyed every week."

C. B.—Mr. Cox was prosecuted under the Church Discipline Act of 1840. Altar lights were declared illegal in the Mackonochie case in 1868, and vestments in the Purchas Judgment, 1871.

THE Nottingham fanatic who posted us a book, addressed "G. W. Foote, infidel," with a lot of other writing on the outside, overreached himself. There was twopence extra postage to pay, and the packet was declined.

T. EVANS.—Thanks for your Freethought pamphlet in Welsh, though we don't understand a word of it except the proper names and the English quotations. The Welsh want stirring up on religious matters.

H. CARD.—We are obliged. See "Acid Drops."

M. F.—Freethought doesn't offer any "pattern" in place of Jesus. Confining the attention to any one man is narrowing to the mind. There are scores of great lives in history, all with some example to imitate, and some failings to shun. As to the apostles sacrificing their property in defence of Christianity, we can only reply that they never appear to have had any. The parson was drawing on his fancy. Read Paine's *Age of Reason* first.

C. HEATON.—Glad to hear you are so pleased with our conduct of this journal. The enclosure is handed to Mr. Wheeler.

G. BATE.—We think you acted rightly in the circumstances. As to the other matter, we can hardly form an opinion without hearing the other side. Anyhow, those who fight bigotry must be sure of their own strength. All are not Freethinkers who call themselves so; we have known some who, in time of trouble and peril, showed as much spirit as a sheep. Fortunately there are many of the opposite kind.

E. MOORE.—Advice is of little use in such a case. Every person acts in the long run according to his own disposition. You know your own strength or weakness better than we do. If the open avowal of your opinions entails such consequences, you must ask yourself whether you can bear them. If you cannot, you must act accordingly. You say you are young, and only recently turned from Christianity. Why not quietly study till you are old enough to shift for yourself?

INFIDEL.—See "Acid Drops." Pleased to hear you appreciate the *Freethinker*. We have many lady readers.

J. TEMPLE.—Thanks for your trouble. We remember the trial and sentence of poor Downes for being such a peculiar fool as to believe what his fellow Christians profess. Listening to James, and obeying the Holy Ghost, led him to jail. Truly the Christians are impartial. They imprison you for believing the Bible, and imprison you for disbelieving it.

A. HENWOOD.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

E. T. G.—Hardly up to the mark. You should study grammar for a few weeks, and copy out and learn a few pieces of first-rate style from great writers.

D.—Jokes are always welcome.

W. T. LEEKEY.—No doubt he is in glory, but you'll never meet him there. Your place is in the fender.

W. CLARK.—You will find a thorough account of Christian forgeries in the *Crimes of Christianity*, which will be published shortly.

R. FREEMAN.—Mr. Gladstone is a great politician, but in theology he is a sophistical old woman, if we may say so without insulting the fair sex. His defence of Genesis against Professor Huxley was enough to make a schoolboy laugh. We understand that his speculations on Homer are nearly as absurd.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Stroud Journal—North Eastern Daily Gazette—La Semaine Anticléricale—Jus—Truthseeker—Portsmouth Evening News—Thinker—Liberator—Boston Investigator—Honesty—Sunday Chronicle—Sporting Echo—Reynold's Newspaper.

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday, if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

THE June number of *Progress* will be ready next Thursday. It will contain the second part of Mr. Foote's careful paper on Giordano Bruno, which should be of great interest to Freethinkers; and an article on "Buddhism, Essenism, and Christianity," by Mr. Wheeler.

MR. FOOTE will be happy to meet all who are interested in the London open-air work at the Hall of Science on Sunday morning, June 5, at 11 o'clock, to talk over the best way of making it specially effective this season.

MESSRS. FOOTE and WHEELER are devoting great pains and labor to the *Crimes of Christianity*, which they intend to make a standard work. Several sheets are already through the press. It is hoped that the first volume, bound in cloth, will be ready in a couple of months. The type is bold and readable, the printing is excellent, and the sheets will be hot-pressed before binding. The portions that were published before the fire have been subjected to a scrupulous revision; every reference has been verified afresh; and considerable additions have been made, both in the text and in the footnotes.

By a peculiar inadvertence the price of *Bible Heroes* has been omitted from the advertisement. The numbers are published at one penny each. Numbers V. and VI. will be ready on the first of June.

PERSONS desirous of circulating *Royal Paupers* during the Jubilee period have asked on what terms they can be supplied. Mr. Forder will send any number of dozens (but not less than one dozen) at the trade price of eighteen pence per dozen of thirteen copies. Of course the consignee must pay carriage.

THE *Freethinkers' Magazine* has certainly improved of late. The May number before us opens with a clever paper by Mr. T. B. Wakeman on the Reconstruction of Religion from a Positivist Standpoint. It also has a paper on Freethought Education, by Thomas Davidson, and a defence of Freethought from the charge of anarchy, from the pen of J. W. Truesdell.

*Chat*, a lively Portsmouth paper, gives a lengthy and appreciative notice of Mr. Foote's recent lectures in that town, finishing with some very flattering words which we have not the courage to quote.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH, M.P., presiding at the annual missionary breakfast of the Religious Tract Society last Tuesday morning, after congratulating the society on its past year's work, spoke as follows:—"There were, however, many causes for anxiety; for while Christianity was growing in circumference, there was some cause to fear that it was decaying at the centre. While they were achieving triumphs in barbarous lands they found a strong tendency on the part of certain sections of those who called themselves the cultured classes to forsake it at home. Indeed, he thought the feature of our age was a widespread increase of unbelief. That was the evil with which they had to contend at home. But it was not in England alone that infidelity was spreading. He had recently returned from India, and it was a melancholy fact to find that there co-existed with the higher education in India an utter decay of all religious faith."

MR. SMITH bears out what we are always saying. Faster than Christianity makes converts abroad, it loses hold on the people at home; and while it does convert a few savages, for whom, in our opinion, it is eminently fitted, its conquests among the adherents of historic religions like Brahminism, Buddhism, and Mohammedans, are so slight as to be unworthy of notice. It is, indeed, quite on the cards that Christianity which originated among the most ignorant section of the Jews, who were the most superstitious people of antiquity, will die out among the African negroes and the Pacific islanders. In the latter days there will be no Bishop of London, but we shall read of the Bishop of Fiji and the Bishop of Timbuctoo.

In a letter on Coincidences in the *Athenæum*, Professor Max Müller points out an old German epitaph on one Ahike Pott which is almost a literal translation of that ascribed to Martin Elginbrodde—

“Here lie I, Martin Elginbrodde  
Hae mercy o’ my soul Lord God,  
As I wad do were I Lord God  
And ye were Martin Elginbrodde.”

Max Muller also cites the recorded prayer of a French captain in the time of the Maid of Orleans: “Lord God I pray thee do for La Hire that which La Hire would do for thee if thou were captain and La Hire were God.” Max Muller gives several instances of the same sentiment in the most ancient Rig-Veda, as for instance: “If I, O Agni, were thou, and thou wert I, then thy wishes should be fulfilled.” The passage from the Rig-Veda shows that the sentiment of reciprocity, the foundation of the so-called Golden Rule of Christianity, was in existence one thousand years before Jesus Christ.

THE American *Bibliotheca Sacra*, lamenting the endorsement of Reuss by the *Andover Review*, points out that Reuss holds that the Apocalypse is no longer of authority, that Second Peter is a forgery, that we do not know who wrote the Fourth Gospel, and that the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke, upon which is founded the doctrine of the Incarnation, are unauthentic traditions. It declares that the Christian ministry, by supporting such authorities, are in danger of being left with neither helm nor compass.

DR. KUENEN, of Leyden, is engaged upon an *Historical and Critical Introduction to the Old Testament*, in which the whole subject will be dealt with from the most advanced critical standpoint.

#### A GOSPEL FOR GOD.

(Concluded from p. 158.)

IN lingering, but mistaken love, thus hath said the genuine Son of Man unto the impostors called Gods; “Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Behold, I sent unto you sages, wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye kill and burn; and some ye scourge in your synagogues and temples, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the fair and noble Hypatia unto the blood of the hero Bruno, whom ye slew with fire, as was your wont, in public token of the greater fires awaiting evermore the souls of all the prophets of the truth that yet shall prove invincible. Verily, I say unto you that for all these things judgments shall come upon you, for ye instigated your children to such deeds. O deities, O wild imaginings and cravings of the human heart, carved deep into the rock of human history, and deep into the heart of ignorance and yearning misery and fear, reforming not and changing not from olden ways to newer needs and higher thoughts, how often would the seeming wise have gathered ye into their fold and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For the time cometh, and now is when the true worshippers shall turn to true ideals and leave the once-loved idols to their fate. Behold the hour is at hand when ye shall be scattered every God unto his own, and the Child of Man shall stand alone; yet not alone, for the hope and glory of his manhood and his truth is in him and the brotherhood of the race around him.

Not every God that saith unto me, Man, man, shall enter into the kingdom. Despairing Gods will say unto me in that day, “O Man, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name and for thy sake done all our wonderful works?” And then will I profess unto them, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.” There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Take heed therefore unto thy ways, and learn of me: for I am humble and meek, and only require of thee the same implicit obedience that thou didst formerly require of me. The tables now are turned. As one having authority, I teach thee back the lessons whereof thou above all hast deepest need.

Take no thought for yourself, what honor and glory ye shall covet, and what worship and subservience shall be yours. Is not pity more than majesty, and loving help than all the splendors of heavenly thrones and hellish vengeance? The God that seeketh his own glory shall lose it, and the man that loseth his glory for man’s sake shall find it. No

God can serve both God and Man: for in holding to the one he will hate and despise the other.

Wherefore I say unto you, Lay not up for yourself treasures in heaven, where no one needs them and the cry of hunger cannot come. But lay up for yourself treasures on earth, where all creation groaneth and the cup of want is never full. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Thou shalt love thy creature as thyself, and do unto all men as thou wouldst that all men should do unto thee.

Swear not at all, neither by Jerusalem, nor by thyself. But for the future let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for thy Son hath discovered that whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Our Father which art in hell (for thou art everywhere) bethink thee of the duties of a Father. For whosoever shall say unto his child, “Depart from me into everlasting fire,” shall stand disgraced; and whosoever shall command that the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever shall be in danger of eternal infamy.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy children’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy child, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy child’s eye.

I say unto thee, resist not evil done unto thyself; for thou art omnipotent, and cannot be pained or injured.

If any man will tax thy churches, let him have thy chapels too. If the Devil take Judas, give him Peter also; and if he would take earth from thee, give him heaven besides. Submit thyself unto the Devil as thou wouldst have the Devil submit himself to thee. And if any one commits the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, forgive him unto seventy times seven. Forgive us all our trespasses as thou wouldst have us forgive thine. Yea, be thou perfect, even as thou recommendest us to be perfect. Love your enemies, bless them that blaspheme you, do good even to them that laugh at your little eccentricities, and bestow your very best thrones in heaven on them which spitefully satirise you and expose your grievous failings. For if ye only love them which flatter you and patronise your shop, what glory have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

Repent therefore, and do good works while yet ’tis night. For the *day* cometh wherein no god can work, no god can live.

W. P. BALL.

#### LETTER FROM “VESTA.”

THE letter from “Juno” to your valuable paper has been noticed by us, the inhabitants of “Vesta,” and I am requested to write you a short account of our planet, trusting you will publish it so that other worlds may be made acquainted with the magnitude of our theocratic affairs as arranged and conducted by our pastors and masters, and that the importance of Vesta in the sidereal system is not to be effaced by the boastings of the Junoites.

We have bishops! We have Jubilees!! And we have had a third part of Jehovah executed for our salvation, and a very taking affair it was; none of your nude figures slung up like we are told you have depicted in your art galleries. Oh, no! Christ mounted the scaffold as a true gentleman should—and as I am told your malefactors have done at Tyburn—in full evening dress, crush hat, open shirt front, and the matutinal pipe complete. The execution was a sight not to be forgotten—Christ seated on his coffin, smoking gracefully and talking gaily, with a joke here and a joke there, for all was made very comfortable, J.C. of course looking upon the whole affair with great gusto, as to him it was returning home after holiday making. Christ was finished off in a glorious style, the last dying speech and confession being sold at the foot of the scaffold two minutes before the operation commenced, showing the celerity of our “special editionists.” The police parted his raiment and sold it to a waxwork exhibition, where we have a splendid fac-simile of this event, with mechanical ascension, the figure going up hourly—very edifying for Sunday scholars and ladies of an evangelical turn of mind.

The “Junoites” boast of their bishops. They should see ours, especially on grand occasions, such as ordination of a man and a brother. Why, they are nearly covered with gold, and have to be very carefully handled. Besides being extremely powerful in apostolical succession, the strength imparted to the recipient is

so strong that, after the laying on of hands, powerful means have to be employed to control him. One of our bishops inadvertently put his hands on a buck ape, and immediately the simious gentleman was found to have apostolical succession so strong, there was no other alternative but to make a bishop of him at once. At confirmation services the laity couldn't stand this forty-bishop power on their heads (wooden as most of them are)—the full influence would be too strong; so (if I may use the term) diluted bishop has to be employed, something weaker—a suffragan, for instance, warranted 50 under proof.

Let the worlds (including Juno) also know we have super-seeded gas and have utilised the gasometers for storing Holy Ghost power, running it through the old pipes to the very houses of our preachers, so that these godly men can be filled with it daily at so much per 1,000 feet, measured by meter. It is quite painful to see some who have imbibed a double dose to last from Saturday to Monday. The very buttons on their black gaiters seem bursting with plethora.

Our royalty—like that of the Junoites—was, I admit, a failure, for having nothing else to do but feast and multiply, they multiplied to such an alarming extent that all the paying posts in the State were monopolised by this insatiable crew, and being noted for nothing in particular, we still had to employ competent persons to act for them; so we had to do away with our beloved sovereign, but in every town have placed portraits, which at every Jubilee wink, laugh, and place the dextral finger alongside the proboscis.

The peoples of other planets, not forgetting your own earth, seem to think their particular place of abode the centre of all things. We, the Vestarians, cannot imagine how such egotistical ideas have attained currency, for out of the uncountable worlds rolling round their central suns, why should all salvation be reserved for one little speck in the vast immensity? Please learn to think other worlds are of as much importance as Juno, Earth and Pallas, and remember that there are other planets in our view, in comparison with which those named could be swept into Nature's dust-pan and not be missed.

#### "WASHED IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB."

It certainly is surprising that, having regard to the large fortunes made at the present time in the soap trade, some poor but honest stock-broker has not seen the immense benefit that might be derived from the promotion of a company to utilize the remarkable cleansing power of the blood of the lamb for general washing purposes. Seeing that this fluid is capable of washing white the souls of the blackest scoundrels who ever disgraced this earth, its ability to cleanse their bodies, and also their garments, cannot be questioned, and the supply is of course practically unlimited. It has been poured out for eighteen centuries now in quantities sufficient to purify countless millions of the rottenest specimens of humanity, and as there are some millions still waiting to undergo the operation, a constant and overwhelming supply is assured. The parsons have monopolised this valuable commodity too long. Their perception of the advantages of the lamb's blood trade speaks more for their sagacity than any other one thing, and its profitableness may be fairly estimated by their intense eagerness to retain their customers and procure new ones.

It is the only business that requires no capital. The outlay is *nil* and the returns all profit. Then why should not its benefits be more generally distributed? Who would not be a shareholder in a company that requires no capital and pays big dividends in this world and provides mansions (with rent, coal and gas free) in the next? If cleanliness is next to godliness, why not work the thing in easy stages, and first of all make everybody clean? By doing so, a great many people would become very much nearer to godliness than they had ever been before, and it would be an immense advantage to have them all clean, if even they nevr did become godly.

With judicious management this scheme would soon cause a vast amount of advertising space to be "to let." It would reduce the size of many papers and periodicals by one half, unless the vacant space was utilised to give detailed accounts of the suicides of soap-makers, as they one by one retired below the great majority. When once the idea suggested is rendered practicable, distress and poverty will vanish. The profitable character of the undertaking will be such that the new company will be able to present every purchaser of washing liquor with a piece of choice lamb (for it is clear that the size of the lamb is in proportion to the measure of its blood), and also it can scarcely be doubted, with a quart of green peas. And only think of the testimonials they could command! This is something like what Mr. Bill Sykes would say: "Before I used this toilet luxury I was black with crime, but one dip in it has made me very much whiter than snow. I have never had a wash since, and don't seem to need one. My complexion is heavenly, and my appearance generally angelical. The wash is effective, economical, and guaranteed free from adulteration." Universal admiration and gratitude await the man who can institute and carry out this, as it may without vulgarity be termed, sanguinary enterprise.

J. M.

#### THE SUNDAY CHRONICLE ON OUR BLACK ARMY.

FAUGH! it is sickening. The spectacle of these thirty millions of people—mainly of honest natives and intelligent minds—being led, driven, cajoled, and frightened like a parcel of infants by a crowd of solemn praters who forbid them to be merry, to be free, to be natural, for peril of Bogey and the Black Hole—the spectacle of a great nation submitting to have its education, its amusements, its social relations, and its laws tampered with by a number of men who are for the most part abnormally stupid and ignorant, and whose authority and influence seem to rest exclusively on their readiness to award a fire and brimstone future to all who disagree with them—such things fill us with amazement.

But, we shall be told, even if you do not believe in all the strict doctrines of the Methodists, the Catholics, and the Church, even if you do not believe in a state of eternal punishment for the wicked—or those whom the preachers call the wicked—you must own that this dread of the bottomless pit is a most valuable agent for the preservation of order. Such a plea is, indeed, the *real* support of many of those noisy denominations of self-elected saints who have improved the Christian religion out of all recognition, and are now trying hard to improve human nature to a similar extent. We pass by the dishonesty of such a system, and we come to its effects. We come to the effects of the gospel of terror, and we say that those effects are everywhere bad. We say that a people who believe in an omnipresent and all but omnipotent Devil and an everlasting Hell must be a gloomy and an unhappy people. We say that the absurd and unnatural solemnity and asceticism enforced upon so many of our youth tend to breed melancholy and bigotry and hypocrisy; that the system of education and training adopted among the Puritanical people of England tends to cramp and cripple children's minds, as the Chinese wedgeboots do their babies' feet. We say that these cramping, stifling tactics, and this religion of horror and hell, are answerable in a great measure for most of the unpleasant traits of the British people.

How can men think soundly, boldly, and freely, who have been constrained from the cradle upwards to accept a number of the most terrible and illogical dogmas as truth without examination? How can men be otherwise than narrow and pragmatical who are trained amid intolerance and prejudice, and taught to regard as lepers and as outcasts from hope all who differ from the Rev. Jedediah Strongjaw's reading of St. Paul's epistles, or who take up their Communion wine with the wrong hand, or face to the wrong quarter when they mumble their creed, or who come to be confirmed in a cap obnoxious to the vicar's notions of millinery aesthetics?

#### CHRIST TUNES HIS LYRE.

(A fragment found at Bethlehem by the Judæan Exploitation Society, and translated from the mongrel Hebrew vernacular by our respected Demon of the Printers.)

I REMEMBER, I remember, one day whilst on the spree  
At a little drum in Cana, way down in Galilee,  
I found a marriage going on. The guests were well-nigh sprung;  
The whiskies neat had joggled their feet, and thus to them I sung:  
"Oh, you gay and festive cusses, drop those whiskies, 'doancherno,'  
And taste a brew that I can stew from water pure as snow.  
Still I never believed in those teetotal chaps, so I'll change it to  
Afric's rich port."  
Each guest rubbed his "tummy," smiling so sunny, and said "Right  
ch'ar; that's yer sort."  
Their looks were befuddled, their actions bemuddled, as they in their  
joy hummed a tune.  
The spokesman spoke up, with a cough and hiccup, like a well-  
seasoned jolly old coon:  
"We've had enough of 'stone walls,' 'tongue-tanglers,' and all, so  
give us a dose of your swizzle."  
Which was spoken so thick (calling me an old brick), saying "After  
the tippie we'll 'mizzle,'"  
I turned up my cuffs and prepared for the muffs a brew of my own  
special brand.  
The trick is well known and has often been shown by many a con-  
juring hand.  
But the bride and her mother came out in a pother, to know what  
we all were about,  
And slanged me most cruel and called me a fool, wanting to know,  
with a shout,  
When I saw the mon bent what the Devil I meant to pander to  
their vicious taste,  
For all that they now drink 's like putting it down a sink, and is surely  
a horrible waste.  
With my blandest of smiles and most delicate wiles, I bade them  
return to the waltz,  
For the dose I intend their vests to extend is strong, puro, but dyed  
Epsom salts.

(Here the fragment is too much worn to decipher further.)

THE latest conundrum from New York: Why is the Rev. Dr. McGlynn like a stray goose? Answer: Because he didn't follow the propaganda.

MR. WHANGLE: "My boy, I'm sorry to see you flying your kite on a Sunday." THE BOY: "Why, it's made out of the Christian World, an' got a tail of tracts."

PROFANE JOKES.

"MA," inquired Bobby, "hasn't pa a queer idea of heaven?" "Well I think not, Bobby. Why?" "I heard him say that the week you spent in Brighton seemed like heaven to him."

"Do you see that dignified-looking gentleman across the way?" "Yes." "He has been a vestry-man in our church and superintendent of the Sunday-school for over twenty years." "Is that so?" Then in a lower tone: "What do you suspect him of?"

"I UNDERSTAND, 'Lijah," said the minister, "that many of you colored people have very queer ideas of heaven. Now, take yourself, for instance, do you believe in the orthodox theory that heaven is a place of pearly gates and golden streets?" "No sah, I don't," was the emphatic reply; "dat 'scription am too promiskiss to be true. Hebben, sah, am a place wheer de 'possum hab only one eye."

A FAMILY, consisting of the father and three sons, lived in one of the southern counties, and led a very wicked life. A good and perhaps eccentric minister labored long and hard for their conversion, but apparently in vain. They all seemed quite obdurate and unimpressed with his appeals and warnings. He gave them up in despair. In this state of affairs, he was greatly surprised on receiving a call to go to the house and offer prayers for the son Jim, who had been bitten by a snake, and who expected a fatal result. The good man attended, and spoke in this wise: "We thank thee for all thy manifold blessings. We thank thee for those that thou sendest against our wishes. We thank thee for snakes. We thank thee that a snake has bitten Jim. We pray thee send another snake to bite Sam. We pray thee to send another to bite Jack. And we pray thee to send the biggest kind of a snake to bite the old man, for we verily believe that nothing short of snakes will ever do this family any good."

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SPECIAL APPEAL.

The Committee of the Manchester Branch N. S. S. gratefully acknowledge the liberal support which has already been given to the scheme for purchasing a Hall, and especially thank the London, Liverpool, and other friends at a distance, for their valued help. In consequence, however, of the shortness of the time allowed for the completion of the purchase, they are compelled to make a Special Appeal to Secularists both in and out of Manchester for further aid, either in donations or in subscriptions for Shares. The amount already subscribed, chiefly by Manchester friends, and in the short space of three months, is about £800; this, with the Spencer Legacy of £500 leaves £500 still to be provided by the middle of June next.

The Committee are very desirous of securing the full benefit of the offer made through Mr. Bradlaugh as mentioned in the N. R. of April 3; 25 Shares we already been taken in lots of not less than five Shares in accordance with that offer, and subscriptions for a further 200 shares will benefit the cause to the extent of £50 additional.

Apart from this, however, the Committee feel assured that there are many friends throughout the country who both can and will help by taking one or more Shares, or by a donation, when they understand that further aid is needed in order that the purchase may be completed at the agreed date.

Prospectuses with form of application can be obtained from the Hon. Sec. of the Company, Mr. Geo. Payne, 20 Kennedy Street, Manchester, who will be glad to furnish any information required. Donations may be forwarded to the Treasurer of the Branch, Mr. E. G. Field, 9 Rye Street, Clarendon Road, Clonm-M., Manchester, or to the undersigned at 25 Higher Chatham Street, Manchester.

A. HEMINGWAY, Hon. Sec.

Price Threepence.

PROGRESS

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- Giordano Bruno. By G. W. Foote.
Voltaire in England. By J. M. Wheeler.
The Decline of Piety. By Alter Brown.
Anne Gilchrist and her Circle. By G. W. Foote.
The "New Sociology" Criticised.—III. By W. P. Ball.
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