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EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.
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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 224.



LED OF THE SPIRIT.

Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.—MATT IV., 1.

CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY.¹

EIGHT months ago I delivered a lecture in the London Hall of Science on "Christianity and Slavery." Among my critics there was one gentleman, and the circumstance was so noteworthy that my friend the chairman expressed a wish, which I cordially echoed, that we might have the pleasure of hearing him again. A few days ago a pamphlet reached me on the subject of that lecture, written by my friendly opponent, who turns out to be the head of the Oxford House in Bethnal Green. Mr. Henson sends me the pamphlet himself "with his compliments," and I have read it carefully. Indeed, I have marked it in dozens of places where his statements strike me as inaccurate and his arguments as fallacious; and, on the whole, I think it best to give him a set answer in this journal. Mr. Henson's paper is not, in my opinion, a very forcible one on the intellectual side. But perhaps that is, in a certain sense, one of its merits; for the Christian case in this dispute is so bad that sentiment does it more service than logic. I must, however, allow that Mr. Henson is a courteous disputant,

and I hope I shall reciprocate his good feeling. When he opposed me at the Hall of Science, he admits that I treated him "with a courtesy which relieves controversy of its worst aspects." I trust he will be equally satisfied with my rejoinder. Whenever I may have occasion to express myself strongly, I shall simply be in earnest about the theme, without the least intention of being discourteous. I mean no offence, and I hope I shall give none.

Mr. Henson says he is dealing in a brief compass with a big subject, but "the outlines are clear, and may be perceived very readily by any honest man of moderate intelligence." Well, whether it is that I am not an honest man, or that I possess immoderate intelligence, I certainly do not see the outlines of the subject as Mr. Henson sees them. The relation of Christianity to slavery is an historical question, and Mr. Henson treats it as though it were one of dialectics. When Mr. Wheeler and I deal with the subject in a future volume of the *Crimes of Christianity* we shall use the historical method of treatment. But meanwhile, I suppose, I had better follow Mr. Henson, and show that he is wrong even on his own ground.

Mr. Henson undertakes to prove three things. (1) That slavery is flatly opposed to the teaching of the New Testament. (2) That the abolition of slavery in Europe was mainly owing to Christianity. (3) That at this present

¹ "Christianity and Slavery." No. 18 of Oxford House Papers. By H. Henley Henson, B.A., Head of the Oxford House in Bethnal Green. London: Rivingtons

time Christianity is steadily working against slavery all over the world.

Before I discuss the first proposition I must ask why the *Old Testament* is left out of account. Mr. Henson relegates it to a footnote, and there he declares, "once for all, that the Mosaic Law has nothing to do with the question." But Mr. Henson's "once for all" has not the force of a Papal decree. It is simply a bit of rhetorical emphasis, like a flourish to a signature. Does he mean to say that the author of the Mosaic Law was not the same God who speaks to us in the New Testament? If it was the same God, "the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever," the Mosaic Law has very much to do with the question; unless—and this is a vital point—Jesus Christ distinctly abrogates it in any respect. He *did* distinctly abrogate the *lex talionis*, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but he left the laws of slavery exactly as he found them, and in this he was followed by Peter and Paul, and by all the Fathers of the Church.

Mr. Henson tells us that "the Jews were a barbarous race, and slavery was necessary to that stage of development," and that "the Law of Moses moderated the worst features of Slavery." The second statement cannot be discussed, for we do not know what was the condition of slavery among the Jews before the so-called Mosaic Law (centuries after Moses) came into vogue. The first statement, however, is perfectly true; the Jews *were* barbarous and slavery among them was inevitable. But that is speaking *humanly*. What is the use of God's interference if he does not make people wiser and better? Why did he lay down slavery laws without hinting that they were provisional? Why did he so express himself as to enable Christian divines and whole Churches to justify slavery from the Bible long after it had died out of the internal polity of civilised states? Surely God might have given a little less time to Aaron's vestments and the paraphernalia of his own Tabernacle, and devoted some of his infinite leisure to teaching the Jews that property in human flesh and blood is immoral. Instead of that he actually told them, not only how to buy foreigners (Leviticus xxv. 45, 46), but how to enslave their own brethren (Exodus xxi. 2-11.)

When Jesus Christ came from heaven to give mankind a new revelation he had a fine opportunity to correct the brutalities of the Mosaic Law. Yet Mr. Henson allows that he "did not actually forbid Slavery in express terms," and that he "never said in so many words, Slavery is wrong." But why not? It will not do to say that the time was not ripe, for Mr. Henson admits that in Rome "the fashionable philosophies, especially that of the Stoics, branded Slavery as an outrage against the natural Equality of Men." Surely Jesus Christ might have kept abreast of the Stoics. Surely, too, as he did not mean to say anything more for at least two thousand years, he might have gone *in advance* of the best teaching of the age, so as to provide for the progress of future generations.

But, says Mr. Henson, Jesus Christ "laid down broad principles which took from Slavery its bad features, and tended, by an unerring law, to its abolition." Well, the tendency was a remarkably slow one. Men still living can remember when Slavery was abolished in the British dominions. I can remember when it was abolished in the United States. Eighteen centuries of Christian *tendency* were necessary to kill Slavery! Surely the national growth of civilisation might have done as much in that time, though Jesus Christ had never lived and taught. How civilisation *did* mitigate the horrors of Slavery, and was gradually but surely working towards its abolition, may be seen in Gibbon's second chapter. This was under the great Pagan emperors, some of whom knew Christianity and despised it.

"Slavery is cruel," says Mr. Henson, while "Christianity teaches men to be kind and to love one another." But *teaching* men to love another, even if Christianity taught nothing else—which is far from the truth—is a very questionable expenditure of time and energy; for how is love to be *taught*? Besides, a master and a slave might be attached to each other—as was often the case—without either seeing that Slavery was a violation of the law of love. What was needed was the sentiment of *Justice*. That has broken the chains of the slave. The Stoics were on the right track after all, while Christianity lost itself in idle sentimentalism.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER FAITHS.¹

THE storm of opprobrium with which the religious press greeted Canon Taylor's paper showing the superiority of Mohammedanism to Christianity in Africa but faintly reflects the feeling with which Christianity in the past has received the pretensions of all other religions. Mohammedanism, almost the only existing rival religion which can be said to have been known to Christians before the present century, was before the time of Carlyle invariably put down as a vile imposture. Luther and Melancthon united in declaring that Mohammed "was inspired by Satan." The Methodists used to sing a hymn by Charles Wesley:

"The smoke of the infernal cave,
Which half the Christian world o'erspread,
Disperse, thou heavenly light, and save
The souls by that impostor led—;
That Arab thief, as Satan bold,
Who quite destroyed thy Asian fold."

Only the introduction of the Devil could serve to account for the fact that the sacred places had been taken from Christianity, and that millions prefer the simple doctrines of Mohammed to the one infallible, divinely-revealed religion.

Christians, believing as they do that there is no salvation except through Jesus Christ, are precluded from holding other than a prejudiced view of other faiths. The eighteenth article of the Church of England solemnly curses those who "presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to form his life according to that law and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved." The great Catholic Church is equally explicit in declaring that "since none but the true religion can be from God, all other religions must be from the father of lies, and therefore highly displeasing to the God of truth."²

The extension of our Eastern empire has opened up a knowledge of Oriental religions surpassing Christianity both in antiquity and in the number of their followers. In the light of comparative religion, Christianity is seen to be but one of a number of faiths, each claiming to exercise rule over the minds of men. Its claim to the exclusive possession of truth is negated by facts. Long before Jesus said, "Resist not evil," Gautama taught, "Let a man overcome evil by good." Confucius taught the golden rule five centuries before Christianity was known. Men are coming to suspect that as much can be said for the claims of Buddhism to become a universal religion as for those of Christianity.

The Religious Tract Society has devoted several of its *Present Day Tracts*, designed to meet current scepticism, to the subject of non-Christian religions. Six of these they have bound into the volume before us. With several of them we have already dealt. One and all may be described as animated by the same spirit of disparagement of other religions in order to extol Christianity. They are works of special pleading for the purpose of reducing the pretensions of heathenism to the smallest possible amount. Christianity needs to blacken other faiths in order that they may serve as a foil to its own divine beauty.

The first essay in the book—that by Sir William Muir, on "The Rise and Decline of Islam"—is a good illustration of this. Its purpose is to show that Mohammedanism extended itself by the sword. Sir William would have done well to have thought of the observation of Carlyle: "You must first get your sword." He forgets that the Saxons were converted to Christianity by the sword of Charlemagne; that Olaf Trygvesson gave the Norwegians the choice of baptism or death; that the whole of Northern Europe was conquered for Christianity by the Teutonic Knights or Sword-bearers of Christ. Other people's faiths, like other folks' children, have many faults from which our own are exempt. Mohammed's inducements to his followers are made much of; but doubtless Sir William reads as figurative the promise of Jesus that his twelve disciples should sit on twelve thrones, and that if his followers gave up houses or wives for his sake they should receive a

¹ "Present Day Tracts on the non-Christian Religions of the World," by Sir Wm. Muir, Professor Legge, the Revs. J. Murray Mitchell and H. R. Reynolds. Religious Tract Society.

² Note to Acts x., 35, Douay Version.

hundredfold. Sir William cites the martial passages from the Koran as the inspiration of Mohammedan soldiers, regardless that the Bible texts commanding the slaughter of idolaters have been equally used by Christians. He charges the Koran with teaching intolerance and permitting polygamy and slavery, notwithstanding that the very same charges apply to his own Bible.

And so with Dr. Legge in his treatment of Confucius. Although constrained to admit he was a great and good man, he says "He was not a perfect character." No one ever supposed he was. Dr. Legge does not notice that the Chinese think the same of Jesus, and find him altogether wanting in that filial respect which, in their view, is the basis of other virtues.

The Rev. J. Murray Mitchell criticises Hinduism in a way he would not like applied to his own religion. Krishna is "grossly immoral and disgusting," the Hindu books "altogether sickening." We should like his explanation of the Lord's command to Hosea to "take a wife of whoredoms," and of the doings of Aholah and Aholibah related in Ezekiel. How easy it would be to reverse such trite statements as that "Christianity is emphatically a religion of hope; Hinduism may be designated a religion of despair." For, according to every Christian creed, the majority of human beings will suffer eternal torment; while, according to Hinduism, all will be eventually absorbed in God. Surely in the light of such facts it is Christianity that is the religion of despair, while Hinduism is a religion of hope.

The treatment of Buddhism by the Rev. H. Robert Reynolds is little better. Mr. Reynolds says that the extraordinary legends about the childhood of Gautama indicate "the reverence felt for his unique career in after years," but he does not see that this applies to Jesus. He thinks Gautama was much indebted to Brahminism, without acknowledging that Jesus must have been as fully indebted to Essenism and the Jewish prophets. He says of the temptation by Mara: "This series of struggles and conflicts of the man Gautama bears a shadowy but not a real resemblance to the temptation and victory of the Lord Jesus," but sees not that the temptations of a man are real, while those of a God are only ridiculous.

The paper on "Christianity and Ancient Paganism," by the Rev. J. Murray Mitchell, displays utter incompetence on the part of its author. He sees little but the most corrupt elements in the ancient religions, and finds them all either ferocious or childish. Well, we agree that religion more than anything else betrays the savagery and stupidity of man; and we believe that the time will come when the history of Christianity will be cited in proof of human barbarism and imbecility.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

"WELL," said a Baptist minister, as he laid down Mr. Spurgeon's manifesto on the vestry table, "then you agree to my having a holiday. You realise that I need a rest at last?" "No," remarked the senior Deacon, "we didn't say that. What we do realise is, that the congregation need a rest." "Oh," "Yes."—*Echo.*

SPURGEON is off to Mentone again. Prayer is found as useless as ever in South London, so the pious pastor is going to try its effect in the South of Europe. Before leaving, however, Spurgeon delivered his soul to a crowded congregation on his recent secession from the Baptist Union. According to the *Daily News*, he spoke as follows:—"Did any of them wonder that he showed fight for the vicarious sacrifice of Christ? Would not any one of them fight for their wives and children? The vicarious atonement was everything to him—more than his wife and children, for without it he was damned and lost."

Was there ever a more shameless avowal of the most disgusting selfishness? Like a shipwrecked man Spurgeon rushes to the boat of salvation by faith, whether his wife and children can get in or not. He means to be saved anyhow. Wife and children are all very well, but what are they to the safety of a man's own precious soul? Let them be damned, if they must be damned; but oh let me be wafted on angels' wings to glory. Such is the brutal doctrine which Spurgeon glories in, and for repudiating which, with the deepest loathing and indignation, he has the impudence to brand Freethinkers as immoral!

MRS. SPURGEON and her family ought to feel highly flattered when C. H. S. reckons them as *impedimenta* on his journey to heaven, that may be left behind without a sigh of regret.

WHEN that frightful railway accident occurred a few months ago in America, and scores of passengers were crushed or burnt to death, one poor fellow was extricated with two broken legs. In this condition he crawled on all fours to a little heap where his wife and all his children were huddled together. The little ones were all horribly mutilated and quite dead, and the mother was breathing her last. Seeing her expire, the poor fellow drew his revolver, sent a shot into his brains, and fell dead beside her. Even in death they were not divided; father, mother, and children were ready for burial in one grave. He spoke no words, but no doubt his thought was—annihilation, heaven, or hell with the beings I love! Christians would call him a suicide, but compared with Spurgeon and his wretched faith he and his faith were heroic.

EIGHT more Salvationists have been fined at the Stamford Petty Sessions for obstructing the streets in that town and in Leicester. Bogus appeals had been entered for purposes of delay. As the defendants did not go on with their appeals, the Bench refused to allow more time, and fined each of the defendants £1 5s., with the alternative of fourteen days' imprisonment.

THE Catholic Truth Society (heaven save the mark!) is circulating an appeal "to the working men of England" in the form of a pamphlet. According to the Truthful Tomny who drew up this precious document, "St. Peter was the first pope." But the statement is an absolute falsehood. There is not even a scrap of real evidence to show that Peter was ever at Rome at all. Lord, how the world is given to lying! And especially the Catholic world.

THAT old "God strike me dead" story has turned up afresh. The Rev. H. Bloomer, superintendent of the Thames Church Mission, has published a sermon he preached in Westminster Abbey, and among a number of other yarns he tells of a sailor he found on board the *Colonel Smith*, who was "a regular reader of the *Freethinker*" and used to "stretch himself upon the deck of his ship and call upon God, if there was one, to strike him dead." Before Bloomer left the ship he got possession of the *Freethinker*, tore it up and threw it overboard, and gave Jack a New Testament instead. Fancy a Westminster Abbey congregation listening to this sort of rubbish! Of course the vamped-up old story is retailed in order to raise the wind. If one of "the unemployed" heard this yarn in Westminster Abbey, he would probably exclaim, "Blest if old Bloomer aint a blooming —," well, we omit the substantive.

In an Italian Catholic Church in New York city they were having a celebration, and the congregation was worked up to a pitch of enthusiasm. Shouts of "Viva Jesu," "Viva Maria," "Viva Guiseppi," "Viva St. Maria Maddelena," and so on, rang through the church. Just then a joyous Hibernian wandered in and reverently listened for awhile. He stood it for a few moments until he grasped the spirit of the occasion, and then evidently thinking the honors not equitably bestowed, called out in stentorian tones: "Three cheers for the Holy Ghost!"

MR. M. L. IRVING, of the Central African Mission, writes to the *Church Times* vituperating the Mohammedans in Africa. He does not deny that they are more successful than the Christians, but he says the Africans are none the better for it. He says that the only teaching the African receives is the Arabic alphabet, deceit, and hypocrisy. Many natives say they are Mohammedans who are not, because they drink fermented wine, never go to mosque and retain the superstitions of the heathen. "I have," he says, "seen them over and over again join in *devil-worship*." These are extremely like the charges which T. W. Marshal, the Catholic, in his work on Christian missions, brings against Protestant missionaries. He says they give the natives Bibles, which they do not understand, and leave them as immoral as ever, with the added vice of hypocrisy. As to devil-worship, we should not think they could be much improved by reading the stories of Jesus casting out devils, and such texts as "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

MR. IRVING says that bloodshed and war are encouraged by the Mohammedans. At the same time we read in the daily press how King Ja-Ja has been captured, with the aid of a gunboat, in our efforts to Christianise the West Coast of Africa.

SOME people may think it a good thing under the circumstances that so much of the money raised for missionary purposes, say about twenty-five per cent., does not go out of England. There are certainly some nice home pickings. In the balance-sheet of the Church Missionary Society the sum of £11,097 4s. 8d. figures for "Administration," while "Collection of Funds" is put down at £16,773 19s. 7d., which is in addition to the deductions made by all local branches before remitting funds.

THE *Times* reduces the conversion of Hindoos to Mohammedans, which Canon Taylor estimates at 600,000 a year, by fully one half. But even this is an astounding success compared with the record of Christianity. In India the money annually spent by the Church Missionary Society alone is over forty-eight

thousand pounds, with the result that it boasts 297 converts gained, not from Mohammedanism or the higher Hindoo castes, but from outcasts and aboriginal hill-tribes, who are but little better than savages. Among the Mohammedan nations in Persia, Palestine, Egypt and Arabia, its yearly expenditure costs close upon twelve thousand pounds, and the only convert made was one weak-minded orphan girl, who should be highly valued as a costly acquisition to the Christian cause. If Jesus delays his second coming till all the world is converted to Christianity, the chance of any living Christian being caught up to meet his Lord in the air must be very remote.

THE *Spectator* has recently been calling attention to the superstitious belief in charms and evil spirits which may be found among the Jews in the East End. We commend to its notice a work advertised in the penny song books which sell in such large numbers in all our towns. It is called "The Private Companion," and the advertisement says: "This book tells you how to bewitch your enemies; to render oneself invisible; to make amulets and love-charms; to converse with the spirits. How the demons can be made to do man's work; how to find lucky numbers by lottery;" and by way of anti-climax, "how to see at long distances," after explaining "how to make a woman do your will." We understand that the work has a large sale, and we do not wonder, considering how far the belief in demons, dreams, charms, and all other forms of superstition is fostered by the Bible.

THE *Theosophist* for October says: "A perfect vocopher is not a person to be met every day." We do not recollect ever having met one. What is a vocopher? He is "a person skilled in the art of telling other people what calling they are adapted for," and also, it seems, of finding a new calling for himself. Altogether a vocopher seems to be a cross between a phrenologist and a fortune-teller. We shall not advertise for one.

THE *Jewish Chronicle* cites from a recently-published Italian book entitled *The Ghetto in Rome*, how the Jews who were condemned to live in that worst quarter of the holy city were obliged to run half-naked over the Corso during the time of the Carnival. This sport was instituted by Pope Paul II. in 1468, and to render it the more amusing, the Jews were fattened for some time prior to the sports on the richest of food. The Pope himself used to enjoy the fun from his Palace of San Marco. This amiable Christian practice, which was a substitution for celebrating Easter by making the Jews run for their lives, continued for two hundred years, when it was stopped by Pope Clement IX. on condition of the chosen people paying him an annual tribute of 300 scudi.

THE *English Churchman* accuses the English Church Union of being a Romanising body, worked by Jesuits for their own purposes. The *Church Times* replies that there is good reason to suppose that Jesuits are in the ranks, if they do not direct the policy, of the Church Association. *Arcades ambo.*

In answer to a correspondent the *Church Times* says, "It is usual in the House of Lords to bow when passing in front of the throne, even unoccupied; and the bowing to the altar is a similar ceremony." Both are equally stupid signs of fetishism.

THE *Catholic Times* says that it must be proved to the working classes that "the Catholic Church is a real friend of the toiler." Hear, hear! But it will need a deal of proving.

MR. CHARLES BOOTH, a member of the Salvation Army, but not stated to be any relative of the "General," has obtained a divorce.

THE Rev. Lindsey Taplin, pastor of Kingswood Unitarian Chapel, near Birmingham, committed suicide yesterday morning by drowning himself in a pond near his residence.

ANOTHER clerical suicide is that of the Rev. Frederick Gooch, who has been the Rector of Baginton for fifty-four years. Frequently he expressed regret that God was so long in calling him home, and he finally anticipated his creator by blowing out his brains (the clergyman's, not God's) with an old blunderbuss.

WILLIAM JOHN PALLET, the religious scoundrel who decoyed away the daughter of a fellow chapel-goer, at Wood Green, and deserted his own wife and five children in order to live with this girl of seventeen, has been sentenced to twelve months' hard labor.

MARSHALL PONTIFEX, Ward Clerk, of Farringdon Without, sends us an invitation to attend a Committee for arranging the Lord Mayor's reception. We have no desire to assist in such tomfoolery. The last time we saw a Lord Mayor was at the Mansion House, when we were committed for trial as a blasphemer. That interview was enough to last us a lifetime. No more Lord Mayors for us, thank you!

THE rapid progress of education has alarmed the ecclesiastics, and they are seeking to avail themselves of the Commission of Inquiry into the working of the Education Acts, granted

by the present Government, to bring about a change in the anti-secular direction. The Church Extension Association has issued a memorial addressed to the Royal Commission praying that all who contribute a sum equal in amount to the rate, at a voluntary school, shall be relieved from paying School Board rates. The Primrose League has taken up the question, and the official organ of the league devotes a leader to the question as flowing from the first principle of the P.L., "The Maintenance of Religion, as opposed to Atheism and Infidelity." Evidently the friends of education must be on the alert, or we shall be brought back to the times when children were kept droning through the Church Catechism in stuffy school-rooms.

To show to what shifts the clergy and churchwardens are now driven for funds to provide for repairing their churches, the *North Wilts Herald* states that at a fête and garden party, held at the vicarage grounds of Wootton Bassett, for the repair of the roof of the church, the accounts show, amongst others, the two following items, viz., weighing machine, 9s. 1d.; donkey race, 2s.

THE *Jewish World* objects to M. Renan's new work on the History of the People of Israel on the ground that he does not accept the Biblical view of David. Of course he does not. M. Renan, like any other historian, puts aside the panegyric of the conquering party and looks simply at the facts, which show that the vaunted ancestor of the Messiah was little better than a bandit and usurper.

MISS WESTON'S *Ashore and Afloat* is constantly giving Jack a lot of rubbish about Freethought. Under the head of "Noted Infidels," a recent number prints a shocking list of bad characters for Jack's detestation, with a brief comment on each. But unfortunately the comments are so brief that Jack will be puzzled to tell what they mean. Woolston, it is said, was "a gross blasphemer." Well, that simply means he was a brave sceptic. He ridiculed the Bible miracles, and the Christians kept him for years in prison, where he died. Personally he was one of the gentlest of men.

TINDAL, we are told, was "infamous for vice in general." Well, it must have been very general; for *in particular* he was a steady-going old scholar. Miss Weston should give her authority or retract the lie. Five minutes' real inquiry will show her that no breath of scandal ever tarnished Tindal's reputation while he was alive.

VOLTAIRE is charged with asking D'Alembert to deny that he was the author of the *Philosophical Dictionary*, which was "a direct and palpable lie." Dear me! Did not Sir Walter Scott deny that he was the author of the *Waverley Novels*, and is he a liar too? At any rate, he was a Christian. But look at the impudence of this charge against Voltaire. Christian bigots were racking and burning men for heresy, and Voltaire published nearly all his attacks on Christianity anonymously, not wishing to be imprisoned for life or roasted for the glory of God. Frequently he had to bribe publishers to print his writings. Yet the Christians now have the "cheek" to denounce him as a liar for not giving their predecessors the chance of cooking him alive like a lobster. Instead of being ashamed of their own bigotry and cruelty they denounce the wily old heretic who laughed at them in a thousand disguises, and held them up to the contempt of the civilised world.

MISS WESTON is like a good many other Christians. They try to imitate God. God invented the universe and they invent lies to fill it with.

JOHN BOTTOMLEY, a quarryman, and member of the Ancaster parish church choir, fell dead during morning service on Sunday, from apoplexy.

THE *English Churchman* wants to know why the Bishop of London who was so ready to inhibit the Rev. Thomas Greenland for being connected with the Reformed Episcopal Church, and the Rev. Stuart Headlam for being connected with the Church and Stage Guild, does not also inhibit the Romanising "Father Ignatius" who is advertised to preach in several London churches.

DR. HOLMES says that charlatanism hobbles on two crutches: "The tattle of women and the certificates of clergymen."

THE Salvation Army in Portland, Oregon, held service in the gaol there on a recent Sunday, and the leader told such a startling story of his wickedness, and how he had imbibed liquor sufficient to have kept a saloon going for a full generation, before he joined the army, that, after the performance was over, one of the convicts said, "The lamp can now be extinguished; the vilest sinner has returned."

LADY: "I don't think it right of people to go such lengths in decorating their churches. Look at those artistic paintings, those beautiful figures of saints, those lovely angels. What a disturbing effect it must have on the worshippers!" Gentleman: "In that case, madame, you ought yourself to be forbidden to attend church."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, November 13, Camden Hall, Camden Street, Liverpool; at 11, "Thus Saith the Lord"; at 3, "The Cooling of Hell"; at 7, "The Blood of Christ."

NOV. 20, Camberwell; 27, Sunderland.
DEC. 4, Nottingham; 5, Clay Cross; 11 and 18, Hall of Science, London.

JAN. 1, Milton Hall, London; 8, Manchester; 15, Hall of Science, London.

FEB. 5, Camberwell; 12, Milton Hall, 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.

W. POWELL reports that the open-air propaganda at Mile End Waste, which he resuscitated this summer, under the auspices of the general Committee, has resulted in adding nine new members to the East London Branch; and that the Branch is taking a hall for winter lectures. Messrs. Warren and Garner, after Mr. Powell, deserve especial mention in connexion with this good work.

E. M. G.—We sympathise with you, but it is a matter on which advice is nearly useless. You alone know all the circumstances, and by you alone the problem must be solved. Our advice might do more harm than good.

H. C. JACQUES.—See reply to A. Sault. Why not see the said Mr. Bradbury and get to the bottom of the business?

HENRY PORTER writes that the Bishop of Manchester has promised £200 a year to a fund for providing spiritual instruction to the navvies employed on the Canal when operations begin. H. P. asks whether Secularists in the district could not provide a few lectures and distribute Freethought literature. A good suggestion if it can be carried out.

E. MOORE.—Buddha's mother was supposed to have borne him through divine impregnation. What do you mean by a religion being "established as genuine"? If you mean, Is the worship of Jahveh the oldest? we answer No. There were old religions in Egypt, India and Persia before Jahveh emerged as the God of the Jews.

G. E. KNOWLES.—Cuttings are always welcome. See "Acid Drops."

IGNORAMUS.—Your *nom de plume* is something more than modest. (1) No. Advancing towards perfection is an ideal way of speaking of progress. Perfection is only a dream. (2) Dividing a thing *ad infinitum* would not leave nothing "at the end." Besides there is no end to an infinite process.

AMOS SAULT.—Mr. Bradbury's "conversion" is too vague for effective comment. Mr. Foote's Nottingham lectures will be announced in detail in due course. Tickets will be purchasable at the hall in doors. Glad to hear that Freethought literature is making an impression on your local-preacher friend.

J. MCLEAN.—Glad to hear your Glasgow choir is so successful. Shall be delighted to hear it when we visit the city again.

H. SALMAN.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks.

C. BAXTER.—The Hyde Park meetings have been discontinued as usual at the approach of winter. They will be resumed next summer. Pleased to learn that you find *Bible Heroes* "a deeply interesting work." Yes, Daniel, Isaiah and the rest will be included. It is indeed gratifying to hear that you were converted to Freethought through having a copy of this journal lent you. This should induce subscribers to lend their copies as extensively as possible.

A FREETHINKER—Surely you need no other objection to being married in a church than that the religious ceremony is to you a mere farce. A marriage at the registrar's office is as valid, quieter, simpler, and more sensible.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Womans' Suffrage Journal—Jus—New York Truthseeker—Jewish World—Truthseeker (London)—Boston Investigator—Liberty—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Echo—Weekly Dispatch—West Sussex Gazette—Lucifer—Freidenker—Primrose League Gazette—L'Union Democratique—Le Journal du Peuple.

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 London Open-Air Lecture Committee met on Thursday evening, November 3, and passed the following resolutions:—(1) That in our opinion it is highly desirable, nay, imperatively necessary to the proper success of Freethought in the metropolis, that there should be a distinct Federation of the London Branches of the N. S. S. (2) That we resolve to call a special Delegate meeting of those Branches, inviting each to send two representatives. (3) That Mr. G. W. Foote, and our Secretary (G. Standing) and Treasurer (R. O. Smith), be invited to attend

and speak, though without power to vote. (4) That a sub-committee of three be appointed to call the meeting at the earliest possible date, and to make all necessary arrangements."

THE sub-committee has fixed Thursday, Nov. 17, at 8.30 p.m., for the Delegate Meeting. Circulars are being sent out to every London Branch. We sincerely hope that not a single Branch will hold back. Every one should be represented by two special Delegates. Federation is going to be realised, and any Branch which remains outside will suffer in the end, for Union gives to each more than its individual strength.

LOOK out for our Christmas Number. It will be published on the 23rd inst.; that is, next Wednesday week. A full list of contents will be printed in our next issue. Order early of your newsagent, or you may be late in getting a copy.

THE eleventh annual Congress of the American Secular Union, which was held at Chicago on October 15th and 16th, appears to have been a decided success. Courtlandt Palmer presided, and delivered an able address. Colonel Ingersoll sent a telegram. The secretary, Mr. Samuel P. Putnam, reported having delivered over three hundred lectures to some sixty thousand different people in all parts of the States. Judge C. B. Waite, author of the *History of the First Two Hundred Years of the Christian Religion*, spoke of "Liberalism in Europe," and argued that Freethought was advancing everywhere. The following nominations were proposed and accepted:—President, Samuel P. Putnam; Secretary, E. A. Stevens; Treasurer, Charles Eckhard; Chairman Executive Committee, E. B. Foote; Chairman Finance Committee, Edgar C. Beall. We were pleased to notice among the speakers were Mrs. Mattie A. Freeman, who lectured on "His Satanic Majesty," and Miss Voltairine de Cleyre, who spoke on Secular Education.

DARWIN'S *Life and Letters*, so long promised, will be published in a week or ten days. Meanwhile the *Pall Mall Gazette* has somehow got hold of advance sheets. Trusting to its account for the present, until we can give our readers a fuller idea of the contents of the volumes, we may say that Darwin's father wanted to make him a parson, and the future terror of the Churches actually went up to Cambridge at the age of twenty to qualify himself for a pulpit. Happily the parson idea came to grief, but it was not finally knocked on the head till Darwin had completed his ever-famous voyage in the "Beagle." Fancy Darwin preaching to a sleepy country congregation on the Atonement, or some other piece of Christian nonsense, and wasting the finest scientific intellect of this century in expounding dead dogmas!

JOSEPH COOK accounts for Matthew Arnold's scepticism by his deficient bump of veneration. Darwin, however, had a large bump, and one speaker at a German Psychological Society where the great naturalist's photograph was under discussion declared that "he had the bump of reverence developed strongly enough for ten priests!"

THE *P. M. G.* crows over the fact that "Darwin was not an Atheist." Well, Darwin certainly said as much, but he used the word Atheist in a sense which no professed Atheist attaches to the word. "Never," he wrote, "in my most extreme fluctuations was I an Atheist; I have never, that is, denied the existence of God." But no Atheist denies the existence of God; that is, of any God. When Darwin called himself an Agnostic he meant precisely what professed Atheists mean by their bolder appellation.

DARWIN allowed that "the theory of evolution is perfectly compatible with the belief in God," but he discreetly added that "the definition of what is meant by the name varies with the people who use it." Surely Theists need not boast over this concession; for it simply comes to this, that if you postulate a God compatible with evolution, evolution is compatible with belief in God.

LIKE John Stuart Mill, Darwin could not reconcile the facts of nature with the conception of an all-powerful, all-wise, and all-good God. Writing to a lady correspondent he thus expressed himself:—"It has always appeared to me more satisfactory to look upon the immense quantity of pain and suffering that exists in the world as the inevitable result of the natural course of facts—that is to say of general laws—rather than as the result of the direct intervention of God—although this theory is not logical, I know, when one supposes an omniscient Divinity." "I cannot persuade myself that a benevolent and omnipotent God has created ichneumonina [parasites that live at the expense of the caterpillars they destroy] of deliberate purpose, with the express will that they should live on the bodies of caterpillars, or mice that they should serve as the sport of cats."

THIS much then is clear. Darwin did not, and could not, believe in God in the ordinary sense of the word. Whatever intelligence might be behind nature was, in his opinion, not omniscient, and not perfectly benevolent, or else it was of limited power. That position is practically Atheism, call it by whatever other name you please.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY'S *Nineteenth Century* article on "Science and the Bishops" is lively reading. Orthodox preachers are severely lashed, but the worst castigation is meted out to the Duke of Argyll, who—poor man!—is always posing as a heaven-appointed monitor of erring scientists.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY warns "those who persist in identifying Christianity with the miraculous, that such forms of Christianity are not only doomed to fall to the ground, but that, during the last half century, they have been driving that way with continually accelerated velocity."

HERE is another Huxley morsel for the parsons to digest:—"I do not know of any body of scientific men who could be got to listen without the strongest expression of disgusted repudiation to the exposition of a pretended scientific discovery, which had no better evidence to show for itself than the story of the devil entering a herd of swine, or of the fig-tree that was blasted for bearing no figs, when 'it was not the season of figs.' Whether such events are possible or impossible, no man can say; but scientific ethics can and does declare that the profession of belief in them, on the evidence of documents of unknown date and unknown authorship, is immoral. Theological apologists who insist that morality will vanish if their dogmas are exploded, would do well to consider the fact that, in the matter of intellectual veracity, science is already a long way ahead of the Churches; and that, in this particular, it is exerting an educational influence on mankind of which the Churches have shown themselves utterly incapable." There, right reverend Fathers in God; put that in your pipes, and smoke it—if you can!

A PROPHETICAL CHAPTER EXAMINED.—III.

(ISAIAH LII.)

THE results of my analysis of this leading chapter of prophecy may be thus tabulated:—

| | No. of particulars. | Fulfilled. | Falsified. | Neutral. |
|-----------|---------------------|------------|------------|----------|
| 1st verse | 2 | — | — | 2 |
| 2nd " | 4 | — | 4 | — |
| 3rd " | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| 4th " | 2 | 2 | — | — |
| 5th " | 3 | 3 | — | — |
| 6th " | 3 | 1 | — | 2 |
| 7th " | 5 | 2 | 3 | — |
| 8th " | 4 | 3 | — | 1 |
| 9th " | 4 | — | 4 | — |
| 10th " | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 11th " | 4 | 3 | 1 | — |
| 12th " | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| | 48 | 22 | 18 | 8 |

Of the 48 particulars of this chapter of inspired prophecy it thus appears that only 22 at most are fulfilled, while 18 are actually falsified by the event, and 8 are of the doubtful or general kind which decide nothing except the want of clear, outspoken knowledge or insight on the part of the prophet. And this is the best that a fairly liberal criticism can make of the richest specimen of Messianic prophecy, notwithstanding that the truth of Christian doctrines and records is granted for argument's sake, and that Christians have had the great advantage of using their own favorable translation of a crude and poorly-known language, their own division into chapters (by which, for instance, they separate the objectionable marred visage, etc., of the Isaiah lii., 14, from its context in chap. liii.), their treatment of Hebrew poetry¹ as if it were English prose, and the obvious fact that the Jewish writers or compilers of the New Testament endeavor to assimilate and re-embody the ideas of the nation's prophets, and even invent fulfillments of prophecies which they misunderstood or which did not exist.

What would a merchant think if goods sent to him answered to the description in 22 particulars out of 48, and differed from the description in 18? What would a judge say of a witness who out of 48 statements uttered 22 truths and 18 falsehoods? Would he praise the witness for the wonderful proportion of truth in his evidence?

¹ One of the *Freethinker* compositors the other day set up some prose copy in blank verse. His explanation was that he could not make head or tail of it, so he thought it must be poetry. Judged by this standard, many of the rhapsodical fragments and inspired ravings of the Hebrew prophets are exceedingly poetical.

This is what the Christian judge does for *his* prophetic witness—a witness, too, who in most of the statements in question spoke in the past tense and did not profess to prophesy, and who was never understood by his own nation to be describing the expected Messiah even in those verses which are in the future tense. The Christian admires the divine inspiration which, in guessing at the history of the future, makes 18 palpable misses for 22 poor hits. Would he treat the *uninspired* historian of the present or the past in the same liberal fashion, and praise him for speaking 46 per cent. of truth mingled with 38 per cent. of falsehood and 16 per cent. of indifferent padding?

But I have a further analysis to make of the 22 clauses hitherto classed as fulfilled. Five of these are repetitions of the idea that the ideal person described is despised, 8 are variations of the idea that he suffered, 8 are re-duplications of the idea that he suffered through and for the transgressions of the people, and the remaining prediction is that he or God shall be satisfied. Substantially these are but three prophecies, for being despised and afflicted are cognate ideas that naturally and almost inevitably run together. The atonement and the satisfaction of God being purely Christian myths, without a particle of evidence in their favor, are valid only to those who already believe the Christian falsehoods which assert, in defiance of fact and reason, that those alleged prophecies are fulfilled. A merely pretended fulfilment like this is worthless; and until the Christians can prove the alleged fulfilment these prophecies must be classed by any impartial examiner as really unfulfilled. The only prophetic idea left is that of suffering. This ideal of a sufferer is, as I have already pointed out, not fairly fulfilled in the life of Jesus except during the last two days of his life. Isaiah, in the opinion of his countrymen, never intended these poetical descriptions of a suffering servant of God as prophecies of an afflicted Messiah. Nearly eight hundred years elapsed before some of the believers in the one true God discovered that, as their alleged Messiah was crucified, these passages must have been prophetic of his fate, because their tone in dealing with the sufferings of Israel resembles the tone which Christianity has to assume towards its martyred leader. The Christians select a chapter of poetry which contains, as they think, the greatest number of analogies or coincidences of sentiment, call it all a prophecy of Christ when it was nothing of the kind, and then say how wonderful it is that there are coincidences between the tone of this chapter and of Christian sentiment or doctrine! Such "proof" of Christ's Messiahship as this is absolutely worthless. The chapter could be shown to be equally a prophecy of Buddha, or Socrates, or Thomas Paine, or Bruno, or Cromwell, or Voltaire, or almost any other worker for humanity and progress.

From the 22 clauses temporarily classed as fulfilled according to Christian ideas, we see that the non-believer must at once deduct the 8 clauses which predict a vicarious atonement or redemption from sin, and the Freethinker must transfer them to the "falsified" column. He is bound to do this from the Freethought point of view, just as the Christian is bound to class them as fulfilled from his point of view. So that, in appealing to the Freethinker, the prophetic chapter can now only show a reduced list of 14 fulfilled clauses as against 26 falsified ones. And none of these fulfilled clauses are at all of a satisfactory or indisputable character, as we have seen in examining them. All but one are poetical repetitions of the idea of being despised and afflicted, and the one that differs in character is merely an insignificant prediction of satisfaction, which is only fulfilled by worthless Christian assertion. These descriptions of humiliation and shame were descriptions of Jacob, or Israel, in captivity in Babylon for his sins. It was the enslaved and exiled Israel that grew up as a tender plant in an arid land, and was despised and rejected of men. For it must not be forgotten that the latter half of the "Book of Isaiah," including of course the fifty-third chapter, was written by the "pseudo-Isaiah," who must have lived during the captivity or restoration, and who spoke of Cyrus by name (Is. xlv., 28; xlv., 1). The sufferings are thus not the sufferings of a Messiah, but those of an Israel who bears the punishment of his own iniquities, but who will "see his seed" and "prolong his days" and divide a portion with the strong, in the future, retrieving divine favor and national prosperity when purged of his sins by the lesson of adversity, and become God's righteous servant in good earnest once more.

As these descriptions of sufferings did not refer to the Messiah, and in fact were not prophecies at all, they too must be deducted from the list of fulfilled predictions of Christ. The Christian pretensions concerning this famous chapter thus collapse into utter nothingness. Investigation leaves no Messianic predictions, but only a number of particulars which happen to coincide with Christ's history in some respects, and conflict with it in others.

W. P. BALL.

GOD IS LOVE.

A hundred voyagers, ay or more,
Arc journeying to a distant shore,
Their fortunes to recall.
A wave o'erwhelms them in the dark,
Beneath the main is sunk their bark,
For God he loveth all.

At night is raised a cry most dire,
And women hear the alarm of "Fire!"
And men for help loud call.
Wild is the shriek of deadly fear,
As one by one they disappear,
And yet God loveth all.

The earth is rent, the houses rock,
Their walls give way beneath the shock,
And crumblingly they fall.
A thousand folks are thus entombed,
A city fair to ruin doomed,
For God he loveth all.

To ease the overwork'd brain,
A thousand men are in a train,
For Adrian's noted wall.
And shortly in the river lying,
Are the wreck'd train, the dead and dying;
And yet God loveth all.

Then list not to the priest that's glib,
Who tells to you this monstrous fib,
As broad as it is tall.
But be ye sure and bear in mind
That, throughout life, you'll ever find,
That God don't love at all.

DELTA.

RELIGION IN BRISTOL.

RELIGION does not seem to be making much progress in Bristol. The great mass of the population never attend any places of worship, and the streets are crowded with promenaders during the times of divine service. During the summer the splendid band that performs on the Durdham Downs every Sunday attracts audiences of about 40,000 persons. The concerts were established, in spite of the opposition offered by the ministers, who formed strong deputations to the Mayor and Town Council advocating their suppression.

The concerts are now discontinued for the season, but still the people do not attend the churches and chapels, and a philanthropic gentleman in Bristol, who has been struck with the crowded state of the streets on Sunday evenings, has engaged the large Colston Hall for all the Sunday nights in November, and will, at his own expense, provide organ recitals, singers, etc. The admission will be free, and it is a special feature that there will be "no preaching."

Many of the churches are very thinly attended, and the chapels fare still worse. St. Werbergh's Church, which has stood in the heart of the city for hundreds of years, has been lately pulled down, and a handsome pile of buildings have been erected on the site by the South Western Banking Company. One of the chapels in Castle Green has been used for some years as an old iron warehouse, and the Calvinistic chapel in Broadmead is now offered for sale. We take the following from the *Bristol Times and Mirror* of October 22:

"ANOTHER CHAPEL SOLD TO TRADE.—We are informed that Thriassell Street Baptist Chapel, off Stapleton Road, has been purchased by a local firm of brewers, and will hereafter be used as a cooperage in connection with their business. This is a dissenting version of the well-known election cry of 'The beer and the Bible.' But it is not, by any means, the only instance in which Baptist chapels have been desecrated in Bristol. The Pithay Chapel is now incorporated in Fry's Cocoa Factory. Counterslip Chapel forms part of the Sugar Refinery. King Street once boasted a chapel which is now part of a warehouse. And then there is the Bridge Street case, where the fact that a Baptist congregation met in a room over a wine merchant's office evoked the well-known lines:—

There's a spirit above and a spirit below;
A spirit of weal and a spirit of woe.
The spirit above is the Spirit Divine,
The spirit below is the spirit of wine.

Ultimately the stores absorbed the chapel, and the spirit of wine prevails now above stairs as well as below."

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIBLE READING AND FREETHOUGHT.
TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Moss seems to think that children who get dosed with the Jew-books at school are more likely to become Freethinkers than those who are withdrawn from the Bible lesson. I doubt if that is the general experience. Dissenters do not usually consider that sending their children to learn the Catechism is the best way to ensure their not joining the Church of England. "As the twig is bent so is the tree inclined." Mr. Moss supposes that the parents will take care to correct the superstitious notions implanted in the susceptible minds of their children, but this is often a difficult thing to do, and must bring about a most undesirable conflict of authority. Teacher says that Jesus Christ worked miracles. Father says he did nothing of the kind. Evidently one or the other must be wrong. I contend that teaching in schools supported by public rates to which all contribute should consist only of that which all are agreed on as beneficial for children to learn. Teachers are not qualified to give religious instruction: They are not chosen for that purpose, and their duties should be restricted to that which they are qualified to perform. In the public hours devoted to schooling there is no time to spare for religion. Every minute given to the old trash is taken away from something more important. Mr. Moss would do much better to advocate that children should have an hour's elementary physiology. He says he would even vote in favor of the Koran being read. But if the Koran, why not all the other sacred books? Children have no time to examine the pretensions of all religions, and why should they do so any more than devote their time to treatises on witchcraft, astrology, or any other exploded beliefs?

Mr. Moss thinks Bible teaching very innocuous; selected readings from the New Testament—often the parables of Jesus and so forth. This gives the child a misleading view of religion which he sees only at its best; though I should not like my child to be taught to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness as in the parable of the unjust steward, or to take the lowest seat in order to be called to the highest, or such fiendish malignity as appears in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. But the best of the Bible lessons are dogmatic in tone and do not appeal to reason. It is always "The Lord spake unto Moses"; "I am the way, the truth, and the life, etc." Even when right conduct is taught, it is never put on the right foundation of human well-being.

The hour's religious instruction in school is in the nature of a compromise. Let us not perpetuate it by refusing to avail ourselves of the conscience clause, but continue our protest against all State teaching of religion, and look forward to the time when the old book, if read at all, will only be read with Shakespeare, Milton, and Shelley as examples of English composition.—Yours truly,
CIVIS.

REVIEWS.

Fraser's Blyth and Tyneside Almanac. (1d.) A big pennyworth, full of verse and prose (as well as advertisements) of interest to the locality.

The Learner's Companion and Teacher's Helper. By J. GREEVZ FISHER, Kolumba Street, Leeds. Mr. Fisher contends for the utility of conducting all business correspondence in shorthand. His little work will be of service to any who are learning Pitman's system.

PROFANE JOKES.

ST PETER—"Come in, good and faithful servant." Newly Arrived Spirit—"Sarvant is it, ye say? It's lady's help I was, sir." "Oh! well, never mind; come in." "That's heaven, is it?" "This is heaven." "How many nights an' afternoons out will I have?"

Two honest farmers in riding along together encountered a large number of clergymen; and one of them said to the other. "Where be all those parsons coming from?" To this his friend replied, "They've been at a visitation." The other, no wiser than before, says, "What's a visitation?" and the answer he received was, "Why, it's where all the parsons goes once a year and swoops their sermons. His friend, on being thus enlightened, quietly remarked, "Dang it, but oor chap man get the worst on it every time."

A SMALL boy who possessed a liberal share of small sins chanced one day to be playing in front of the house, and overheard some street boys using slang expressions. He ran to his mother crying, "Mamma, mamma, what is a gone sucker?" Now mamma did not know in the least, but as her son had disobeyed her that very morning she took advantage of the opportunity to point a moral. "A gone sucker my son? Why, it means a naughty little boy who does not obey his mother." That night, as Johnny was saying his prayers, the full measure of his sin seemed to occur to him with awful significance, and stopping short in the usual petition, he cried out in the abandonment of his remorse, "O Lord, I'm a gone sucker!"

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.—A school-board teacher tells me that at the last examination the children of her class, aged ten and eleven, committed to memory the following passages of Scripture:—Proverbs viii. from first to twenty-first verse, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, 304 lines from the Psalms, twenty-four lines from the Paraphrases. Also from the thirtieth to the eighty-second question of the Shorter Catechism of the Church of Scotland. The whole of the Sermon on the Mount, which was repeated almost by heart; various extracts from Saint Matthew's Gospel. And to the end of the twelfth chapter of 2nd Samuel, as well as the whole of 1st Samuel, they prepared so as to be closely questioned upon it. This represents one single branch only of the examination these children of Standard V. undergo. Who can doubt that bodily enfeeblement is here the natural result?—J. H. Clapperton, *Scientific Meliorism*, p. 354.

A PARABLE RECONSIDERED.

If it was true in ancient times as it is to-day, that enough food is wasted by a wealthy family to keep two other families in provisions, Lazarus had no excuse for starving. He had a monopoly of the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, for anything that we know to the contrary. He has been pointed at as a man deserving the deepest pity, while the rich man, Dives, who allowed him to partake of what his surfeited family couldn't eat, has been held up to execration. Perhaps Lazarus, in his poverty and his rags, was less to be pitied than Dives, after all. Many rich men have more trouble than forty tramps. There are expensive establishments to maintain, fashionable wives and daughters to keep in rich clothes and finery, costly parties to give, and marriage portions to settle, no matter what may be the condition of the stock market. Was Lazarus compelled to bother himself about any of these affairs? Not at all. He didn't even have to dress for dinner. He could lie around in his old clothes, so easy and comfortable, until the big, formal dinner was over, and then pick over the choice things left at his leisure. They were the most delicate kind of crumbs that fell to his lot, all provided for him without costing an effort on his part. He had no wood to saw or water to bring—he refused to bring even a drop for Dives when he asked for it, the only request the rich man ever made of the pampered and ungrateful mendicant.—*Texas Siftings*.

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 "The work should be scattered like autumn leaves."—*Ironclad Age* (America).
 "Two keen writers."—*Truthseeker* (London).
 "If we are not mistaken, the first-named of these authors is the same gentleman who was imprisoned for blasphemy We may be excused from any detailed review of a work animated throughout by the bitterest hatred of Christianity."—*Literary World*.