

# THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.  
Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



ALL FOR JESUS.

“SIMPLY TO THY CROSS I CLING.”

*I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me.*—JOHN VII., 32.

## MR. GLADSTONE ON PROVIDENCE.

MR. GLADSTONE is an indefatigable contributor to magazines. His several volumes of *Gleanings* probably contain only the best of his essays and articles, written during thirty or forty years; and since that collection was closed he has written other articles on all sorts of subjects, classical, political, social and religious. Sometimes he has shown to advantage, as in the reply to Tennyson; while at other times he has cut a sorry figure, as in his duel with Huxley. But he is always the old man eloquent, the practised rhetorician, the master of sonorous periods. Style, in the best sense of the word, he has absolutely none; indeed it is doubtful if any admirer ever copied out a passage or a sentence from any page of his writings, as profound in thought and memorable in expression. Yet his manner is not unattractive; on the contrary, it has something of the fascination of his personality. We can well understand what Mr. Froude says, in his *Life of Carlyle*, of Mr. Gladstone's address as Lord Rector at Glasgow; it was a marvellous performance, though the next day you could not remember a word he said.

Always a rhetorician, Mr. Gladstone is likewise always intensely pious. Probably if he comes into office again he will have to rub shoulders with Mr. Bradlaugh, and we can

imagine the painful feelings he will experience in the contact. His defence of Genesis against Huxley showed not only a strong, but an almost laughable, belief in the plenary inspiration of Scripture. Nor does his latest article on “The Unity of History,” in the *North American Review*, exhibit any tincture of scepticism. Theologically Mr. Gladstone is an antediluvian. He thinks and writes on religion as he did fifty years ago; and although he talks of “development” and “evolution,” he does so without the least regard to the pregnant meaning of those words in the minds of scientists. Darwin and Herbert Spencer have made no impression on him. He does not appear to catch the slightest glimpse of the fact that religious problems and religious discussion have entirely changed during the past generation. He takes for granted what nine-tenths of the foremost clergymen have relinquished; he assumes as unquestioned points on which theology has been challenged by science for a quarter of a century, points that have been debated so long and so often that every decently-read man is supposed to be familiar with them. The fact is, Mr. Gladstone's mind still plays freely on political questions, but on religious questions his mind never did play freely. He wears now the theological outfit they provided him with at Oxford in his youth, and he has never contemplated the smallest change in its cutting or trimming. Half the new generation wear a different rig, but Mr. Gladstone prides himself on sticking to the good old style, although his theological coat-tails and big brass buttons put a severe tax on the gravity of many of his admirers.

Mr. Gladstone's article on “The Unity of History” is really an article on Providence in History. He tries to show how God has been shaping human society through the ages. But those ages are not very numerous in Mr. Gladstone's chronology. Being a pre-Darwinian he begins with Adam, and his theory is such as you may read in clerical productions of forty years ago, that now slumber on the top bookshelves of family libraries. Nay, not only does he start with Adam, but he stolidly sticks to the geocentric theory of the universe in spiritual affairs; indeed, one may describe his theory as homocentric. “The plan of the world,” he declares, “material and moral, seen and unseen, is adjusted and subordinated to man and to the fulfilment of his destinies.” He thinks that man's doings are profitably studied by the angels, and doubts whether “creative power can go beyond” what it exhibits in the highest specimens of our race. What a capital illustration of the colossal pride there is in religious humility!

All the mighty antique civilisations—Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Egypt—are omitted from Mr. Gladstone's review; nor are the multitudinous adherents of Brahminism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Mohammedanism, so much as glanced at. Mr. Gladstone is a man, therefore man is the centre of the universe; Mr. Gladstone is a Christian, therefore Christianity is the central fact of history. With a fine generosity, which the four-fifths of mankind outside the pale of Christianity will doubtless appreciate at its proper value, he admits that “these great outlying tracts of human life” were not absolutely “excluded from the care of the Almighty Father.” But the virtues they may have produced may be left for “final elucidation from the All-just and All-wise.” Now we do not wish to be uncivil, but we must ask whether Mr. Gladstone is ignorant that the “religions less favored than our own” have been profoundly studied, and that any student may form a just opinion of their merits and demerits, without waiting for the Day of Judgment?

The Olympian religion is put aside as a transitory phenomenon, lasting only “fifteen centuries.” One would fancy that Christianity had flourished for a million years,



to hear Mr. Gladstone speak thus; whereas not sixteen centuries have elapsed since its establishment under Constantine, and now it is declining far more rapidly than it arose.

Mr. Gladstone is too ardent a lover of the immortal literature of Greece to listen to the uncritical eulogists of the Jewish Scriptures. To his mind the Hebrew literature is "absolutely incommensurable with the literature of other lands." Yet he regards the Jewish writers as the spiritual centre of humanity before the Christian era. But as the Jewish language, in which God spoke through Moses and the prophets, was a very imperfect one, how providential it was that the Greek language was fashioned for the propagation of Christianity and the elaboration of its subtle dogmas! "I suppose," says Mr. Gladstone, "it to be a question still open among the learned whether, and in what degree, the Savior himself employed it in his ministry." I suppose! Yes, Mr. Gladstone, you *do* suppose. Cicero's speech in *Julius Caesar* was Greek to Casca, and in the same way Jesus Christ's speech was often Greek to his gaping auditors; but although Peter might have said like Casca "it was Greek to me," Jesus Christ certainly preached in the mongrel Syriac dialect of his age and country.

Obviously Mr. Gladstone has no real conception of the evolution of mankind, nor even of the evolution of Christianity. He disregards the fact that Egyptian and Grecian theosophy, as well as other heathen elements, entered largely into the production of the Christian system. Whether there be a God or not, Mr. Gladstone's notions of Providence are essentially as narrow as those of the Methodist preacher or the itinerant Revivalist. G. W. FOOTE.

#### A JEW ON CHRISTIANITY.

WORKS against Christianity written by Jews are rare. Compared with the vast literature designed to convert God's chosen people to belief in his second revelation, they are extremely few in number, and those few circulate almost exclusively among the Jews themselves. Christian persecution seems to have made the Jew cowardly. Content to abide in his ancestral faith, he usually cares little to carry the war into the enemy's camp and accords no support to the Freethinker who does.<sup>1</sup>

One of the ablest Jewish works against Christianity is the *חֹזֶק אֱמוּנָה*—*Chissuk Emunah*, or Shield of Faith.

It was written in 1593 by Rabbi Isaac ben Abraham, of Troki, in Lithuania, and was first made known to the Christian world by a Latin translation, published by Wagen-seil, together with the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* and other Jewish tracts, in 1681. Despite the age of this shield of the Jewish faith, it is a solid construction, showing plain but painstaking and honest workmanship. A translation into English was made by Moses Mocatta in 1851, and the title-page bears the imprint: "Printed but not published." No doubt this was to prevent a Christian outcry at the Jews daring to publish a refutation of Christianity while enjoying the privilege of dwelling in a Christian land. Legally the book was published, since it was printed and put into circulation.

The work is divided into two parts. The first part, consisting of fifty chapters, is devoted to showing that the Old Testament prophecies do not bear the constructions put upon them by Christians. The second part, in one hundred brief chapters, exposes the misquotations, discrepancies, contradictions, and absurdities of the New Testament. It is with the first portion only that I shall be able to deal within the limits of this article.

Rabbi Isaac begins by stating his reasons for rejecting Jesus as the Christ. That he was not the Messiah is evident: first, from his pedigree; secondly, from his acts; thirdly, from the period in which he lived; and fourthly, from the fact that, during his existence, the promises were not fulfilled which are to be realised on the advent of the expected Messiah, whereas the fulfilment of the conditions alone can warrant a belief in the identity of the Messiah.

First as to his pedigree. Jesus was not a descendant of David, being merely affiliated to him through Joseph, who, according to the Gospel, was no real relation. Even the relationship of Joseph to David is wanting in proof, for the discrepancies between the genealogies given in Matthew and Luke show they are untrustworthy. Then as to his

acts. Jesus declared "Think not I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother," etc. (Matt. x., 34-36); whereas Zechariah (ix., 10) says of the true Messiah, "He shall speak peace to the nations," and Malachi declares that the hearts of the fathers shall be turned to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers. As to the period in which Jesus came, Rabbi Isaac argues that the Messiah was to come in the latter days, immediately before the restoration of the Jews; whereas Jesus came shortly before the destruction of the Holy City and their dispersion. As a Messiah Jesus was not a success. The Jews expected one who should redeem them from their oppressors, instead of which, they were not redeemed but led into worse tribulation. Among promises which were to be fulfilled at the coming of Messiah the author mentions the ingathering of the Ten Tribes (Ezek. xxxvii., 16) the Gentiles to be converted to Judaism (Zech. viii., 23), idolatry to be destroyed (Is. ii. 18; Zech. xiii., 2; Zeph. ii., 11); but one religion (Is. lii., 1; Zech. xiv., 6) and one kingdom (Dan. ii., 44). The Sabbaths and new moons will be celebrated by the Gentiles (Is. lxvi., 23), who will make an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem to bow before the Lord of Hosts (Zech. xiv., 17). The Shechinah will return, all sin will vanish, and there will be peace between nations, and even between animals. Some of these prophecies Christians refer to the second coming of Christ, but Rabbi Isaac challenges Christians to show from the Old Testament the slightest hint that the Messiah was to make more than one appearance.

Rabbi Isaac then deals with the prophecies adduced by Christians. We summarise his answers as briefly as possible. Gen. xlix. 10.—The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come. But Judah lost the sovereignty at the captivity of Zedekiah 430 B.C. How then can it apply to Jesus? Is. vii. 14.—The sign of a *young woman*

being with child. The word *עַלְמָה* does not mean a *virgin* but merely *young woman*. It refers to the wife of Isaiah who was still youthful. The sign was to Ahaz who was in consternation at the threatened siege of Jerusalem. At the period when the prophet spoke, his young wife became pregnant and bore a son, who was first called Emanuel and afterwards Maher-shalal-hash-baz. Is. ix. 6.—Unto us a child is born, etc., refers to Hezekiah. Is. liii.—The servant of Jehovah is the personified people of Israel. Rabbi Isaac expounds this chapter very fully, but as it has recently been treated by Mr. Ball I will pass it over. Jeremiah xxxi. 15.—Rachel weeping for her children. If this was a prophecy of the slaughter of children at Bethlehem, it should have been Leah, since they were descended from her. Moreover the promise is given that the children should return. The prophet alludes to the ten tribes comprised under the designation Ephraim, descended from Rachel, who is therefore described as weeping for her children who were banished from their country by the king of Assyria.

Other passages are expounded, and the author concludes his first part by pointing out that although Jesus declared that he had not come to destroy the law, his followers had destroyed and added dogmas, such as that of the Trinity and the worship of images, while omitting acts enjoined by Jesus himself. Among these he specifies the non-adoption by Christians of the precept to sell their property and give the proceeds to the poor. Nor do they practise the admonition to love their enemies. They have moreover, without authority, abolished the law, repeated in the New Testament (Acts xv., 29, and xxi., 25), that they should abstain from blood and the flesh of things strangled. "If," he declares, "Christians thus evade well-defined doctrines of the New Testament they cannot cast any reproach on the Jew, who, from conscientious motives, refuses adherence to the new doctrines of the Christian religion."

J. M. WHEELER.

PAUL'S supposed epistle to the Galatians is written in Greek yet it is remarkable (Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Galatians") that "we have the testimony of Hieronymus, who visited Galatia in the fourth century of our era, in his preface to his commentary on the epistle to the Galatians, that the Galli still kept their own language, which was almost the same as the language of the Treviri, or the people of Treves; and Hieronymus, who was a good linguist, and had lived at Treves, was a competent judge of this." Possibly the epistle was addressed to a small colony of Jews dwelling in Galatia.

<sup>1</sup> The Jewish papers refused to notice the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* or *Jewish Life of Christ* when sent to them for review.



## ACID DROPS.

"Y.M.C.A. INTOLERANCE" is the heading of a short article in the *Christian Commonwealth*. The Young Men's Christian Association of Camden Town have expelled a young man of unexceptionable character on the ground that his doctrinal opinions are not in harmony with their own. He is a member of the Church of Christ, Hampstead Road. The *Christian Commonwealth* regrets also to have to say that the officials of the Camden Town Y.M.C.A. lose no opportunity of showing their animosity towards the church in question. One of the opinions of the Y.M.C.A. to which they require adherence is "the essential unity of all believers." They show their own belief in their own professions by expelling a believer who belongs to the "Church of Christ." Are they hypocrites or fools, or both?

The *Christian Commonwealth* also speaks of the opposition to Miss Finkelstein at Exeter Hall as "one of the meanest persecutions of modern times." Yet Christians try to persuade outsiders that the inner life of Christian bodies is all humanity and peace and justice; and the C. C. is always talking about Christian unity.

At the inquest on the Rev. J. M. Lowther, at Bolton-gate Rectory, near Wigton, Cumberland, the jury returned a verdict of suicide during temporary insanity. Deceased had shot himself after bidding farewell to his "little church" and invoking God's curses on certain families in the neighborhood.

At the Coroner's Court, High Street, Borough, the Peculiar People were censured for not calling in medical aid to an aged woman named Fanny Adlem, who died of apoplexy. The Coroner said they had neglected to make use of the means God had given for the relief of sick people, and it was a most iniquitous thing to refuse to obtain medical aid. But as they obeyed God's instructions as given in the Bible, it was the Coroner who was inconsistent in dragging God's name into the question. The Peculiar People act as they do because they prefer to obey God rather than man, and God's Word fully warrants them in doing so. It was God and his Bible that the Coroner and his jury should have condemned.

EIGHT hundred acres of arable land in the Isle of Sheppey have just been rented at 1s. 2d. per acre. The tithe on the land amounts to 12s. an acre. Surely this tithe would bear reduction, if not total abolition.

A SWINDLER, who passed under the pseudonyms of "Lord Courtenay," "Sir Henry Vane Tempest," etc., has been victimising society right and left for the past ten or twelve years. He was very religious and used to give away portraits of himself with the following verse at the back:—

The Bible is my engineer,  
It points the road to heaven,  
If you'll repent and turn from sin,  
The train will surely take you in.

Yes the Bible will "take you in" as surely as the swindler "took in" his credulous dupes.

THE Rev. Peter Higginson Whyte-Melville, who was recently shot at by the father of a girl whom he had seduced, is a pretty specimen of the cloth. Mrs. Whyte-Melville has applied for a restoration of all securities he has obtained from her, and asks that the deed of settlement may be cancelled on the ground of his having committed bigamy in marrying her. On their marriage the reverend bigamist received £20,000 of her money for his absolute use. She commenced these proceedings against him last September, but abandoned them in consequence of promises of reform. At that very time he was carrying on an intimacy with his wife's friend and companion, Miss Dunne. He has now disappeared, but an interim receiver of the property has been appointed, and an injunction granted restraining him from parting with it.

In the South Tyrol a terrible panic took place in a church during the evening service, owing to a woman fainting. Five persons were crushed to death immediately. Three died during the night, and many are badly injured. How is it that piety doesn't give people a little more courage and presence of mind? The probability is, that it greatly weakens self-reliance and fosters feelings of terror-stricken selfishness by its awful dogmas.

ELIZABETH MARGESON, of Moscow Road, Bayswater, committed suicide under the delusion that she had "sinned beyond forgiveness." She was a churchwoman and "well educated."

The tithe war in North Wales is presenting some fresh features. The Clergy Defence Association is beginning to fight the landlords as well as the tenants. Where bailiffs can seize nothing else they seize the land itself, and are instructed to hold it till the tithes are paid. The distraining force includes fifty hussars, forty policemen, and nearly a score of emergency men. The expenses have been enormous, and only £300 or £400 has been collected.

JESSE SHEPHERD, formerly spiritist medium has given up his profession, which he says doesn't pay as it did in 1870. There have been so many exposures since that time that even believing audiences are more exacting as to the conditions under which séances shall be conducted. The conjurers Maskelyne and Cooke are however as successful as ever.

THE *Record* has been making inquiries as to the condition of religion south of the Thames, and comes to the conclusion that "Christianity is not in possession of South London," where there is a population of 800,000. In every part of that district the people are declared to be stolidly indifferent to religion. The answer of a working man to a clerical inquirer is said to reflect the general feeling, "To tell you the truth, I don't care two-pence about it."

THE *Record* and the Rev. F. G. Lee have been giving each other the lie in reference to the attendance and work done in the parish of All Saints, Lambeth.

THE *Christian World* believes this is the only world that is inhabited—the only one turned out finished, and on which God Almighty consented to come and die. This quite fits in with the notion that the sun and moon were formed as lights for this earth, and the countless star-suns thrown in just to make the night skies look pretty. When Jesus Christ pays his promised but long-deferred second visit to this only inhabited world, no doubt he'll make straight for the office of the *Christian World*, that being the centre of all Christian modesty.

THE revivalist negro is strong in Biblical history. For lovely anachronism, the following verse from a genuine camp-meeting melody, quoted from the *American Art Journal*, fairly takes the cake:

"In de days ob de great tribulashun,  
On a big desert island de Phillistines put John,  
But de ravens dey feed him till de dawn come roun',  
Deu he gib a big jump and flew up from de groun',  
O come down, come down, John."

It should be added that the John referred to is not the crack-brain of Patmos, but Johnny the Ducker, otherwise St. John the Baptist.

THE late Mr. Turpin, of the defunct Bible Defence Association, is said to have gone about with a brick from Babylon, as indubitable testimony of the story of the Tower of Babel. Very similar are the confirmations of Holy Writ which satisfy the Bible worshippers. Whenever a place or name is mentioned in any ancient inscription which is also found in the Bible, the orthodox hold up their hands in astonishment at this wonderful testimony to the truth of the divine record. The Rev. Alexander Jeffreys, of Ipswich, who has been lecturing at Brighton on the Bible and Modern Research, finds the very stones crying out that the old book is true because it appears there was such a place as Pithon in Egypt. This, however, is capped by the wonderful corroboration of the Plagues of Egypt found in the discovery of the mummy of Rameses II., who, according to Exod. xv., 19, and Ps. cxxxvi., 15, ought to have been drowned in the Red Sea.

THE Rev. Silas Hocking declares it is shocking a minister's name to condemn, for it ought to be noted that none so devoted are found in the country as them. No doubt, Mr. Hocking, it is very shocking to despise a good man like yourself; but we have a notion most parsons' devotion is paid just to power and pelf.

A NATURAL instinct seems to make rogues take shelter under the cloak of religion. At Redhill a tract deliverer named Edward Carrott has had a month's imprisonment for indecently assaulting a girl nine years of age; and at Portsmouth, Albert Roy Wentworth, an attendant at the Gospel tent on Southsea Common, has received a similar sentence for embezzlement.

A NEW journal entitled *Young Men* seems mainly devoted to football and opposition to Freethought. The first number has an article on Agnosticism, by the Rev. T. T. Waterman of the C. E. S., an apocryphal story entitled, "How Mr. J. Symes was Silenced," and "The Difficulty of Unbelief," by the Rev. E. Hoskyns. The latter is noticeable for its impudence. It says, "we may even welcome evolution as preparing the mind of man to expect exactly what we have taught for hundreds of years." The fall of man and the making of woman from his rib for instance.

HERE is a new way of raising the wind. A congregational church in the county of Durham got up an entertainment, and the leading feature was this. Two young men undertook to eat a two-pound loaf each; if they failed they were to be fined, and if they succeeded they were to kiss any lady they liked present. They succeeded, and had bread and kisses too. But, alas, the whole proceeds of the entertainment only amounted to seven shillings and sixpence. Jesus Christ will have to work a miracle for that church.

ACCORDING to a letter in the *Times* from Major-General Nassau Lees, late Principal of Calcutta Mohammedan College, the Rev



Canon McColl has been grossly slandering that institution, accusing it of harboring "horrible crimes against nature, which Christianity has extirpated from Europe." In giving the lie to Canon McColl and his authority, Dr. Hunter, Major General Lees also says, in reference to this assertion, "he must have been well aware that Christianity has not done anything of the kind."

THE Shrewsbury School Board has a number of sky-pilots among its members, and they seem to do pretty much as they please in regard to the "examination in religious knowledge." Among the questions put to the children was, "What types of our Lord are to be found in Genesis?" If the children had been well up in patristic theology they could have given some astonishing answers to this question, since, according to the Christian fathers, Jacob and his wives, and Lot and his daughters were all types of Christ. The Rev. E. Myers had the sense to object to such absurd questions, but he was met by Major General Humbert, who showed his profound acquaintance with the Apostles' Creed by asking, "What was the use of learning the words 'quicken the dead' unless the word 'quicken' was explained." "Quicken the dead," for "quick and the dead" is good.

GOD has sent a terrible snow-storm, or "blizzard," as they call it over there, across Dakota and other parts of the United States. Over two hundred persons have been frozen to death. Many of the victims were little children returning from school. This is how the Almighty Friend shows his constant love and care for the little ones.

THERE is hope for the Crown Prince of Germany yet. Some pilgrims to Lourdes have sent him a bottle of miraculous water, with the assurance that it will infallibly cure him if, when using it, he prays to our Lady of the shrine. The pious donors do not say whether the supernatural medicine is to be used as a gargle or an emollient.

THE latest reports state that the Crown Prince has declined to test the efficacy of the holy water, but rather than waste it he has presented it to the lady superior of the Convent of San Remo, for distribution among her invalid nuns. We wonder what the nuns think of it? Has it cured Sister Catherine's vapors, Sister Margaret's bunions, Sister Theresa's asthma, or Sister Mary's fits? We pause for a reply.

MORE Christian charity! Daniel Kahle, of Metamora, Ohio, died last October. He was an energetic and enthusiastic Freethinker, and by industry and frugality he gathered together a few thousand dollars. His will made provision for his sister, and the residue was to equip a secular and scientific free library at Metamora, the books to be selected by "The *Truthseeker* Company." But as the family did not want the library and did not want the dollars, they accused the deceased of being crazy; and although not a shadow of evidence was adduced in support of the charge, Judge L. W. Brown (of course a Christian) found that the testator was not of "sound mind and memory." Fortunately the editor of the *Truthseeker* has taken the case up; an appeal has been granted against Judge Brown's decision, the case will be tried next March, and Mr. Macdonald feels sure of winning.

THE Church people of Netley, in Hampshire, have a strong objection to the corduroys of reformatory boys in church. They got up a petition against allowing these boys to enter the church, and the churchwarden, Captain Timson, expelled a boy who was sent to test the case. Mr. Justice Stephen has decided that the churchwarden had no power whatever to prevent the boy entering for the purpose of attending divine worship. So the respectable Christians who care so little for the souls of boys in corduroys, will have to put up with the indignity of their company in church, just as they will in heaven. Mr. Justice Stephen only gave the nominal damages of 1s., but as he is a thorough Agnostic, the *Daily News* says it would have been interesting to know at what figure he estimated the privilege of going to church. The "miserable sinners" of Netley Church ought to subscribe their churchwarden's heavy costs in defending their right to go to heaven in select company.

THE soul-saving business seems to pay in the United States as well as over here. From one of our American Exchanges we learn that the Rev. M. Pearson, an evangelist, received 800 dollars and free board for himself and wife for two weeks' service at a place called Charlotte; 560 dollars and free board for two weeks at Salesbury; 1000 dollars and free board for three weeks at Raleigh; and 225 dollars for one week at Concord. This is over 325 dollars a week, besides hotel expenses; or, in English money, about £8 12s. a day.

CANON DOYLE maintains that boycotting has biblical sanction. "What," says the canon, "does St. Paul say (1st Corinthians, 5th chapter, 11th verse)? 'But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.' Verse 13: 'Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.'" The beloved disciple John went further, and declared

in his second epistle: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." The Christian Church, by its practice of excommunication, proved itself the most terrific boycotter the world has ever known. While its power lasted no independent thinker could live in safety unless he got away and dwelt among the Mohammedans.

AT a discussion upon Maimonides and Islam, held at the Jews' College Literary Society, it was generally agreed that the condition of the Jews under the Mohammedans was far superior to that under the Christians.

WHEN a dean writes on "The Age of the Pentateuch," the most important things to notice are his admissions. Those of the Dean of Peterborough in the current number of the *Contemporary Review* are very considerable. He admits that the book of Joshua must be taken as part of the Hexateuch, which is a composite document of various ages. He allows that in its present form it is much later than the times of Moses and Joshua. Of this such notices as "The Canaanite was then in the land," and "there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses" are indications. Dean Perowne's contention that the priestly laws must have had a Mosaic basis is greatly founded on the fact that the priests must have been awfully unscrupulous if they ascribed to Moses laws which were only in existence many hundreds of years after his death.

AT the Westminster police-court the Rev. George B. Butterfield, who wore an old shabby cassock, was charged with being drunk and begging. A number of begging letters were found on him. It appears that he has ill-treated his wife, who is now reduced to obtaining a living for herself and the children by charging. The reverend drunkard was remanded to the House of Detention for a week.

A PARAGRAPH going the rounds declares that Mr. J. L. Sullivan, the prize-fighter, prior to leaving America, "assisted" a church fund by giving an exhibition.

THOSE who think superstition almost extinct in this Christian country should read the recent correspondence in the *Daily Telegraph* on "Luck," and consider the exhibition of terror during the fog at Birmingham last week in consequence of the prediction of an astrologer. Women kept their beds, and would not let their children attend school; many ignorant persons met to pray; females of the class commonly seen in gin-shops bought Bibles; and members of the Salvation Army held forth on the divine wrath immediately impending. The case with which mankind falls back into the crudest superstitions is a strong sign of our evolution from savagery.

IN Mr. Froude's new book, *The English in the West Indies*, he says of the negroes of the Antilles, "They steal, but if detected fall back upon the Lord. It was de will of de Lord that they should do this or that. The Lord forbid that they should go against his holy pleasure." This is the fashion of all who speak in the name of the Lord. They make him countenance their own desires, though not always with the naiveté of the West Indian negroes.

AT the Sheffield County Court, Judge Ellison was asked to commit to prison the Rev. Samuel Parkes, vicar of Stammerington, for non-payment of debts, but his honor was not satisfied that this clergyman was able to pay, although he receives £135 per year and has no rent to pay.

THE Bishop of London, with £10,000 a year, needs assistance. Instead of paying for it out of his enormous stipend, he billets the Suffragan Bishop of Bedford on St. Andrew's and the new Bishop of Guildford on St. Michael's, Cornhill. The *Church Times* sees nothing wrong in this, but hopes two or three more of the richer City livings will be dealt with in the same way.

THE *Brooklyn Eagle* sent an inquirer on the track of Dr. Parker to the Hotel St. George during his recent visit to New York. It gives many curious and uncomplimentary details of the doctor's habits and character. It says: "There are twenty-six waiters in the hotel, and they all had a try at pleasing the doctor. Twenty-five of them thanked heaven day and night that he would have no more of them. Parker took five meals per day—breakfast at 9 o'clock, lunch at 12, dinner at 5, tea at 8, and supper at 11. Parker used up an hour in the discussion of each meal, and his spare time was used in the consideration of the preparation of his meals. Parker says: 'We should worship while we eat.' One evening at five o'clock Mrs. Beecher made a call and sent up her card. The reply that came down was, 'Dr. Parker cannot possibly see Mrs. Beecher until 7 o'clock as he is engaged in private prayer.' Mrs. Beecher gathered her skirts about her, and shook the dust of the place off her feet. She had happened to interrupt Parker's dinner." The *Brooklyn Eagle* gives the bill of fare of one of Parker's suppers. It begins with green turtle soup for two and ends with ice cream, and would about suffice for a good-sized family.



## MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, January 22, Oddfellows' Hall, Thornton Road, Bradford: at 11, "Is Christianity True?"; at 3, "Darwin on God"; at 7, "An Hour in Hell."

JAN. 29, Blackburn.  
FEB. 5, Camberwell; 12, Milton Hall, London; 19, Liverpool; 26, Rochdale.  
MARCH 4 & 11, Hall of Science, London; 25, Milton Hall, London.  
APRIL 1, Manchester.

## 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.—A.

- J. J. STORY.—Glad to hear the information suffices.  
F. FIGG.—Thanks. Always glad to receive papers and cuttings.  
J. P. CHACE.—Christian fanatics always disregard their own fetish-book except when it suits their purpose.  
PATERFAMILIAS.—Yes. The disgusting chapter, Genesis xix., is appointed to be read in church on Jan. 11, and on the first Sunday in Lent. Genesis xxxviii. is to be read on Jan. 20.  
W. J. COX.—According to Luke ii. Jesus was twelve years of age when he said "wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business." The saying "Woman what have I to do with thee," was at the wedding feast, presumably at the beginning of his ministry, but John who reports it, gives no indication of his age. Thanks for cuttings.  
G. W.—Thanks for the profane jokes from *Rare Bits*, but both have already appeared in the *Freethinker*.  
W. VENN.—It is gratifying to hear that Freethought has come up for discussion in your club. We always thought there was very little religion among the Radical clubs of London.  
A. SAULT.—Thanks, but we had seen it before. We do not intend to give him an advertisement.  
W. MALINS.—Sent. Shall appear.  
G. NAEWIGER, 5 Hull Place, Osborne Street, Hull, will be glad to receive any Freethought literature for distribution.  
A. BUTTERWORTH.—Jokes and cuttings are always welcome.  
G. DIXON (Liverpool).—We have not time to comply with your wish. Get *Bible Contradictions, Absurdities, and Atrocities, and Crimes of Christianity*, and you will be able to put the parson any number of awkward questions.  
W. ROGERS.—The free-will question is dealt with in Mr. Foote's Debate with Dr. McCann; also in Mr. Bradlaugh's debate with the same gentleman.  
A. B. C.—We know nothing of the book you mention. Any biography of Thomas Paine in an orthodox "Miscellany," published so far back as 1837, is sure to be a tissue of falsehood and innuendo. You will find the real facts of Paine's career in Linton's *Life of Thomas Paine*, which we think is still in print.  
W. T. LEEKEY.—Thanks for your diverting account of the C. E. S. lecture at Holloway, which proved such a *fiasco*. No doubt, as you say, the lecturer should study *Bible Heroes*.  
R. PHILLIPS.—We always understood Cornwall to be an exceedingly pious county, and if, as you inform us, Freethought is in its infancy there, we regard the fact as anything but dispiriting. It is something for Freethought even to be born in such a hotbed of superstition and bigotry.  
A. JACKSON.—Not at all bad, but we have rather too much copy on hand at present.  
C. M.—We do not know of any agent in Dublin who supplies Freethought literature.  
OLD SUBSCRIBER.—Please to hear that the *Freethinker* is getting well known in the neighborhood of Swindon. We reciprocate your good wishes.  
T. MAY.—John Hampden is what the Yankees call a crank. When you offered to bet him £200 that you would prove he was as wrong in religion as in astronomy, you touched him on a raw place. He lost a bet of \$500 many years ago, having been flat enough to stake that sum in a bet that the earth was flat. You may get some amusement out of a correspondence with him, but little edification.  
R. FIELD.—Mr. Wheeler's *Dictionary of Freethinkers* will meet your requirements, and no other book will. It will include over a thousand names of ancient and modern times, with a brief biography of each, giving the chief ascertainable facts of his life and a list of his Freethought writings.  
INQUIRER.—We have no room at present to treat political and social questions in this journal, but if we ever see our way to enlarge we shall then have space for a greater variety of matter.  
W. C. SAVILLE.—Shall appear.
- PAPERS RECEIVED.—St. Mary's Edmonton Parish Magazine—Jus—Great Thoughts—West Sussex Gazette—Hampshire Independent—Young Men—Bailey's Sunday News—Brighton Argus—Liberty—Ironclad Age—Western Figaro—Boston Investigator—Lucifer—Truthseeker—Freidenker—Menschentum—Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Scientific News—Radical—L'Ecole du Peuple—Le Journal du Peuple—L'Union des Libres-Penseurs—Sheffield Evening Star—Shropshire Evening News—Weekly Dispatch.
- 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 Secular Federation held its first meeting at the Hall of Science on Thursday evening, January 12. The following 12 Branches sent 23 delegates:—Ball's Pond, Bethnal Green, Camberwell, Central London, East London, Finsbury, Hyde Park, N. W. London, Peckham, Paddington, West Ham and Westminster. The following Branches were not represented, though it is hoped they will send delegates to the next meeting:—Battersea, Deptford, N. Lambeth, N. London, and West Central. The Hackney Branch is in process of amalgamation with Ball's Pond. The new Branch at Hornsey was overlooked, but its co-operation has since been invited.

MR. FOOTE was unanimously elected President for 1888, Mr. R. O. Smith treasurer and Mr. G. Standing secretary. The Council then settled down to work. Various plans were discussed in a business-like spirit. Messrs. Foote, Standing and Smith were authorised to appeal in the Secular papers for funds. A committee was appointed to report on the subject of social parties in London in connection with the Federation. It was also decided that a common monthly programme of lectures should be printed for all the affiliated Branches, each taking as many as it felt able to distribute judiciously; the February programme to be printed to the number of 20,000, and every Branch to send in its list by January 22. The Secretary was also directed to write officially to the Christian Evidence Society, and inquire whether arrangements would be made for a representative of the Federation to speak after each of the annual course of lectures at the Hall of Science. After transacting minor business the Council adjourned till Thursday, February 2.

WE earnestly appeal to Freethinkers to assist the Federation financially. The Branches are chiefly composed of the poorer and hard-working members of our party; they are willing to fight for the cause, but the wealthier members must furnish the sinews of war. Never was there so grand an opportunity for promoting Freethought in the metropolis, and indirectly through the country; and we trust the appeal for funds will meet with a prompt and generous response. Furnished with proper means, the Federation will carry Freethought actively into every part of London. Mr. Foote starts the list with a guinea, and the Camberwell Branch subscribes the same amount. Surely this is enough to *encourager les autres*.

MR. FOOTE lectures at Bradford to-day (Jan. 22) for the first time on a Sunday since his imprisonment. The subjects chosen are attractive, and it is hoped that the local Freethinkers will do their best to bring their orthodox friends to the Oddfellows' Hall.

COLONEL INGERSOLL'S second letter to the Rev. Dr. Field is, if possible, better than the first. It is now on sale at our publishing office. Freethinkers will enjoy its perusal, and they will do a great deal of good if they pass it on to their more orthodox friends.

THE Rev. Dr. Field is a lucky man. What he could never achieve has been achieved for him. Ingersoll has immortalised him by this friendly discussion. The *North American Review* containing Ingersoll's first letter went through seven editions, but it is not reported that either of Dr. Field's letters had any appreciable effect on the circulation of the magazine.

THE editor of the *New York Truthseeker* has been interviewing Colonel Ingersoll on a variety of burning questions, including the comparative merits of the stage and the pulpit. We expect a full report in the next number we receive, and whatever is interesting on this side of the Atlantic shall be introduced to our readers.

WE also learn from the *Truthseeker* that Ingersoll's great speech in defence of Mr. C. B. Reynolds, who was indicted for "blasphemy," is now in the press. It will make about a hundred pages of (probably large) type. The publishers anticipate a great sale.

THE Christian libel, started by a drunken parson, on the Freethought city of Liberal, in the United States, seems to have died a natural death. Our latest information shows that the Freethought University at that godless city is a great success. It is under the management of Prof. M. D. Leahy, and seems to be quite self-sustaining. Two years ago it started with thirteen students, and the number is now fifty.

THE Second Series of *Bible Heroes* will not begin being published until February 1, when two numbers will be ready. After that two numbers will be issued every fortnight until the work is complete. The fourth and last part of the Bible Handbook is nearly ready. The third, revised and enlarged, edition of *Royal Paupers* will be ready next week.

ENGLISH champions of Christianity tell us that *only a few* clergymen in America opposed the abolition of slavery. But



the Americans tell a different tale. This is how C. K. Whipple writes in the *North American Review*: "I am sorry to see such a misleading under-statement of fact by Dr. Clarke as that a part of the churches refused to sympathise with the anti-slavery movement. Nineteen-twentieths of all the churches and of all the clergy not only refused to sympathise, but threw the weight of their influence more or less actively against the movements for the abolition of war and of slavery. Instructed by these demonstrations, later seekers for reform saw the uselessness of looking to the Church for help."

DESPITE the efforts of a bigoted Government, Sunday is gradually becoming a day of recreation and enjoyment at the Antipodes. *Bailey's Sunday News* (Sydney) advertises no less than five Sunday concerts at the various theatres, music halls, and pleasure grounds in that city.

THE *L'Union des Libres-Penseurs*, the official journal of the French Anticlerical Federation, comes to us with a new title page. The title contains a portrait of the editor, M. Hippolyte Miahle, in the hands of a devil, and at the side are medallions of Voltaire, Diderot, Victor Hugo and Gambetta. A partial list is given of the anticlerical groups who, we are glad to see, are organising for common action.

THE following suggestive passage occurs in Vernon Lee's paper on "The Value of the Individual" in the current number of the *Contemporary Review*: "Did you ever read the description of the Sacrifice to Moloch in Flaubert's *Salambô*? Well, given the belief that God cursed all mankind for the fault of one man and one woman, and appeased his wrath by the sacrifice of his only begotten Son, the logical conclusion should have been, not Christianity, but that Moloch worship of Tyre and Carthage." Another curious point in this most thoughtful paper is the classing of Robert Owen with St. Francis as among the unselfish benefactors of the world.

ANOTHER lady has taken to the Freethought lecture field in America. Mrs. Mattie A. Freeman, who is vice-president of the Chicago Secular Association, is described as a very agreeable woman and a talented lectress. General Trumbull of Chicago, says there is not in America three women of equal genius.

THE Lord is losing ground in America. According to the *Church Press*, an episcopalian organ of New York, all the churches over-estimate their numbers. An episcopalian church reporting sixty communicants was found to have actually only twenty, and many similar instances are given: "Then as to church-going: In the states of Vermont and Maine, ministers everywhere lament the condition of things. Young men are seldom seen in church. Respectable farmers allow the year to pass without entering a place of worship, and yet they call themselves 'church members.' The state of things is even worse in the south. The wide-spread popularity of the Sunday newspaper is largely responsible for the indisposition of men, young and old, to attend churches in our large cities. In such territories as Dacota and Montana a very large proportion of the population never enter a place of worship."

THE second volume of Rénan's *History of the People of Israel* is announced as ready.

THE January number of the *Freethinkers' Magazine*, published at Buffalo, New York, opens with a striking article on "The Hebrew Scriptures under the Light of Evolution," by T. B. Wakeman. Three portraits are given of American Freethinkers—H. Bonnell, A. T. Lilly, and George H. Walscr, the founder of the town of Liberal.

THE Camberwell Branch dined over a hundred poor persons last Sunday. After dinner they were regaled with songs, recitations, and instrumental music, all of an unsectarian character.

## CHRISTIAN ATHEISM.

THE civilised nations of to-day are nominally Christian. Even France still subsidises the priesthood to some extent although she has expelled religion from her schools. But those who do not wish to be cheated with names will still ask themselves whether we are *really* Christian in belief, whether in the conduct, which is the real test of belief, we are guided and impelled by Christian doctrines, or by the motives and teachings of Secularism.

The first difficulty in getting this question fairly answered by people in general arises from the lamentable want of clear logical perceptions and courageous logical accuracy in the human mind when troublesome or abstruse matters press for a solution. The second difficulty, born of the first, is the carefully-cultivated confusion of meaning in the words used. Feuerbach, in his *Essence of Religion* (note 23), says:

"Arbitrariness in the use of words is unbounded. But still no words are used so arbitrarily, nor taken in so contradictory significations as the words *God* and *religion*. Whence this arbitrariness and confusion? Because people from reverence or from fear to contradict opinions sanctioned by age, retain the old names (for only *the name, the appearance, rules the world, even the world of believers in God*), although they connect *entirely different* ideas with them, which have been gained only in the course of time. Thus it was in regard to the Grecian gods which in the course of time received the most contradictory significations; thus in regard to the Christian God, Atheism *calling* itself theism is the religion, anti-Christianity calling itself Christianity is the true Christianity of the present day.—*Mundus vult decipi.*"

The world wishes to be deceived, and it insists on being deceived. It commences the process by deceiving itself. Christendom practically rejects the distinctive teachings of Christ and accepts Secular teachings which are often opposed to the maxims of the alleged Founder of Christianity. The Bible is seldom quoted in our "Christian legislature" except for quaint old-fashioned phrases which may be flung at opponents in novel fashion as smart sayings. Any reverent use of revelation as authoritative in the House of Commons would be scouted as absurd—the subjection of sacred words to the test of profane reason and serious argument being at the same time conveniently condemned as improper and even blasphemous. The dethroned Bible is thus so sacred nowadays that we must not use it. Practical men pay no real attention to the Bible in practical matters. Darwin was laughed at even by the orthodox officers of the "Beagle" for honestly advancing the Bible as a decisive authority.

There is certainly a very large amount of truth in Feuerbach's remarks. Christendom *does* reject God in practice. It studies and obeys the laws of nature instead, but it conveniently calls them the laws of God to avoid an unpleasant break in the continuity of the religious evolution. Its belief in prayer is very slight in proportion to its belief in big battalions. It does not really believe in Christ's doctrine of celibacy, or in taking no thought for the morrow, or in faith-healing or exorcism, or in the speedy return of Christ, or in miracles or ghosts or witches or angels or devils, or in making the next world the chief object of our cares. Two-thirds of the best living Christianity is Secularism christened as religion, and the convenient confusion of ideas is such that popular opinion credits Christianity with benevolent work which is intrinsically anti-Christian and Atheistic.

This confusion begins in the Bible. It reigns supreme in modern Christian minds. No religion can exist without an admixture of Secularism to preserve it from suicide. The logic of thought is so imperfect in most minds and so continually set aside by the seeming logic of facts or necessities (that is by the compulsions or conveniences of the situation) that most people, wisely enough perhaps, do not think of trusting to their reason. Thus conflicting doctrines, illogical conclusions, and even absolute contradictions can live together in the human mind in unchallenged peace and harmony. So little has absolute logic to do with the matter. Hence modern Christians can believe in a God and act as if there were none. They believe in heaven yet fear to depart for that happy realm. They believe that they believe in the supernatural, yet they display no practical confidence in that belief. They trust in life assurance rather than in the tender mercies of God towards their helpless widows and children. They "trust in God"—which simply means nowadays that they hope for the best—after they have done all they can. Their conduct in the main is that of Atheists who study this world only. Atheism is their abiding ruling faith, but they hedge a little for the sake of deriving some measure of comfort from the contradictory belief and the conflicting, but time-honored nomenclature which still holds joint possession with practical Atheism in their illogical brains. Atheism—or the decision of conduct independently of the hypothesis of a God—is the guiding rule of modern life and modern progress. "Avowed Atheists" are but teaching the Age to know itself and to be honest enough to speak the truth without disguise.

In religion practical Atheism is being made supreme, just as in our politics a practical republic has been initiated and is being evolved under the forms of monarchy. Limited monarchy—which means the supremacy of law and the people—is paralleled by limited deity—which means the supremacy of natural law. God and the king are both



disabled from mischief by constitutional restrictions. The king acts only by his ministers and God by natural laws. A convenient fiction saves the feelings of the pious and the loyal. Practical republicanism and Atheism are thus established without shocking and alienating people by a change of name. Nay, the energetic support even of royalists and religionists is largely won over by this method.

The increasing advancement of modern nations concurrently with the practical adoption of Atheism has been unparalleled in history. Christians attribute this progress to Christianity. I read in a religious journal that the Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, says:

"The fifth of the modern wonders of the world is the triumph of Christianity. In the first 1,500 years of Christianity it gained 100 millions of people as adherents. In the next 300 years it gained 100 millions. In the next eighty-two years (the present century) it has gained 210 millions. These people are communicants in the Church."

The last statement is certainly a falsehood, for the actual communicants are but a very small minority among even professed believers—so little is Christian obedience to Christ of a genuine docile character. The large totals of Christians are obtained by including all the inhabitants of all so-called "Christian" countries in the world. The huge numbers of the indifferent who never think of attending a place of worship, are reckoned as part and parcel of the Christian Church, and even as communicants.

The alleged facts concerning the boasted increase are significant. After 1,200 years of Christian supremacy and real faith, Christianity only counted 100 millions of adherents; and for a thousand years of this time its numbers must have been nearly stationary. But with the decay of Christian faith, with the advance of freedom and enterprise and knowledge, the European nations who are counted as Christians increased by 100 millions in 300 years. With a still further decay of faith, with a still more marked rejection of the priest and the Bible as authoritative guides in practical affairs, the nominally Christian nations have increased by 200 millions during the present century alone. In proportion as first the Church and then the Bible have lost their power, the emancipated nations have gained in numbers and prosperity. The ages of faith were the Dark Ages; the ages of science are times of enlightenment and of astouishingly rapid progress. If God intended this unprecedented progress and prosperity as a sign of his approval of Christianity, why did he not send it earlier, when belief was thorough and sincere? Is it a sign that God approves and blesses the Christian Atheism which fights like the parliamentary armies under the royal name until finally they lead their nominal king to execution?

W. P. BALL.

A STORY was told by Judge W. M. Weaver, of Greensboro, illustrative of the strict construction children sometimes put upon remarks from the pulpit. The judge's little granddaughter, Margie Burke, recently received a large doll as a present. She was delighted with the gift, and named the doll "Gesie," after the donor. Measles broke out in the community, and the little one said her Gesie had the measles too. On the Sabbath the little one went with her uncle to church, the two taking a seat directly in front of and near to the pulpit. The preacher warned to his theme and spoke with much earnestness. At last, pointing with his index finger and looking straight towards the little girl, he asked impressively, "How stands it with you and Jesus?" Quick as thought she answered in a clear voice heard throughout the house, "I am very well, I thank you, but Gesie's got the measles!"

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN.—A rich old speculator imagined that he knew all about art, whereas he was an ignorant in regard to everything in fact, except making money. This old fraud determined to make a valuable present to his son-in-law, who was a preacher. It was suggested to him that an oil painting representing Daniel in the Lions' Den would be appropriate; so an order was given to a painter to produce the work of art. It was almost finished when the old speculator was called to inspect it. It represented a cross section of the den with Daniel walking about among the lions. When the old man saw the picture he refused to take it. He insisted that if Daniel was in the den, neither he nor the lions could be seen, and the artist had to cover the lions and Daniel with a thick coat of black paint. When the son-in-law was presented with the picture he was somewhat dazed to know what it represented. "It represents Daniel in the lions' den," replied the art critic. "But I don't see either of them." "That makes no difference. They are there—I saw 'em myself."

#### THE NEW ENGLAND "BLUE LAWS."

THESE laws were enacted by the people of the "Dominion of New Haven," and became known as the blue laws because they were printed on blue paper. They are as follows:

"The governor and magistrates convened in general assembly are the supreme power, under God, of this independent dominion. From the determination of the assembly no appeal shall be made.

"No one shall be a freeman or have a vote unless he is converted and a member of one of the churches allowed in the dominion.

"Each freeman shall swear by the blessed God to bear true allegiance to this dominion, and that Jesus is the only king.

"No dissenter from the essential worship of this dominion shall be allowed to give a vote for electing of magistrates or any officer.

"No food or lodging shall be offered to a heretic.

"No one shall cross a river on the Sabbath but authorised clergymen.

"No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep houses, cut hair or shave on the Sabbath day.

"No one shall kiss his or her children on the Sabbath or fast days.

"The Sabbath day shall begin at sunset Saturday.

"Whoever wears clothes trimmed with gold, silver or bone lace above one shilling per yard shall be presented by the grand jurors, and the selectmen shall tax the estate £300.

"Whoever brings cards or dice into the dominion shall pay a fine of £5.

"No one shall eat mince pies, dance, play cards, or play any instrument of music except the drum, trumpet or jews' harp.

"No gospel minister shall join people in marriage. The magistrate may join them in marriage, as he may do it with less scandal to Christ's Church.

"When people refuse their children convenient marriages, the magistrate shall determine the point.

"A man who strikes his wife shall be fined £10.

"A woman who strikes her husband shall be punished as the law directs.

"No man shall court a maid in person or by letter without obtaining the consent of her parents; £5 penalty for the first offence, ten for the second, and for the third imprisonment during the pleasure of the court."

#### REAL ESTATE IN DAKOTA.

ONE Wednesday evening about two months ago, says the veracious *Dakota Bell*, a prayer meeting was held by the members of one of the leading churches in Aberdeen, this territory. Owing to some repairs being made in the church building, it took place at the residence of a prominent member of the church, named Dawson, who was also a leading real estate dealer. The city was at that time in the height of a boom.

Rev. Bagley had charge of the meeting, and after a number of those present had offered prayers, the reverend gentleman called on Brother Dawson. He accordingly knelt by a chair and, after a fitting introduction, said:

"And we desire to further thank thee this evening for allowing me to put my new North Side addition upon—"

"Hold on, brother, hold on," interrupted Rev. Bagley. "It hardly seems to me proper for you to introduce private real estate deals in a supplication at a church prayer meeting. Don't do it, Brother Dawson."

But Brother Dawson was of a stubborn disposition, and this only made him more determined. He continued:

"As I was saying, I desire to return thanks for thy providential guidance while placing my North Side addition on the market. As thou probably knowest I have thrown the entire addition on the market at 450 dollars per lot, though they are all well worth—"

"How's that, brother!" put in Rev. Bagley eagerly, as he took his face out of his hands and peered sideways over the spectacles from where he was kneeling in front of the sofa.

"Four hundred and fifty dollars a lot, Eldor," answered Brother Dawson.

"Good gracious!" replied the minister, as he arose, "there's money in those lots at that figure. Just put me down for a block of about six—I'm willing to put my pile in North Side dirt at that rate at any time! Here, Sister Dawson, bring us a pen a minute till we draw up the deed—I don't propose to take any chances on monkey business on as good a deal as this. Just remain kneeling, friends, this matter won't take but a moment's time."

#### PROFANE JOKES.

On the way he inquired: "Mamma, does God make skunks?" "Why, yes, Eddie; I suppose he does," was the hesitating answer. Eddie, after a moment's thought: "Well, if he got a good sniff of one once, I'll bet he'd never make another."

A little girl lately arrived from the East wanted to amuse herself sewing one Sunday. Her aunt objected, saying it was the Lord's day. "Why, auntie," said the child, "the Lord can't see me; I'm in California."

"Remember, Bobby," said his mother, "when you are about to do something you know to be wrong, that although I may not see you there is One who does." "Who do you mean?" inquired Bobby, anxiously. "God." "Oh," said Bobby, with a look of intense relief, "I thought you meant pa."

There is a teacher in the St. Paul public schools who will hereafter be very careful about asking her pupils Scriptural conundrums. She said to them the other day: "Noah had three sons, Japhet, Ham and Shem. Who was their father?" The children, suspecting a catch, replied variously. One answered Ham, another Japhet and a third Shem. Finally a precocious little boy shut them all up by inquiring: "Who did Noah suspect?"



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