

THE FREETHINKER

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

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No 234.



THE FIRST POLICEMAN.
"God took him."—GENESIS V., 24.

A PIOUS MURDERER.

DR. CROSS, the Cork wife poisoner, was a "bold bad man." Physical courage he certainly did not lack, but many great criminals have equalled, and perhaps surpassed him, in this respect. To take two very eminent cases, the Duke of Marlborough was a precious scoundrel, but he was as serene as Jove himself while death flew around him on the battlefield; and Napoleon, who was apparently quite devoid of conscience, was absolutely fearless, confronting any peril if the game he played necessitated the risk. We may add that some of the vilest malefactors, who have expiated their crimes on the gallows, have "died game" and met death with as much *nonchalance* as they gambled, drank, robbed or murdered. The manner of a man's exit from life is, as Byron observed, pretty much a matter of nerves, especially when there is no question of moral courage, and nothing has to be faced but the brief bodily pain of extinction.

Possessing a born soldier's nerves, Dr. Cross might have achieved distinction a few centuries ago. But he came into the world too late. The qualities that might have made him a popular hero in barbarous ages have brought him to an ignominious end in better days. He lived a life of callous selfishness, and the infernal crime for which he

was hung could hardly have been exceeded in turpitude. He carried on an intrigue with the governess in the home of his wife and children, and finally, in order to marry his new love, he slowly poisoned the old one. He did not cut her throat, he did not strangle or suffocate her, he did not slyly push her into the river. No, he poisoned her with a slow and agonising poison. He watched her sufferings unmoved, he heard her groans without a shudder. The mother of his children was merely *a thing* that stood in his way, and he removed her with as much indifference as he would have kicked a stone out of his path. Had he run away with the governess, leaving his wife and children provided for, he might have pleaded an uncontrollable passion; but to cruelly torture his wife to death, and then to bring his paramour as her legal successor into the dishonored home, argues such an awful depth of callous wickedness that we may be glad the earth is rid of such a brutal wretch.

While in prison he wrote a will. Most of his property is bequeathed to his brother and his children by his first wife. To the second Mrs. Cross he leaves only £60 a year, with a lump sum of £400 for her child, born while he was under sentence of death. He expresses a hope that this sum will enable her to take care of her babe, but he provides that her allowance shall cease if she marries again; that is, he selfishly aims at possessing her even in death.

Further, if she marries or dies, her son is to receive the magnificent sum of £25 a year till he is twenty-one. Such is the "justice" which Dr. Cross excogitated in the condemned cell towards the woman whose life he blasted, and the boy she brought into existence under the shadow of his father's gallows.

Freethinkers will now be prepared to learn that Dr. Cross was pious. Not only was he strongly attached to the doctrines of godliness, he was no less strongly persuaded that Protestantism is the only proper embodiment of divine truth. He hopes his children will be brought up in that faith, and he adds that "the Bible, pure and simple, is the true religion."

Here is a testimony to the truth, beauty, and holiness of Scripture! What better testimony can the Christians desire? It conforms to all the conditions which, in orthodox eyes, make testimony valuable. It is given by an educated man, conscious of original sin, with a large experience of human depravity, in the shadow of death and in the very presence of his Maker. May we not, therefore, expect that Dr. Cross's recommendation of Holy Writ will henceforth be printed in religious tracts, circulated wholesale by Bible Societies, paraded everywhere by Young Men's Christian Associations, and extensively employed in the refutation of infidelity? We venture even to suggest that Dr. Cross's guarantee of Scripture should be printed as a Preface, with a short sketch of his life and death, in all translations of the Bible into heathen languages. The Buddhist, the Brahman, the Mohammedan, the Confucian, will then be speedily converted to the "true religion." How could they resist such a potent and persuasive argument, or withstand the cogency of such demonstrative evidence? Christianity has not converted mankind in eighteen centuries, but by the grace of God it is now swiftly advancing to its triumph. Moses and the prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles, have only secured it a partial success; but Dr. Cross has appeared in the fullness of time, and the Bible will soon be the Holy Scripture of "the round world and them that dwell therein." We admit that this is not the way in which it might have been expected that "all people that on earth do dwell" would be brought into the true sheepfold; but, as the French say, it is always the unexpected that happens; and we have Cowper's word for it that "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." He hides his secrets from the wise and prudent and reveals them unto babes, as he himself informs us, and it is therefore not surprising that "the Bible, pure and simple," should be certified by a murderer.

G. W. FOOTE.

CHRISTIANITY IN ABYSSINIA.—II.

AN American fable, given in the *Boston Investigator*, tells how a log of decayed wood floating down the rapid current of a river exclaimed to the bystanders, "See how swiftly I push the waters along." A sceptical observer remarked that he had seen the same log lying idly in a stagnant pool for weeks before, but a recent freshet had started it on its course towards the sea.

Christianity claims to be the moving spirit of modern progress and civilisation. How, then, comes it that it was so long in Europe before producing the effects of civilisation? And how is it that it may be found in Abyssinia in its primitive state, and failing to redeem that country from barbarism?

Parkyn says Abyssinia has "probably as salubrious a climate as any country on the face of the globe." Its highlands might supply the markets of the world with cotton, and its valleys rival the United States in the production of corn. The soil is so fertile that three crops may be grown in a year. Yet after the seed is sown the land is never touched till harvest time. Coffee and other plants are allowed to grow wild. There is very little trade, and no arts. "All the masonry, carpentry, and upholstery," says Reclus, in his *Universal Geography*, "are left to the Felasha Jews, who are rewarded for their services by being hated and persecuted as budas—i.e., werewolves—or else as sorcerers."

The churches, which are extremely numerous in Abyssinia, are rude edifices. They are described as "generally small, low, circular structures, with a conical roof of thatch, and four doors, one towards each of the cardinal points." The interior, dirty and neglected, but overloaded

with frightfully bad pictures of the Virgin Mary and the saints, the angels and the Devil, is divided into three compartments—an outer one for the laity, one within for the priests and deacons, and in the centre the Holy of Holies, with the tabooed ark. The priests, as well as monks and nuns, are very numerous, and are looked upon with great awe and reverence. Yet the priesthood is very illiterate, and there is no preaching at all. An important part of their ceremonies consists in blessing and purifying houses, utensils, tools, etc. Service consists of singing psalms, reciting parts of the Bible and Liturgy, and prayers to the Virgin and wonder-working saints. Of all the religious practices the most important are the funeral rites. The most upright man would be thought unworthy to enter heaven did not his relatives pay for masses to be said for the repose of his soul.

Their art is of the rudest description. The paintings of their saints have their faces always in full whatever may be the position of their bodies, and even these paintings are executed by descendants of Portuguese settlers.

In manners the Abyssinians are rude and barbarous. Engaged in continuous wars, life is little regarded. Murders and executions are frequent. When a murderer is caught he is handed over to the relatives, who may either put him to death or accept a ransom. When the murdered person has no relatives, the priests take the office of avengers. The Abyssinian theologians are fond of justifying their surviving barbarous customs by the examples supplied by the lives of their pretended ancestors, David and Solomon. The Abyssinians do not go in for so extensive a married life as the latter, although polygamy is by no means uncommon. They dissolve marriage as often as they please, the father taking the sons, and the daughters remaining with their mother. In the case of a single child, if under seven it goes to the mother; if older, to the father. Bishop Gobat says there is little family affection; and children of the same father, but of different mothers, are "always enemies to each other."

Their moral condition is described as very low. "Lying, deceit, laziness, and theft are their universal characteristics." Continual wars put a stop to peaceful labors. "The soldiers live by plunder, the priests by alms; hence all work is despised and left to the women and slaves." For there is slavery yet in this Christian country, though it is confined to slavery of the blacks.

The statement by Bruce as to their cutting steaks from the living cow was questioned, but has been confirmed by all subsequent explorers. Leprosy, among other diseases, is very common, and more especially among the Felasha Jews, who always seem to have been very subject to that disease. According to Dr. Blanc, an Englishman who was for some time a prisoner of King Theodore, the women frequently die in parturition, whilst in the neighboring countries they pass easily through the trial.

Abyssinia, it must be borne in mind, has been a Christian country for over fifteen hundred years. How is it that the log has not set the river rolling in that portion of the world?

The following picture of the state of the Christians in Abyssinia is given by Baron Katte, a Prussian nobleman. No doubt orthodox readers will repudiate the idea that the picture could be paralleled by any Christians nearer home.

"I found everywhere in Abyssinia a confirmation of what I so frequently found in the East—namely, that the professors of Christianity are, in all moral respects, far below the Mohammedans. If any one looks, then, for fidelity and probity, let him not knock at the door of a Christian or he will find himself cruelly deceived. This is not owing to the oppression which Islamism exercises over Christianity, for this oppression is by no means so severe as people in Europe fancy. It rather proceeds from the hatred with which the different Christian parties persecute each other, from the endless family intrigues generated by covetousness and supported by falsehood, from the practice of the austerities of their religious duty, which hardens their hearts, and, lastly, from the moral corruption in which the young are brought up. The influence of the priest is, on the whole, very great, especially over the lower classes."

In Abyssinia we see what Christianity becomes when separated from the influences which arise from doubt and competitive contact. It affords another illustration that it is not the Bible, not Christianity nor its priesthood, that sends forward the stream of progress, but that these remain like useless logs encumbering the stream until some movement of the waters bears them onwards.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN and Mr. John Burns have both been telling how they managed to communicate with the outside world during their imprisonment. But they are very indiscreet to do anything of the kind. Their "blabbing" will be a serious injury to all future prisoners for liberty, who will be more strictly watched and annoyed by all sorts of petty precautions. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent, and although these gentlemen are undoubtedly brave they should remember that in such a case as this discretion is very decidedly the better part of valor. We saw many things during our own imprisonment that we never talked about in public.

MESSRS. O'BRIEN and Burns have both told the editor of the *Pull Mall Gazette* how much they enjoyed the Bible in prison. Mr. O'Brien says he never appreciated it till he was shut up with it. Very likely, and perhaps if he was shut up with it for twelve months he would appreciate it at its proper value.

THE Book of Job excited Mr. O'Brien's highest admiration. "What wonderful poetry, what profound wisdom!" he exclaims. Probably Mr. O'Brien doesn't know that the Book of Job is not of Jewish origin. It is, in fact, no more a Hebrew book than Cary's translation of Dante is an English poem.

MR. BURNS says: "I read the Bible all through from beginning to end, also the Prayer Book. I enjoyed the Bible immensely." But he does not say why he enjoyed it. Mr. Burns is a professed Freethinker, and we should really like to know. Did he enjoy the story of Jonah and the whale, Balaam and the talking ass, Samson and the jawbone, and Joshua's little trick with the sun and moon?

SIX-WEEKS' prisoners are not entitled to any book except the Bible. Perhaps that is why every literate person reads it, even if he is a Freethinker. When it is Hobson's choice—the Bible or nothing—you must make the best of the situation, and fall upon Scripture with all your literary appetite.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury has been denouncing early marriages. He forgets that God's first command is, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

THE following advertisement appeared in Monday's *Times*:

WILL any one give a very poor curate a week's hospitality in London? Nine in family. Stipend only £80, no private. Bound to be in London.—Address, Rev. Sigma, 3 York Terrace, Dover.

Will the Bishop of London or the Archbishop of Canterbury give him accommodation for a week? There should be plenty of spare bed-rooms at Fulham Palace or at Lambeth. A curate with seven children and eighty pounds a year will not expect very sumptuous dinners, and then the bishop might lecture him on the virtues of Malthusianism.

ANOTHER clerical scandal at Brooklyn, the city of churches. The clergyman is the Rev. Mr. Flath, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, and the woman Mrs. Choles, who teaches in the Sunday-school, and is wedded to the gravedigger. Alas! that an unbelieving world refuses to concede to a man of God the time-honored privileges of his calling and thinks evil of a woman who spends her nights in confiding her troubles to his sacred breast!

How good and kind Christians are to each other! A Seventh Day Baptist with a young and delicate wife and a little baby went to Arkansas and bought a small farm. As his religion only required him to keep holy the seventh day of the week, which is Saturday, he used to plough his field on a Sunday. This act excited the holy wrath and pious indignation of his neighbors, who were good orthodox Methodists and Presbyterians. They had the young man arrested and thrown into jail, and the sheriff sold his only horse and cow to pay his fine. The poor young wife, being delicate and in a land of strangers, wept and lamented until the angel of death came to her relief, and her baby also died. When the young man came out of jail he sold his little farm for what he could get for it, and moved away to dwell, it is to be hoped, among people who had a little less religion and a little more charity.

THE Christians of Boston, U.S., have sent the Rev. W. F. Davis to jail for twelve months for preaching the Gospel on Boston Common. He can get out by paying the fine of £70, but appears to prefer the martyrdom of imprisonment. He has been fined several times before, but insists on obeying God rather than man. Various other preachers have also been fined. This prohibition of preaching is a curious anomaly in a Christian community. The city regulations forbid it, except by license from the committee which has charge of the common. Perhaps it was found that there was danger to the public peace or the enjoyment of the use of the common if the "thousands of licences" formerly granted to preachers of the various religious sects were renewed. The *Christian Herald* holds that the prohibition of Protestant preaching arises from the circumstance

that Boston is ruled by "Roman Catholic authorities" and Roman Catholic rum-sellers.

ELEVEN Salvationists were fined at Torquay police-court for infringing a section of the local Act of Parliament, forbidding processions accompanied by music or other disturbing noises in the public streets on Sunday. Several of them wanted to go to prison at once, but were informed that distress warrants would first be issued.

A SALVATIONIST drummer has been fined ten shillings and costs for annoying the people of St. Albans with his big drum.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL is to be illuminated by electricity before next winter. Typical of what is happening with Christianity. But the national cathedral will stand the light of science far better than the creed which for the present it represents.

ONE of the two rectors of Pontesbury, Shrewsbury, has been administering water instead of wine at the Lord's Supper. There was no wine in the vestry, so he sent the beadle to the pump, possibly praying that Christ would re-perform his Cana conjuring. The bishop brought the case before the Ecclesiastical Courts, and the Rev. Mr. Hawkes was admonished and ordered to pay the costs. But suppose some poor fellow lost his chance of heaven through not receiving the blood of Christ; who will pay the damages for that?

THE emergency men engaged in collecting tithes in Wales are now armed with long sabres. Great commotion is excited. The farmers protest vigorously against paying tithes to a church whose services they never attend.

THE *Rock* gives an account of "An Evening with Vagabonds." A dinner was given to "twelve hundred tramps, vagabonds, and unemployed youths." The audience were asked to repeat certain texts, and the *Rock* says that "the readiness with which these vagabonds repeated the sacred words show an evident familiarity with the Bible." Vagabondage and knowledge of the Bible thus appear to go together.

PRIESTS in France can now legally marry. The anti-clericals say they are by no means anxious they should avail themselves of the privilege. Priests are not of the type it is most desirable should propagate their species. It is, moreover, bad enough that their poor deluded flocks should be shorn to support their pastors without the additional burden of supporting their wives. Let those who give themselves to the Lord give themselves wholly; the Church should be a sufficient bride.

SENATOR VEST, of Washington, who has visited the Indians in Alaska, reports that the natives had given up cannibalism and embraced Christianity. The English missionary, Mr. Duncan, refused to administer the sacrament, for he was fearful that asking them to eat the body and blood of Jesus would awaken cannibalistic tastes, and the labor of thirty years would be lost. The parent church, however, insisted, and sent a bishop to enforce obedience. The report says: "In a short time the Indians began to drift back towards barbarism. They grew wildly excited, and Mr. Duncan saw his work was going to ruin."

THIS reminds us of another story of a cannibal who would have been converted but for the trifling objection that he had two wives. This, although but a mild imitation of Solomon, he was informed was not consonant to the teaching of Jesus Christ. The savage pondered the matter of polygamy *versus* salvation, and in about a week proclaimed himself a Christian. "How is that?" asked the man of God. "Me got one wife now." "What have you done with the other?" "Me eat her."

A CHANCE was given the Lord to convert an infidel recently at Flint, Michigan. Messrs. Potter and Miller the evangelists from Chicago had been boasting of their success in converting infidels, when Dr. J. H. Jackson arose, said he had been "converted" when young, but as he advanced in education discovered it was a myth. He was invited to the altar and went, accompanied by his wife and child. The pastors began to pray over him. Pulling out his watch, Dr. Jackson said he would give them an hour. The evangelists and audience prayed mightily for sixty long minutes but the Holy Ghost refused to assist, or found Dr. Jackson too tough to be saved.

A MINISTER preached a very eloquent sermon on the hard times, and dwelt with much earnestness on the duty of retrenchment and economy. His powerful discourse had a swift and unexpected effect. Immediately after service the congregation held a church meeting and reduced the minister's salary from £100 to £300.

IN the Church of St. George's, Belfast, last Sunday, service was brought to an abrupt conclusion, as a panic had been caused among the congregation by the outbreak of a fire. Here was fine opportunity for prayer. But instead of invoking the Holy Ghost, they sent for Superintendent Reilly and his fire brigade, who soon got the flames under.

THE Rev. J. A. Brown, preaching on the "Golden Rule of Life," said that there were times when Christians must insist on the Golden Rule being applied in politics. But why not *always*, unless the rule is sometimes a bad one? The preacher wants to know if the Coercionists are acting in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Of course, they are. Will he not send his opponents to hell? And is that not infinitely worse than a few months in gaol?

How is the Golden Rule to be applied in politics? Which party is to obey it? Are the Home Rulers to give way to the Unionists because they wish the Unionists to give way to them? Must France give provinces to Germany because she wishes Germany would restore Alsace and Lorraine? Or is the rule a mere cat's-paw, used only when it suits one's purpose, and abandoned as unspeakably absurd when it doesn't?

SOME burglars have broken into the palace of the Bishop of Lichfield and stolen valuables to the amount of £100. The bishop ought to send them another £100 as a present, but somehow he doesn't think much of Christ's Golden Rule in such a case, although he would like the burglars to believe in it. Perhaps they are relieving him of some of the dangers of the wealth which, according to Christ's teachings, will send the possessor to hell. If the bishop sincerely imitated his Lord and Master, he wouldn't have a hundred pounds' worth of valuables to steal.

A WESLEYAN minister purchased a sermon of a literary gentleman, which he preached with much applause. The next Sunday he went to another chapel as an auditor, and had the mortification to hear the same sermon delivered to a crowded and admiring congregation. This so greatly provoked him that he went directly to the author, and abused him in severe terms for selling him a copy instead of an original. "You are greatly mistaken, sir," said the other, "for he had the copy, and you had the original."

THE value of the oath was recently illustrated. A most important witness for the Crown at the Coolgreaney trial at the Wicklow Assizes thus delivered himself to a counsel who had been cross-hackling him: "You've been badgering me for a full hour, sorr; but a cleverer man nor you was at me for two hours a short time ago, and he *couldn't get the truth out of me*, and what chance has the likes of you?" "Good God, man!" quoth the judge, "do you know that you are on your oath?"

THE biblical belief in witchcraft still survives in Devonshire. A cab proprietor named Heard accused his son of bewitching his daughter, and thus causing a chronic disease in the arm, which the doctors advised should be amputated. The father took the girl to a "white witch" instead, who soon cured her. The Totnes magistrates dismissed the case. They are not such fools as to believe in Bible rot of that particular kind.

MRS. SOLT, of Laurence, Kansas, became converted, and believed that the infant at her breast was a new Christ. She received a command from God to fast. She did so, and died drinking water and quoting Scripture.

The *Christian Advocate* explains to teetotal Christians that when Paul said, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine," he probably only used the words in a spiritual sense. It points out that such words as "milk" and "wine" are often used figuratively in the Bible. But Paul recommended Timothy to drink a little wine for his stomach's sake. Was this a figurative stomach?

GOD has been showing forth his power and benevolence in Illinois. On Sunday afternoon he sent a tornado or cyclone by which two-thirds of Mount Vernon, a town of about 4,000 inhabitants, were literally swept out of existence within a few minutes. Hundreds of houses were blown down, and many people were crushed in the ruins. A fire broke out immediately, and raged with great fury, adding horror to the situation. Cries and groans were heard in all directions. Two churches lay a mass of ruins. The town looked as if it had been visited by a violent earthquake. The survivors had to leave the injured and dying in order to fight the flames, which were only subdued after a stubborn contest of several hours. Forty-one persons are known to be killed, and many others injured. The scene at midnight was peculiarly distressing. Through the great heaps of ruins men, women, and boys were struggling in their efforts to reach those imprisoned beneath the timbers and bricks. Cries came from every pile of debris. Why does Almighty Goodness amuse itself in this wretched fashion? Cannot God guide the storms any better?

A CAPTAIN of the Salvation Army named Maslin, belonging to Chatham, has gone mad through religious excitement. He believes he is the Savior. He was removed to the asylum, and on his way was so violent that he had to be held by four or five men and bound with ropes. As his cab passed through the

streets he could be heard loudly appealing to his "Father" to burst his bonds asunder.

MR. HURLBATT did not like being publicly told by a Salvation Army officer that "the moment he dies he will go straight to hell," and brought an action against the S. A. man for slander. Mr. Justice Manisty held that although to tell a man he would go to hell was "low, vulgar abuse," the words did not impute any indictable offence, and were, therefore, not actionable. If Christianity is true and men are damned for unbelief, to say one is on the road to hell does not even imply anything against his moral character. Obviously God's laws and human laws are quite distinct.

PROBABLY the judge was right in common sense, but we fail to see the justice of his decision with respect to another portion of Mr. Hurlblatt's complaint. The Salvation officer said his property was amassed by knavery and thieving, yet this is held not to be libellous. Evidently a Salvation meeting-place is privileged, like the House of Commons.

A FACT from Bethnal Green.—The lovely Salvation Army captainess was holding forth to a deeply interested assembly. She brought her observations to a climax with the remark: "Last night I was clasped in the arms of a wicked man. To-night I am clasped in the arms of Jesus." And then a naughty young reporter in the audience shouted: "Are you engaged for to-morrow-night?"

THE Rev. Hugh O. Pentecost is coming out since he has left the Congregationalists. Preaching on parasites, he is reported as saying: "In this class are the feeble human parasites who think that by simply clinging to Jesus, and without an effort of their own, they will be saved.

"Jesus died and paid it all,
All the debt I owe."

"That is their hymn. It is the hymn of the parasite. Nothing is so singular as to hear a company of women singing:

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast."

"It is the hymn of the parasite. Now, I have no doubt," Mr. Pentecost exclaimed, "that this shocks many who hear me. And I am not sorry. To shock people is sometimes the only way to make them think."

"I HAD intended, brethren," said a Texas pastor, "to preach a sermon this morning on the universality of the plan of salvation, but I have just learned that Brother McBender has collected my last quarter's salary, and instead of paying it to me has taken it and run off with the wife of Brother Clugston. I will therefore invite your attention on this occasion to a few remarks from the text: 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment.'"

THE Rev. Sir George William Cox, the elect Bishop of Bloomfontein, whom the Archbishop of Canterbury refuses to consecrate, has published two volumes of a Life of Bishop Colenso, which he professes to be a full and complete vindication of that prelate's conduct. We recognise that there was much that was admirable in Bishop Colenso, but we should like to know how much Freethought is compatible with the Thirty-nine Articles. Could they be consistently subscribed to by the author of *The English Life of Jesus*, for instance—who some people say was the reverend baronet himself?

DEAN BURGON, lecturing at Gresham College, was asked if Almighty Justice would condemn a Freethinker to everlasting punishment because he could not recognise certain evidence as conclusive? He replied that "where there was a defect of mental organism he humbly believed that the Almighty would show mercy." A cute Freethinker then drily inquired whether Herbert Spencer had "a defect in his mental organism," to which the Dean retorted that he was not there to "answer for individuals."

DR. RUGER, of Elberfeld—a *mucker* or pietist town in Germany—is undergoing six months' imprisonment for saying that the Church is a stupefying establishment. The sentence is a perfect proof of his accuracy.

G. A. POYZER, schoolmaster and actuary of a savings bank at All Saints' Church, Sheffield, has been sentenced to five years' penal servitude for forgery.

A MEMBER of the Colored Church was the other evening conversing earnestly with an acquaintance, and seeking to have him change into better paths; but the friend said that he was too often tempted to permit him to become a Christian. "Whar's yer backbone dat ye can't rose up and stand temptation?" exclaimed the good man. "I was dat way myself once. Right in dis yere town I had a chance to steal a pa'r o' boots—mighty nice ones, too. Nobody was dar to see me, and I reached out my hand and de debbil said take 'em. 'No, sar!' I said to him, and I took a pa'r o' cheap shoes off de shelf an' left dem poots alone."

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, Feb. 26, Secular Hall, Milkstone Road, Rochdale; at 11, "The Tory Hell in Ireland;" at 3, "Darwin on God;" at 6.30, "The Blood of Christ."

MARCH 4 and 11, Hall of Science, London; 18, Leeds; 25, Manchester.

APRIL 8, Plymouth; 15, Huddersfield; April 22, Liverpool.

MAY 13 and 27, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—F. A.

MOUNTAINFEAR.—Mr Forder has executed your order. Kindly send in future direct to him. The clergy do not sell all they have and give to the poor; they do not sell goods, they sell the people.

ARGUS.—Always glad to see your handwriting and budget of all sorts. Success to the Confectioners' Union.

A. H. HUNTER.—Thanks for your letter *re* the Rev. G. Street. We will keep it till he sends us the "small lecture."

F. WHITTON.—Saturday, of course, is not mentioned in the Bible. How could it be? Saturday is of Pagan origin; it means Saturn's day. The Jews appear to have distinguished the days of the week by numbers instead of names.

W. LITTLETON says that an orthodox friend of his dropped into a hall in a provincial town to hear Miss Thornton Smith lecture, when to his surprise he recognised among the audience, not only his family doctor, but four members of a church choir to which he himself belonged.

CASA BIANCA.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

W. C.—Voltaire's reply is of course the right one, but every sensible man would make it himself. Such an argument, in fact, is scarcely worthy of a reply at all.

H. ALGAR.—We noticed the pious squabble last week.

C. LENGER.—We are obliged. Always glad to receive bits of news from our readers.

H. ROBERTS recommends the Manchester Freethinkers to circulate widely our last week's number, containing Mr. Street's letter and our reply.

J. BRUMAGE (Portsmouth).—Sorry to hear of Mr. Beale's death. We shall miss his cheery presence at our future visits. The world is the poorer by one brave, earnest, thoughtful man.

M. S.—We cannot answer medical questions. You apparently understand the risk of such a marriage, and consequently you are in a position to form a judgment for yourself.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Lucifer—L'Union Démocratique—Le Journal du Peuple—Freidenker—L'Union des Libres-Penseurs—Jus—New York World—Liberty—Menschentum—American Idea—Oldham Chronicle—Beckenham Journal—Echo—Isle of Man Times—Independent Pulpit—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Boston Investigator—Truthseeker—Portsmouth Evening News—La Vespa—Liberator—Western Figaro.

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 Rev. G. Street's second letter will appear in our next number with Mr. Foote's reply. This will close the correspondence.

THE London Secular Federation meets again next Thursday evening at the Hall of Science. A good muster is desired, as important business will be brought forward. Owing to the Christian Evidence lectures in the large hall, the L.S.F. meeting will begin at 7. Delegates please note.

THE Christian Evidence Society has promised to let the Freethought criticism after its lectures be made by representatives of the L.S.F. Dr. McCann is to be the Christian champion, we understand, during the whole course of four lectures. Mr. Foote will attend on the opening night on behalf of the L.S.F., and assist the C.E.S. in "keeping order," as the Rev. Mr. Waterway appears to feel rather dubious about "the peace" in consequence of this friendly arrangement.

THE funds of the London Secular Federation will, we hope, be recruited by the "Grand Concert and Dance" at Milton Hall on Wednesday evening, March 7. Mr. Foote will be present. Tickets (1s. each) may be had of any Branch Secretary, or of Mr. G. Standing, the Federation Secretary, 8 Finsbury Street, E.C.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are not flowing in as fast as we could wish for the Federation. We have received the following up to date:—A Radical £10; H. M. Ridgway, 5s.; W. Littleton, 2s. 6d. Mr. R. O. Smith, the treasurer, has also received the following:—W. Hunt, 5s.; Germaines, 5s.

LIVERPOOL frequently gives Mr. Foote a dirty Sunday. Last Sunday the snow thinned the morning and afternoon audiences, but the weather cleared sufficiently to allow of a good audience in the evening to hear "Darwin on God." Apparently the Lord was in an impartial mood, and wished to have the subject ventilated.

THE Liverpool Branch used the opportunity to make a good collection for its exchequer. We trust to hear that the Branch is better supported. Mr. Schweitzer, who presided, said the Branch was not actually in debt, but it was afraid of getting so, and the summer is approaching. Probably some open-air lectures will be delivered in Liverpool during the warm weather.

MR. BRADLAUGH sends us a copy of his Affirmation Bill, which we earnestly hope he will be able to carry through the House of Commons this session. It is backed by Sir John Simon, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Courtney Kenny, Mr. Burt, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Richard, Colonel Eyre, and Mr. Jesse Collings.

THE *Independent Pulpit*, which is an admirably-edited and well-printed Freethought monthly, published at Waco, Texas, has a capital editorial in "The Church and the Word of God," and reprints, with acknowledgments, from our columns Mr. Wheeler's article on "The Douay Bible."

MESSRS. BLACKWOOD AND Co., of Edinburgh, have just published a new volume on Spinoza by Principal Caird. It is a sign of the times that the great Pantheist, who used to be the opprobrium of the orthodox, is now everywhere mentioned with respect.

THE Congress of the German Freethinkers' Union will take place this year on the 27th May at Cologne. Any desiring to participate should communicate with Dr. L. Büchner, Darmstadt, or Dr. A. Specht, Gotha.

AMONG the names of speakers at the Paine celebration at Boston we notice an ex-rev., C. H. Sims, formerly of Alabama. Col. Ingersoll sent the following telegram:

"New York, Jan. 28, 1888.
Cannot be with you. Hope that the celebration will be worthy of Thomas Paine, one of the noblest of men.—ROBERT G. INGERSOLL."

MANY persons take it upon themselves to attempt to convert Col. Ingersoll from Atheism. They make their efforts both in person and by mail, in letters and pamphlets. The other day the Colonel received a pamphlet entitled, "Sure Cure for Atheists." He replied to the sender by returning the book with the comment that it was as full of errors as the book it sought to defend, and that he could not think of retaining it, because a single perusal was sufficient assurance that its only earthly object was to minister to the vanity of its author. Several times women of severe garb and countenance have besieged Col. Ingersoll's office intent on bringing him into the Christian fold. These are generally put off by the office boy, who has come to know unerringly all such visitors.

MR. CHARLES LADD, of Kewanee, seems to be seeking evidence on the subject of immortality. He addressed a letter on the question to Col. Ingersoll, and received the following reply: "My Dear Ladd:—I know nothing about the great sea that spreads before us. I am a little acquainted with this shore, a very little—that is all. I do not know that there is another shore. No Columbus has sailed, discovered and returned. I am willing to wait, and you will have to. Not knowing how it is, let us indulge in the luxury of hoping that it will be as we wish it to be. That is enough; and if it is not, we can get no more. Yours always, R. G. Ingersoll."

THE Bishop of Rochester finds that of the 40,000 inhabitants of Camberwell only 3,000 are church-goers.

THE Rev. Joseph Halsey, of Anerley Congregational Church, has sent in his resignation. Mr. Brownsmith, in moving its acceptance, said Mr. Halsey had distinctly referred to the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ as a sanguinary idea. Christ had been lost sight of, and in his place Mr. Halsey had brought in Darwin, Huxley and evolution. The Rev. Leon Zucher followed in the same strain. An amendment was, however, carried by a large majority, who are evidently content with Mr. Halsey's teachings.

THE Huxley of America is Professor Cope. He has recently described a new and almost perfect fossil mammal, and casts of this ancient brute are being sold at 100 dols. each. It is called *Phenacodus primævus*. Its size was 4ft. 4in. by 2ft. 9in.—nothing like a primeval monster. Its importance consists in its being one of the "missing links" which are so frequently inquired for at Exeter Hall. Professor Cope is of opinion that this fossil mammal

represents the type from which most living mammalia have descended—the ancestral type “of all hoofed mammalia, monkeys, and man”—not *woman* of course!

MR. F. HOWARD COLLINS, writing to the *Fortnightly Review* on “The Ways of Orthodox Critics,” takes the Rev. Lelwellyn Davies and Mr. W. S. Lilly severely to task for their criticisms of Herbert Spencer. He reminds the latter defender of Catholicism that “it is comparatively easy to be eloquent where you are not particular of the truth of your statements,” and shows that his criticisms are implied perversions of fact.

BIBLE CRANKS.

I HAVE before me two Christian periodicals devoted to the support of the scriptural doctrine of the flatness of the globe. One of these has reached its nineteenth number. Its title is *The Earth; Scripturally, Rationally, and Practically Described*. It speaks of itself as being devoted to “the conflict between modern Astronomy and the Bible,” and as “fully justifying the irreconcilable antagonism between Christian Students and the Modern Professors.” It holds that the “true method of studying philosophy” is by the light of the Bible, and that there is remarkable truth in the biblical declaration that “the weakness of God is stronger than man, and the foolishness of God is wiser than man.” It says:

“If geology and astronomy have proved the Mosaic history of Creation to be faulty or figurative, do not the Socialist and the sceptic gain an unanswerable argument in favor of their doubts and disbelief? . . . If Moses wrote falsely concerning the history of Creation, he also wrote falsely concerning Christ; and our Savior must have known it when he appealed so often to this authority. . . . It is utterly preposterous to suppose that youthful minds can retain any respect for, or absolute reliance on, the authority of Scripture, if they are compelled to embrace the systems of modern astronomy and geography. It is simply making them hypocrites to attempt to instil these palpably antagonistic systems into their minds. It is utterly impossible, upon any explanation yet invented (and we presume invention and argument have done their utmost), to give credit to the Mosaic records as the Word of God, if we adopt and teach the principles of the Newtonian philosophy. It is not only the credibility of Moses that is introduced in this attempt to harmonise these two antagonistic systems. David, Solomon, and all the prophetic writers, as well as Peter and Paul, and our Savior himself, are involved in the same charge. If Moses was not fully inspired on the subject of the Creation, we must except all the other Evangelists and historians and prophets from the claim to inspiration.”

“We readily admit that the inspired historians were utterly ignorant of the principles and concoctions of modern science. But their narratives are *true*, in substance and in fact, because they wrote under supernatural guidance; their ignorance, if it existed, was no defect, and error was impossible. Sooner or later, every jot and tittle of the Mosaic records, as to the cosmogony of the universe, will be found as literally accurate as any other portion of the Word of God. And every professing Christian, and certainly every minister of the Gospel, should feel that his only chance of enforcing the claims of that Gospel upon educated minds, will be to show them that the truth of Genesis is their only foundation for the truth of the whole Scriptures.

“Consequently, when they have the intelligence and the courage to admit the unquestionable truth of the Book of Genesis, they will be compelled to acknowledge the utter falsehood of the whole system of modern astronomy, and that the attempt to harmonise the two is no less impious than vain.”

There is much more force in this reasoning than is convenient for modern Christians, and much more honesty.

Another article in the same paper also upsets the science of astronomy by means of the Bible. It teaches us to rely on “the Divine statement respecting the earth’s stationary position; the foundations of which (by Divine precept) no man can search out, although Newton and his followers profess to have done so.” “Nature, common sense, and Divine Truth” co-operate in showing us that the heavens are a plane “stretched out” above a flat earth, and the writer wonders that ministers of the gospel do not relinquish partnership with the infidels who uphold the pagan faiths adopted by modern science.

John Hampden, who evidently is at the bottom of these journals, is a survival—but not of the fittest. He is a fossil representative of the Christian of the past. We laugh at the genuine Christian now because he is in an insignificant and powerless minority. A few centuries ago he was formidable, for he was supreme. Fortified by his Bible, he crushed science and killed or persecuted the philosopher. The terrible has become the ludicrous, and soon will become completely extinct.

The other journal upholding the flatness of the earth as a biblical truth is called *The Witness for God in Christ*. It charges men of science with cunning sophistry, and says that their account of the solar system is a lie, which is “nailed down in its coffin by the living Word of God.” The Creator Himself has divinely revealed that he has “laid the *foundations* of the earth that it should not be moved for ever” (Ps. civ., 5), and the Psalms are endorsed by Jesus Christ. The writer demolishes the men of science with more Bible texts, threatens them with the judgment day, rebukes their “scientific delirium and foolish pride,” and orders them to “sit as babes at the feet of Jesus” that they may learn wisdom. And if the Bible is true, this fanatic is quite right. But who is there nowadays that places implicit reliance on the Word of God? Only men whom even ordinary “Christians” are compelled to regard as cranks and madmen.

Another Bible crank publishes *The Student of Prophecy*, and another work headed *Scripture Inspiration Proved by the Accurate Fulfilment of its Prophecies*. Both these productions commence with the striking proof of prophecy found in the alleged fact that cannon were foretold in Scripture. Illustrations of cannon in action are given, and beneath the pictures is placed the following passage from Rev. ix., 17—20:

“And out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands.”

A long disquisition follows. The writer, like most Christian prophecy-mongers, only takes notice of the context so far as it suits his purpose. In Revelation the fire and smoke proceed from the mouths of horses with heads like lions; but the horses spoil the prophecy, and are accordingly ignored. The prophecy of tails like unto serpents is strikingly fulfilled by the rear portion of a gun being called the “cascabel,” which in Spanish is said to signify a rattlesnake. The *re-coil* of the gun is “also spoken of as a serpent.” The “trail” of the cannon helps to fulfil the prophecy, because it is a remarkable fact that serpents trail themselves along the ground and leave trails behind them. Hence “the prophecy was logically correct.” But “there are stronger proofs still.” Different kinds of cannon at different times have been called aspik, dragon, basilisk, culverin, serpentine, and other names which can be twisted into meaning some form of reptile or serpent. “So the serpent-like element in cannon is amply testified to.” As to the “hair as the hair of women,” and teeth as the teeth of lions, of verse 8, who will scout Byron’s alleged picture of artillery [or Destruction?] as a giant with blood-red tresses (“Battle of Albuera”)? And did he not also speak of these hounds of war as gnashing their fangs? “What are FANGS but teeth? And so Byron describes the cannon with fangs, as beasts of prey,” and as “loud yelling for their prey.” These coincidences, the writer suggests, must be the result of DESIGN. Besides, cannon have mouths; and “right in the teeth of the cannon” is a common form of expression. Who will venture to dispute the authority of revelation after all these “Plain Proofs of Bible Inspiration”? Do not fire and smoke and brimstone issue from the mouth of the cannon just as St. John prophesied? (St. John spoke of horses, it is true, but then he evidently meant cannon). And as cannon were unknown in St. John’s time, what more remarkable prophecy and fulfilment could the believer require to confirm his faith?

Foolish as are such arguments, they are not a whit more foolish than many which have been advanced by the most eminent Christian divines, and accepted by Christians generally as impregnably valid. That Shiloh, a place, should mean a person, is as absurd a pretension as that a horse should mean a cannon. That a girl’s motherhood should mean the perpetual virginity of some future mother is a still worse distortion of the honest meaning of the prophet. That the promised eternity of David’s throne should mean the spiritual reign of Jesus of Nazareth is another ridiculous, if not palpably dishonest, claim. Translating the word “saved” as “having salvation,” because the latter phrase suits the Christian Messiah, is another case of paltering with the truth. That Elijah meant John the Baptist, as assumed by Jesus, is a still

more childish method of manufacturing fulfilments of prophecy. That Friday evening, Saturday, and Saturday night should be represented as three days and nights is equally preposterous. If these claims were as novel in our eyes as the alleged prophecy of cannon, they would strike us as equally ludicrous and far-fetched. The orthodox claims are simply sanctified by usage, by long-continued acceptance and repetition. The time is coming when all these hare-brained pretensions will be laughed out of court because men will have outgrown them. Let us endeavor to hasten that time by exposing such falsities and delusions.

W. P. BALL.

WORK FOR FREETHINKERS.

Do not, dear readers, imagine for a single moment that I think that Freethinkers are to be found among the "idlers." Not at all. From long experience I know that they are exceedingly active in every movement to which they give the sanction of their encouragement and support. But Freethinkers are very much like other people. They like to know before they act what work is likely to be most useful at the time of its performance or immediately after.

At the present moment their opinions appear to be divided. Many of them incline towards politics, others towards social problems, others towards Freethought, as the first step towards progress. My own opinion is that mental freedom must precede all other freedom. Political and social reforms are very necessary, and no one can blame Freethinkers if they devote a large portion of their spare time to the advocacy of measures for the amelioration of the condition of the workers in every part of Great Britain and Ireland.

It seems to me pretty clear that the greatest impediment in the way of reform in Ireland is the religious difficulty. Remove the priestly despots, change their occupation, and let the people have free play intellectually, and they will soon make the path clear for "Home Rule." The same thing holds good in England. Social reforms are absolutely dependent upon religious reforms. The "sects" still claim the possession of the field, and the man who proposes to do something without the aid of religion is regarded as an interloper or something worse. To the Freethinker who considers that the breaking of intellectual fetters is the most useful work that intelligent beings can engage in, I respectfully offer a few words of advice. You want to know what to do? I will suggest a few things, and probably others will make further suggestions later on.

A week or two ago I suggested to the editor of this journal that it would be a good thing to widely circulate Colonel Ingersoll's letters to Mr. Field. I went further: I suggested that these letters should be sent to the clergy, and that they should be invited to reply to them; that each Freethinker should then send a postcard to the editor of this paper with the name of the clergyman to whom a copy of these letters had been sent; if any of these deigned to reply, that Mr. Foote or myself should either write an answer or deliver a lecture in reply.

As a second suggestion, I think it would be useful work for those who can pen a good letter to write to the members of Parliament representing their constituency, calling upon them to vote in favor of Mr. Bradlaugh's Affirmation Bill (or for the abolition of all oaths) and the repeal of the blasphemy laws. Others might write to their local clergy, asking them to deliver sermons on the various contradictions and absurdities of the Bible,¹ taking copious notes of what they say, and sending them to the Editor of the *Freethinker*.

Others, again, might send to the clergy all the pamphlets they could procure on "Darwinism," and solicit their opinion on them. The great doctrine of Evolution is coming more and more to the front. Day by day it is referred to in daily journals, and openly advocated in monthly magazines, while, as we may naturally expect, it is sneered at and condemned by the small-minded and bigoted among the clergy. Freethinkers, therefore, must take every opportunity in their power to defend Darwin from the misrepresentations and calumnies of the pulpit.

The question is, how can this be done? For my part, I think that eighty per cent. of our lectures for the next year or two should be on "Darwinism." The teachings of Darwin relate to all the subjects that have an interest for man. We can try Socialism by the doctrine of "natural selection," and evolution is proceeding as surely in the world of politics as in the world of religion.

Freethinkers in all parts of the country should induce the secretaries of their social and political clubs to engage a lecturer to discourse to their members on "Darwinism." They should also write to their local papers on Darwin. They might write first and ask how it was that Darwin, who was well known to be a Freethinker, was buried in Westminster Abbey? Whether it was because the clergy wanted to claim him as a believer in Christianity—or at least as a Theist—or solely on account of his scientific achievements? Further, they might ask what the clergy think of Darwin since the publication of his biography by his son. The discussion once opened, the whole

range and tendency of Darwin's teachings might be gradually introduced or foreshadowed. Science is certain to conquer in the end. It is science that will ultimately release man of the shackles by which superstition has bound him; and he who would know what science really is should read Darwin and study his works most attentively. The world has given us no more modest, fascinating, or powerful a teacher.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

MELANESIAN SUPERSTITIONS.

A RECENT volume, *Ten Years in Melanesia*, by the Rev. Alfred Penny, a missionary in the South Pacific, gives some interesting details of the superstitions of the natives. The whole structure of their religion, he says, was based upon a belief in the existence and the power of the ghosts of their ancestors. The general name "Tindalo" is applied to these ghosts, and the word "Mana" signifies their spiritual power. When a chief dies he is sacrificed to as a Tindalo. If the devotee is lucky in the enterprise for which he has invoked the Tindalo's aid, then the Tindalo's "Mana" is considered strong, and his reputation spreads. On the other hand, failure consigns him to the limbo of obscurity. Tindalos preside over all the concerns of life. Feasts are prepared for them, which of course find their way to the priests, who are an hereditary class, and are supposed to be able to bring a person within the evil influence of a Tindalo with a view to his destruction.

COLONEL INGERSOLL IN COURT.

(From the "Evening Sun.")

COLONEL INGERSOLL is a big man wherever he goes, but he has seldom been such "a big toad in the puddle" as at the little shire town of Dedham, Mass., the past week. He was the leading counsel for Alley, the defendant in the suit to recover 150,000 dollars, the value of one hundred and fifty bonds of the Postal Telegraph Company, which the plaintiff claimed had been given to Mr. Alley upon conditions which the latter failed to carry out. The news that Colonel Ingersoll was at the court-house spread rapidly through the country town and crowds flocked to the place. So great was the rush that deputy-sheriffs were sent to guard the stairways and prevent accident. All eyes were centered upon "Bob." He sat in an arm-chair, and his ample proportions completely filled it. His smooth-shaven, round face was continually wreathed in smiles, and he frequently joined in the laugh that followed his witticisms. He thought he made a good impression on the jury, and he kept it up. At one time he was quizzing Mr. Snow in regard to the condition of his finances at a certain date. Mr. Snow tried to explain, but was interrupted by Colonel Ingersoll, who said: "I asked you if you were not substantially out of money. I have a friendly feeling for you on that account, because I have often been in that condition myself." Mr. Snow looked embarrassed.

Later in the trial Mr. Snow testified that on a certain Sunday he had remained at home and had not gone to church. Colonel Ingersoll ejaculated, "Well, you were a sensible man for once in your life." Several old ladies who were in the court-room looked horrified and glared severely at the noted Agnostic. The younger ladies joined in the laugh that followed, and even Judge Pitman's face broadened into a smile.

DESIGN

In a conversation drifting toward the many wise provisions of nature the Rev. Mr. Mackwell said: "The other day, in my intellectual excursions, I came across a wonderfully sensible paper treating of the use of snakes. The long black snake is especially useful. He goes into the dense swamps, worms himself among the reeds and flags, and devours thousands of scorpions and lizards, which, without his timely interference, would become too numerous. So, you see, everything, even the black snake, is useful, being created for a purpose." "That is all very well," one of the reverend gentleman's listeners replied; "we recognise the usefulness of the snake, because he devours scorpions and lizards, but of what use, pray tell me, are the scorpions and lizards?" "They eat innumerable insects," the minister triumphantly replied. "All right; but of what use are the insects?" "The insects? Why—er—they serve as food for lizards." "Yes, but of what use are the lizards?" "Why, you must be blind not to see that they serve as food for snakes." "Of course I see that, but that only brings up the question of what use are the snakes." "To eat the lizards, I tell you. My dear sir," the minister added, "it is not strange that Christianity advances so slowly when we think of man's narrowness of understanding."

PROFANE JOKES.

Two burglars had ransacked a house in Dublin and secured every portable thing of any value. While passing through the pantry, one of them picked up a piece of cold meat and was about to eat it. "Whist, Pat!" said the other warningly, "av'yez forgot phat day it is?" "Be jabbers," said Pat, dropping the meat, "I had; it's Friday mornin'!"

Uncle Mose met the pastor of a colored church recently on Austin Avenue, and asked him: "I say, parson, am dat a fact vhat you preaches dat a man an' his wife am one?" "Dat ar' am Gospel troof." "Well, parson, of you will come down after dark on Pecan Street, when Brudder Bones an' his wife am drunk an' banging one anudder, an' listen to do racket, you will be willin' dey is ten o' fifteen."

¹ See Messrs. Foote and Ball's *Handbook*.

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