

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 245.



PUERILE PIETY.

“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.—MATT. XVIII, 3.

GLADSTONE AND INGERSOLL.

THERE must have been a great run in the United States on the *North American Review*, containing Gladstone's reply to Ingersoll. Probably all the ministers rushed for copies, and are now working up Gladstone's points in their own sermons against the Goliath of infidelity. At any rate the *Review* is very late in reaching England. We have not had it long enough to digest the article. Our readers therefore, must wait a week for our criticism. We have seen extracts in the American papers, but we prefer to deal with the article in its entirety. Meanwhile we take the occasion to say a few words about the disputants. Dr. Field has disappeared from the arena, which is occupied by two doughtier champions. Gladstone is accounted the greatest orator in England, and Ingersoll is unquestionably the greatest orator in America. But there the similarity ends. It would be difficult to find two men more unlike each other. They differ as much in mind as in body. Gladstone is stiff and somewhat austere; Ingersoll is pliant and genial. Gladstone is diffuse; Ingersoll is pointed. Gladstone is solemn; Ingersoll is witty. Gladstone uses occasional metaphors, seldom with grace or dexterity; while metaphors gleam in Ingersoll's pages like jewels in a sultan's turban.

The chief distinction, after all, between these two athletes, lies perhaps in the faculty of humor. Gladstone is one of the least humorous of men. He is felicitous in this line about once in a decade. His last coruscation was the remark that Mr. Goschen seemed to think the Irish had a double dose of original sin: a joke which we fancy is borrowed from Sydney Smith. Mrs. Gladstone, however, evidently regards it as original, having more than once revived it in her helpmeet speeches. Ingersoll, on the other hand, is full of humor. His difficulty is not exuberance but restraint. It is easy to see that, now and then, he is tempted to fling the rein aside, and let his humor gallop and gambol. Voltaire would have delighted to bandy wit with him, and Rabelais have hailed him as sworn brother.

Gladstone's style is intensely English. Eloquence, with Gladstone, too often means physical heat and emphasis. Ingersoll's eloquence is marked by a freer play of mind. Irony, sarcasm, wit, humor, pathos, imagination and passion, are all at his command; and all are in the service of a regnant common sense, like that of Shakespeare. Gladstone, though powerful, is monotonous. Ingersoll is as varied as a landscape under an April sky. Gladstone is always labored, and Ingersoll is always spontaneous. The one is a fountain and the other too much like a pump.

Ingersoll is an original thinker. His arguments and illustrations come from his own brain. He is too rich to borrow. He has assimilated the best thought of his predecessors, but their ideas assume a new form in his presentation. Gladstone has no originality, except as a politician. His *Gleanings* are readable, but never striking; and his various defences of religion do no more than reproduce, with little improvement, the stock arguments of apologists. He presents the arguments in a rolling cloud of words; the words are his, but the thought is simply borrowed.

Gladstone and Ingersoll are both laymen. This is a very significant fact. Christianity seems unable to find a champion inside the churches who is fit to combat a gladiator like Ingersoll. Dr. Field bravely did his best, but he has fared badly, otherwise Gladstone would not have rushed into the arena. Cardinals, bishops, priests, parsons, and ministers, decline to meet Ingersoll's onset. God Almighty is their backer, but they shirk the encounter. The time has gone by when the little Davids of orthodoxy were always ready to tackle the giants of scepticism. Divine assistance has been proved a feeble support. Miracles are not wrought to back a bad argument; prayer does not carry conviction to those who watch the controversy. The clergy seem to feel they are on the wrong side. Their positions are untenable, their dogmas indefensible. They shirk discussion, and take their stand on tradition. "We are in possession," they say, "and we mean to stay. Our predecessors fought for the castle, we inherit it, and we decline a fresh challenge." So they sit down, and eat and drink, and pretend to be happy. All the while the battering-rams are crashing against the walls, and horrid fumes are rising from the fire at the gate. The nearer their doom the more loudly they protest their is no danger. Such a spectacle is not exhilarating to their followers, who rapidly desert such an ill-defended cause. Gladstone flourishes his battle-axe in their service, singling out their adversaries' Goliath. But this cannot avail them, and if they shun it the world will tell them "All is lost."

G. W. FOOTE.

THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA.—II.

BIBLE believers in these days seek to ward off the attacks of science and historical criticism, by saying that the Bible is only intended to teach morals and religion. How comes it that while inserting the fables of Genesis, Esther and Daniel, the Protestants exclude such moral and religious works as the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. In these books there is much good teaching, and none of that obscenity and objectionable matter so rife in other parts of the Bible. The Wisdom of Solomon contains as fine poetry as any in the Canonical scriptures. Its praise of wisdom is very fine and in some places extremely like what the New Testament says of Christ. Thus Wisdom in the beginning sat with God on his throne and by wisdom the world was made (ix., 4-9). "For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness" (vii., 26; compare Hebrews i., 13). Another passage, which is copied and not improved by Paul, is the description of the just man, "He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate and pure judgment instead of an helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with him against the unwise" (v., 18-20; compare Eph. vi., 14-16). "The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world" it teaches (vi., 24), and we doubt if there is any lesson from Genesis to Revelation of equal value. The religion of this pre-Christian book is very similar to Christianity. Ewald indeed says it may be regarded as "a premonition of St. John and a preparation for St. Paul." Death came unto the world through the envy of the devil (ii., 24). The saints will judge the nations and the Lord reign on the earth for ever (iii., 8). The author believed in the pre-existence of souls (viii., 20) a doctrine held by the Essenes and by Jesus (see Matt. xi., 14; xvii., 12; John iii., 7; vii., 48; ix., 2). Some have thought this doctrine taken from Plato, as the author directly copies the four cardinal virtues of that philosopher, saying of Wisdom "she teacheth temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude: which are such things as men can have nothing more profitable in their life" (viii., 7). The work being ascribed to Solomon only serves to show how rife was the tendency

to pass off supposititious books under the cover of illustrious names. Though it certainly was not written by Solomon, it is also quite as certain that our Ecclesiastes was not written by Solomon, though it deliberately states that it was. Philo has been conjectured to be the author on insufficient grounds. It seems likely he was a bachelor, if not a Malthusian, for he says, "It is better to have no children and to have virtue. But the multiplying brood of the ungodly shall not thrive" (iv., 1-3).

The Book of Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, who probably lived from 200 to 180 B.C., was referred to by many of the fathers of the church as divine scripture. Hilary quotes it with the words "Do they hear the Lord?" Athanasius cites it as the saying of the Holy Spirit, etc. And, shrewd and cynical as they are, some of the sayings of Jesus the son of Sirach will compare favorably with those of Jesus the son of Mary. "A faithful friend is the medicine of life" (vi., 16) is a phrase as worthy remembrance as most of the proverbs ascribed to Solomon. Its eulogy of wisdom, if less grand than that in the Wisdom of Solomon, is not surpassed by any portion of the New Testament except Paul's eulogy of charity (1 Cor., xiii.) Some of the expressions are similar to those put in the mouth of Jesus concerning himself. Thus Wisdom says (xxiv., 17-19):

"As the vine brought I forth pleasant savor, and my flowers are the fruit of honor and riches. I am the mother of fair love, and fear and knowledge and holy hope: I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children who are named of him. Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits."

The short Book of Baruch, which follows, is mainly noticeable because of its being evidently, on critical grounds, the product of more than one pen, although there is no external evidence against its unity. Indeed the Apocrypha throughout shows how the Jews continually worked over their old literature. The Epistle of Jeremy, exhorting against idolatry, is another illustration of a later work being tacked on to a well-known name.

Then follow three additions to Daniel. The Song of the Three Holy Children is best known by the *Benedicite* inserted in the Church Service. The very monotony of the chorus of praise is impressive, and few of the Psalms are superior. The absurdity of putting the psalm into the mouth of the children in the oven never struck the writer. It was the custom of the Rabbis to embody their lessons in a story, whether parable, allegory, or seeming historical narrative, and the last thing they or their accustomed disciples considered was whether the events which suggest the doctrine were themselves real or fictitious. This point, so evident when Christians read the Apocrypha, they forget when they come to the Gospels. The story of Susanna and how Daniel "came to judgment" against the elders is well known through illustrations. That of Bel and the Dragon gives another version of Daniel in the lion's den, and other stupid fables^f It is appointed to be read in the Church of England on November 23.

The first book of Maccabees relates the fortunes of the Jews from the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes (B.C. 175) to the death of the high priest Simon (B.C. 135). It comprises the period during which Judas and his brothers raised the standard of independence against Syria until their deliverance. The figure of Judas stands out as superior to that of David, as Sir William Wallace to Macbeth. It is a secular narrative and as trustworthy as any other part of Jewish history. It certainly cites (xii., 20) an improbable letter from "Areus, king of the Lacedemonians, to Onias the high priest," saying, "It is found in writing that the Lacedemonians and the Jews are brethren, and that they are of the stock of Abraham," but this *was* the current fiction of diplomatists seeking peace, and the letter is not nearly so incredible as the decrees of Ahasuerus cited in the canonical book of Esther, permitting the Jews to slay their enemies wholesale.

The second of Maccabees on the other hand is mostly fictitious. The history of Judas is seen through the eyes of a religious enthusiast. Prayer is answered, impiety punished, and even if God sometimes afflicts the saints they are promised they will be rewarded in the Resurrection. The doom of the dead, it is clearly taught, can be influenced by the prayers and sacrifices of their survivors. The author of the second book of the Maccabees was as evidently a Pharisee as the author of the first book was a Sadducee.

J. M. WHEELER.

I WOULD NOT BE AN ANGEL

I would not be an angel,
A golden crown to don,
And bellow "Holy, Holy"
Round heaven's awful throne.
I'd rather spend the time I have
Upon a wiser plan.
Let those who would be angels,
I choose to be a man.

I would not be an angel
And shout with holy glee,
While groaned hell's countless victims
In deathless agony.
The good can know no heaven
While hell hath even one.
Let those who will be angels,
I choose to be a man.

God's ways are somewhat shifty
(For who can with them grapple?)
Who knoweth that another Eve
Won't eat another apple?
Heaven may end as badly
As paradise began.
Let those who will be angels,
I choose to be a man.

I love the dear old earth-home,
Its golden sky above,
Its children's merry laughter,
Its woman's holy love.
To make it fairer, brighter,
Is life's sublimest plan.
Let those who will be angels,
I choose to be a man.

WALLACE NELSON.

ACID DROPS

THE Church Association is deploring the spread of Popery. A resolution was passed protesting against the graven image of the Virgin Mary on the reredos at St. Paul's, and an action against the Bishop of Lincoln for his Ritualistic practices is threatened.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Echo* points out that children are injured by the barbed fence put round the Bishop of London's enclosed fields at Fulham, and suggests an inquiry into the number of children drowned in the Bishop's moat.

THE American *Jewish Times* denounces the assertion of the *Central Baptist* that ten thousand Jews have been converted to Christianity in the present century, as a wilful and malicious falsehood.

THE *Daily Telegraph* (May 22nd), in a review of Mr. Lea's *History of the Inquisition*, says: "The so-called Ages of Faith he truthfully delineates as ages of force and fraud, and he notes how marvellous has been the improvement in the last two centuries in the substitution of tolerance for bigotry, humanity for horrible cruelty, and a higher morality for the debased and degraded public opinion to which the Inquisition ministered and on which it thrived." Others may note that the horrors were the culmination of Christianity, while the improvement has been coincident with the extension of Scepticism.

MR. GRATTAN GUINNESS alleges that he recently had an interview with a Dominican of the Roman Inquisition who plainly told him, "We punish all we can and we shall punish more when we can."

GOD launched his lightning at three school-boys who were crossing Glasgow Green, and succeeded in killing two of them. One of them was only nine years old. Why should God display such murderous feelings towards children? Christians who profess that God does not direct the lightning and guide the storm had better study their Bibles. God directeth his lightning unto the ends of the earth; and after he sends the fatal flash he "thundereth marvellously with his voice" (Job xxxvii., 3-5). God also killed two men and some horses during the thunder-storm, and tore up many large trees by the roots, and set fire to Fifeshire Lunatic Asylum, besides performing many other mischievous tricks.

GOD has also sent floods to the usually dry province of Mesopotamia, and has swept away between five and six hundred people. Parts of Asia Minor have also suffered heavily from the rain which God forgot to turn off in proper time.

THE Army of the Lord at Brighton has been victimised. They provide a special suit for candidates for baptism by immersion. One young fellow professed an earnest desire for regeneration by water, but when he stepped into the tank, proceeded to splash about and baptise all the saints within reach, until they were well soaked and the water exhausted.

SCRIPTURE, according to Dr. McPherson, asks who can count the dust? and Mr. John Aitken, of Dorrock, has the answer. He finds one million, six hundred thousand dust particles in a cubic inch.

BROTHER Bateman says the good Lord's recipe for pancakes (Ezekiel iv., 12, 15) "seems to be regarded with little favor." But the intelligent compositor, after reading the recipe in the good book, went and put it "flavor."

A WOMAN attempted to drown herself at Eastbourne because she was under the "curse" of a local clergyman.

NINETEEN members of the Salvation Army were fined for persisting in holding musical processions on Sunday at Torquay in defiance of the local Act of Parliament.

THE Japanese do not find Christianity so beautifully consoling as it has been represented. A missionary, who is apparently tainted with some modicum of doubt, says: "They grieve over the fate of their departed children, parents, and relatives, and often show their grief by tears. They ask us if there is any hope, any way to free them by prayer from that eternal misery, and I am obliged to answer there is absolutely none. Their grief at this affects and torments them wonderfully; they almost pine away with sorrow. They often ask if God cannot take their father out of hell, and why their punishment must never have an end; and they do not cease to grieve." Evidently these pagans are superior to the religion that is offered them. If they were persons of spirit, they would act like the pagan Radbod, who, when about to be baptised, bethought himself of the question, "Where are my dead forefathers?" "In hell, with all other unbelievers," replied the bishop. "Well, then, I will rather feast with my ancestors in the halls of Woden than dwell with your starveling Christians," replied the pagan, who died as he had lived, a heathen.

A "CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST" has been arrested at Boston for manslaughter, but is let out on bail for five thousand dollars. She undertook the superintendence of her daughter's confinement on the faith principle. Mother and infant both died. According to medical opinion, both would have been saved by proper treatment.

THE Church Missionary Society and similar institutions are no longer to be allowed exemption from income tax as hitherto. The Moravian Mission Trustees object to paying the tax, and are going to fight the matter out in the law courts.

THE Rev. Cowper Thomson suddenly fell back dead from his seat in Park Church, Glasgow. Cannot Talmage add such cases to the fictitious cases he gives of awful deaths of people while swearing? Why isn't the sudden death of a minister equally an awful judgment, and a striking warning against worshipping or praying or preaching?

SAY anything against his mythical God and Savior, and the average Christian demands redress for wounded feelings. The same person will probably approve of the language used by a pious East End journal in abuse of sceptics—who, if not living, have at least living friends—and which is, we believe, reproduced from a work by the Wesleyan, Rev. W. L. Watkinson. In the "Sceptical Picture Gallery" this Christian journal puts "George Eliot and George Lewes, her paramour; John Stuart Mill and his adulteress; Carlyle, with his scorching, scathing, cursing, thunder-and-lightning temper; Miss Martineau, the climax among womankind of egotism, vanity, arrogance, pride, and censoriousness." This is another specimen of the Christian charity which "thinketh no evil."

A PROSECUTION for blasphemy is reported from Germany. Dr. Voelkel, of Magdeburg, editor of the *Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt*, has been tried on a charge of indirect blasphemy, gross insult of the Christian religion, and abuse of the Bible, contained in the tale of *The Unfortunate Prince*. On the motion of the Public Prosecutor the proceedings took place with closed doors. A verdict of "Not Guilty" was given, the court being of opinion that the tale, although showing want of reverence, does not contain any insult or abuse. A correspondent has furnished us with a translation of the tale in question, which we may shortly place before our readers.

GOD is favoring the United States with some huge floods. The embankments of the Mississippi have burst in many places under the pressure of the rising waters, and the fertile land of the valley is fast being flooded. Cattle and crops are swept away, towns and villages are flooded and undermined, and the ruined inhabitants are seeking in neighboring towns the shelter and help which their God refuses.

THE floods in the Mississippi valley and the drought in other parts indicate that the Lord has not yet learned the principles of economic supply and demand. In one part he renders thousands homeless through floods; in another starves hundreds for want of water. But, as Beyle said, "God has one excuse—he don't exist."

A PERSON named Robert Bear has been summoned at Sydney, New South Wales, to answer a charge of selling obscene literature, to wit, *The Law of Population*, by Mrs. Besant. The Ministers' Union are the prosecutors. A Defence committee has been formed, and the Ministers' Union will be fought to the uttermost.

THE Rev. D. Macleod in his memoirs of his brother, the editor of *Good Words*, gives from his journals the following answers recorded as received from intending communicants of the Barony parish, Glasgow. What did Christ do for sinners? Gave his son. Any wonderful works Christ did? Made the world in six days. Any others? Buried Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. What became of them afterwards? Angels took them to Abraham's bosom. What had Christ to do with that? He took Abraham. Who was Christ? The Holy Spirit.

ACCORDING to the *Eastern Argus*, a meeting of the members of the Martin Luther Church, South Hackney, "unanimously resolved to continue the good work so well begun by the Rev. F. G. Widdows." They surely do not mean the work for which he is now undergoing imprisonment.

THE riots have taken place in Denbighshire. The distraining party were hooted and hustled by an enormous crowd. Stones were thrown and blows were struck, fifteen people being seriously injured by the batons of the police. Blood was streaming from the heads and faces of the persons hit. This is how the Church shows its love for the people. One man is said to be in a dying condition. Eight persons were subsequently fined £1 each and costs for throwing stones.

A FRESH commentary on the brotherhood of Christianity is afforded by the Protestant Episcopal Convention of South Carolina. Last year the presence of a colored clergyman caused a great uproar, and led to the secession of a large body of clerical and lay delegates. Ever since there has been furious strife in all the parishes over this question, which this year's convention has settled by a compromise which is virtually a triumph for race intolerance. The new scheme arranges for dividing the diocese into two organisations, one white and the other black. The white Episcopalians will hold their convention uncontaminated by the presence of the black, while the niggers, if they please, can have a convention of their own.

FIVE women have been sent as delegates to the Methodist Episcopal Conference at New York. Their admission was stoutly opposed by Dr. Buckley, who was supported by a colored Methodist, who was strong on the point that Paul declared the man should rule, and not the woman.

THE British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews reports an expenditure of £9,000. This supports a staff of thirty-one agents, being at the rate of £300 a-piece if it is shared out equally, which is sure not to be the case. In return, the Society reports that the conversions and baptisms are "numerous," and that the Hebrew race is of all people the most inaccessible, the least open to Gospel influences. Why did God select as his chosen people a nation which is thus hardened, and why don't the Society specify the actual number and price of the "numerous" baptisms? The Chairman, Lieut.-General Sir Robert Phayre, believed that there was no work nearer the heart of our Lord than that of Christianising the Jews. And yet the work proceeds so slowly. The Jews are so obstinate that God the Son can't get on with the work nearest his heart.

THE Rev. Dr. Green attributed the "intolerable pride and prejudice" of the Jews to the "persecution they had always suffered at the hands of so-called Christians"—from which it appears that the Christians of to-day are ready to repudiate the Christians of the past, so as to relieve Christianity from the responsibility of Christian crimes. The Rev. E. White thought it only natural that there should only be the comparatively insignificant results from preaching the Gospel among the eight or ten millions of Jews who found themselves face to face with "such a hideous mockery of the Christian religion as the Roman Catholic Church presented in Central Europe." Hadn't Christians better Christianise each other before they try the Jews?

THE Rev. E. White caused quite a storm in the meeting by suggesting that Christians should not hurt the feelings of Jews by teaching them that all their good and wise Rabbis in the past are hopelessly lost because they had not believed in the Word which they had never heard. This was sailing perilously close to a denial of the doctrine of eternal punishment, and vigorous protests were uttered against such a betrayal of the faith. Amid loud cries of "Chair," and "Hear, hear," a gentleman inquired if the agents of the Society were influenced by such opinions. The Secretary promptly calmed the rising storm with an emphatic "No." So the converted Jews will have to believe that their ancestors are in hell.

A WILSH chapel scandal has come into the law courts. A split occurred in the congregation, and fights took place for possession of the chapel. As there is another chapel within

twelve yards, it was suggested that each set should take one of the chapels. The counsel for the respondents objected that the preaching and singing in the one were audible in the other, as they were so close together. Mr. Justice Stirling thought "it surely might be trusted that the feeling of people engaged in divine service would prevent them disturbing one another." But the counsel urged that the reasonable arrangement suggested would only provoke further disturbance. How powerful a peace-maker Christianity must be, when rival congregations cannot keep the peace towards each other!

IN an article on "The Resurrection and Scepticism" the *Rock* commences with a story of a valuable silver cup being accidentally dropped into a strong acid bath by one of Faraday's workmen, whereupon Faraday poured in another strong acid, which precipitated the silver to the bottom. The metal was then melted up and made into a cup again, "more beautiful than ever." This illustrates the resurrection; we are to be made beautiful for ever up in heaven. But the story is almost as improbable as the conclusion derived from it. Valuable silver cups are not put into workmen's hands in laboratories, and if a man were so clumsy as to drop it into an acid bath, he would fish it out again with some of the rods or vessels at hand. A chemist would not pour in another acid, because this could only drive out the first acid by uniting with the metal itself. He might put in another metal for which the acid had a stronger affinity than it had for silver. The errors in the story of a simple practical matter indicate how readily the narrator of it falls into mistakes. In matters of fact the mistakes can easily be exposed, and it is only in matters of fiction or faith that detection and exposure can be evaded.

HERR COHEN tells a very amusing story in the *Christian World* of a young man at a leading London Y.M.C.A., who, on his entering the building said to him bluntly, "Are you saved?" As he appeared to be half-witted, unhealthy and dirty, Herr Cohen asked him whether he was saved, and having received the reply that he was holy and without sin, brought up the subject of baptism. "Oh, no," he had not been immersed. "Well then," said Herr Cohen, "if ever a person wanted baptism by immersion at least once a week, with a liberal application of soap, it is yourself."—*Christian Commonwealth*.

THE *C. C.* explains some of the prophecies in the Revelation and then recommends its readers to "pause here," inasmuch as "the delirious fancies of certain popular 'prophetic' students (!) have lately dragged this mysterious subject in the mire of ridiculous mockery." What does prophet Baxter think of this unkind cut from a Christian brother?

A SAILOR was rigging Commodore Hovey's yacht, *Fortuna*, in Boston the other day. He fell to the deck and suffered a compound fracture of the right thigh. His superstitious messmates carried him off to the Boston branch of the Faith-Cure League which has accomplished some wonderful cures. His fracture was duly blessed and prayed upon, and the man was told to get up and walk. He did so, and fell and broke his other leg. "—— ——— the faith cure!" exclaimed the sailor man. "Take me to the Massachusetts General Hospital." And there the poor fellow lies, doing quite well.—*New York Star*.

"FALL in, my friend, fall in!" shouted a Salvation Army leader, as he finished his exhortations and shouldered his banner at the street corner the other evening. "Come along with me." "Where are you going?" thoughtfully replied a sad-looking man on the curbstone, whose name is not wholly dissociated with that of "Boxer." "I'm going to heaven," said the Salvationist, "I've been on the road nine years." "Well, if you've been nine years on the road," replied the sad one, "and haven't got any further than Holborn Bars, you'd better give it up." And the bystanders indulged in a rich baritone smile as the procession moved off, warbling that beautiful hymn, "We'll get there all the same."

THE *Christian Advocate* tells a story of a sick but loquacious preacher:—"He offered a brief prayer, and arose to express his regret that he could not proceed. He said it was a great disappointment to him. He had hoped that morning to be able to speak to them upon the following beautiful passage of Scripture (announcing the text), but owing to ill-health he should not be able to do so, and would merely state the line of thought which he intended to communicate. After speaking for awhile on that he said, 'In the evening, had I dared to venture out, I should have hoped to follow these reflections with a few remarks upon another subject' (announcing the text). After a while a bell rung. He stopped, placed his hand to his head, and said to one of the deacons, 'What is that bell ringing for?' Said he: 'That is the one o'clock bell, and you have spoken about two hours in telling us what you would have said in the morning and in the evening if you had been well enough to speak.'

"England, in the spiritual sense, is the modern Israel," says the Rev. A. C. Berry. This is an improvement on the Lost Tribes theory. We are the chosen people. Of course we are. Every other nation thinks the same—of itself.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, May 27, at 11.30, Clerkenwell Green (open-air) "Salvation"; at 7.30, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., "Gladstone's Reply to Ingersoll."

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.

A. HALL.—Mr. Foote will perhaps be able to pay Hanley a Sunday visit during the autumn or early winter.

H. RICHARDSON.—Sorry to hear your Freethought activity has cost you your situation. We will gladly insert an advertisement gratis, if you will draw up one, stating the kind of situation you require.

J. REID.—Glad our letter was useful. Hope to hear from you again some day.

H. G. SHEPHERD.—There is a deal of method in Prophet Baxter's madness.

J. B. A.—You mistake. Ingersoll does not profess to believe in a future life. He merely says the priests did not invent the idea.

W. B. THOMPSON, on behalf of the Chatham Branch, sends Mr. Foote a unanimous vote of thanks for his attempt to improve the organisation of the N. S. S.

H. HISCOCK.—Glad to hear you have literature for sale on Clerkenwell Green. Our informant said he walked round and saw nothing being sold but the *Link*.

HETERODOX.—(1) Pusey's *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment* is the best book in reply to the "liberal interpreters" of an illiberal dogma. (2) Leslie Stephen is an Agnostic, which means a timid Atheist. See his *Essays in Freethinking*. (3) Carlyle might be called a Pantheist. He denied the Bible miracles. (4) Emerson might also be called a Pantheist. (5) Glad to hear you are so pleased with our answer to Gladstone. The articles are much amplified and improved in the pamphlet. We shall deal with Gladstone's reply to Ingersoll at length.

H. G.—We believe that "sky-pilot" was originally used to designate a chaplain in the navy, but the term is appropriate to all Christian ministers.

W. D.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks for your good wishes.

R. J. M.—Canon Westcott on the Resurrection is a standard work on the orthodox side. Greg's *Creed of Christendom* deals with the question from the critical side. Our "Bible Romance" *A Rising God* may be of some service.

G. FINDLEY offers to take 2s. worth of the proposed tract *The Word of God* by Mr. G. L. Mackenzie.

W. NEWTON.—The question of Christianity and the position of woman is more elaborated in the pamphlet than in the articles on Mr. Gladstone. Sir Henry Maine's splendid work on *Ancient Law* is used against the ex-premier's argument.

G. FAHEY.—Mr. Forder has handed us your interesting letter. We wish, with you, that the *Freethinker* could be read more in Ireland. People who shiver at the frown of an old gentleman at Rome require a little rousing.

G. BALL.—There is a branch of the N. S. S. at Cardiff. Secretary, S. Jones, 19 Oxford Road, Roath, Cardiff.

A. H. B.—Thanks. Paragraph will be used next week.

J. THOMPSON.—Sent. Please forward future orders to Mr. Forder.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Western Figaro—Watts's Literary Guide—Ironclad Ago—Open Court—Freethought—South London Mail—Freidenker—Lucifer—La France—Countryman—New York Tribune—Newcastle Weekly Leader—Truthseeker—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Echo—Boston Investigator—Halfpenny Weekly—Le mot d'Ordre—La Justice—La Vespa.

SUGAR PLUMS.

Christianity and Progress, Mr. Foote's reply to Mr. Gladstone, is now on sale. Considerable pains have been taken with it, and it should have a good circulation. Freethinkers might lend it to their orthodox friends. The pamphlet is handsome in appearance.

Mr. FOOTE lectures this evening (May 27) at the London Hall of Science on "Gladstone's Reply to Ingersoll," instead of on the subject previously announced. His morning lecture on "Salvation" will be delivered on Clerkenwell Green.

SUBSCRIPTIONS for the London Secular Federation:—J. Robertson, £1; German Freethinker, 5s. Further subscriptions are solicited. With its inadequate funds the Federation has already done wonders. The Christian Evidence Society want another £1,000 a-year to counteract its baneful influence.

THE London Secular Federation's last social party for the season takes place at the Hall of Science, on June 11. Concert from 8.30 to 10.30. Dancing from 11 till 1. Tickets for concert only 6d., for concert and ball 1s. Mr. Foote will attend.

THE Newcastle papers give some report of the N.S.S. Conference. The *Chronicle* reprints a large part of the yearly report, and gives a brief account of the evening meeting. The *Leader* devotes only a few lines to the Conference, but about fifty lines

to the public gathering. This is not much, though it is an improvement on the old conspiracy of silence.

THE Chatham Branch has started an open-air campaign. Mr. B. W. Dent opens to-day (May 27) with two lectures; at 3.30 in Stopford Road, and at 6.30 in the New Road, top of Hammond Hall. Freethinkers should rally round him. The Branch has reprinted as a tract a part of Mr. Foote's article on "Do Infidels Recant?" and its wide circulation will be extremely agreeable to the Rev. S. D. Scammell.

Hairy Elijah and *Bald Elisha* are the two new numbers of "Bible Heroes." They will be published on Monday.

COPIES of a permanent *Freethinker* poster will be forwarded to any friend who can get it exhibited in a shop or elsewhere.

THE Newcastle *Weekly Leader* has arranged a symposium on morality, religion and the press. Clericals of all sects were invited to contribute to the discussion, and over three hundred have done so. The editor put three questions: (1) Are people generally growing better or worse? (2) What are the chief influences that make for degradation? (3) Do you think the daily and weekly secular press has, on the whole, a healthy influence?

A FEW croakers say, like the ravens they are, "We are all getting worse; God help us." But most of the answers are to the effect that morality is progressing and religion decaying. The Rev. O. C. Carr, of St. Wilfrid's, Newcastle, like the rest of his tribe, is somewhat jealous of the press. "It is impossible," he says, "to over-estimate the evil wrought by the organs of Secularism and Atheism (e.g., the *Freethinker*)." We take it that our circulation is looking up in canny Newcastle.

MR. CARR's nominal reason for hating that awful *Freethinker* is that "by destroying the belief in a future existence" we "virtually and practically give free licence to the evil passions of men." The grammar is a little mixed, and "free licence" should take a prize at Killarney. Mr. Carr's real reason is probably that the *Freethinker* makes converts and helps to empty the churches. He must be quite aware, unless he is very ignorant, that Freethinkers are not conspicuous in the criminal and vicious classes, though a good many sky-pilots manage to earn a most unenviable notoriety in wickedness.

THE *South London Mail* inserts a lengthy letter from the president of the Camberwell Branch N. S. S. in reply to the Rev. Mr. Chapman's recent strictures upon Secularists.

THE *Echo* inserted a letter from our esteemed contributor, Mr. G. L. Mackenzie, tackling Mr. Gladstone for his views as to the moral responsibility of erroneous belief, in his controversy with Ingersoll.

THE New York Legislature unanimously chose Colonel Ingersoll to deliver the memorial address in the assembly in honor of his friend the late Roscoe Conkling.

THE following inscription (in French) is proposed for the memorial to Servetus, which it is suggested should be erected on the place of his execution at Geneva:—

TO THE MEMORY OF
MICHAEL SERVETUS,
Who died on this spot
A Victim of Religious Intolerance.

This monument has been raised in the name of the Liberty of Conscience of the 19th century.

As if in rebuke of the bigotry of the Municipal Council at Rome, who have refused to permit the erection of the monument to Bruno on the place of his execution at Rome, the Municipal Council of Paris have decided to inaugurate a monument to Etienne Dolet, the French Freethought printer and martyr on the Place Maubert, where he was executed August 3, 1546

MR. WALLACE NELSON is using his pen as well as his voice in Australia. The *Liberator* contains jottings both in prose and verse over his signature. As many of our readers are interested in Mr. Nelson we reproduce some of his lines.

CHRIST'S PARABLES.—XI.

DIVES AND LAZARUS (Luke xvi., 19—31).

THIS parable gives a dramatic picture of a most horrible and reprehensive kind. In it Christ depicts eternal torment, the rich man writhing in the everlasting flames of hell from which there is no escape. If Christ's pictures and threats are genuine and true, he and his Father, the creator and maintainer of hell, stand convicted of deeds of horror utterly surpassing all possible crimes on earth. The Trinity must be hideous fiends, who glory in the eternal agony and despair of millions of immortal souls. No word

too strong, no condemnation too severe, can be launched against so atrocious a doctrine or so atrocious a course of action.

If the picture of hell is false, then the Son of God was a deliberate liar, who uttered words which he knew would deceive the Christian world, and which he must have intended to deceive. Whether founded on hell as a fact or on hell as a fiction, such terrorism is vile and contemptible, and utterly subversive of the true basis of morality. The parable that embodies such cruel acts or threats is an insult to humanity, and an outrage on all good feeling and good sense. If spoken as a useful lie, that lie deserves to be held up to universal reprobation. If spoken in earnest, its hell stands forth as an infamy of the deepest dye. Christians who resent such strong words, but who defend and admire the strong actions and teachings to which the words apply, should say what can be worse than eternal agony of which fire is the only fitting agent or symbol. If a human being burnt down a town and sacrificed thousands of lives in a temporary hell of his own creation, what should we say of him? If a mother throws her child on the fire, what language can the Christian press find sufficient to express its sense of such inhuman conduct? Does such an action cease to be blameable if the fire is made eternal and the torture never ends? Is the universal Father a glorious being for throwing billions of his children on a fire that is never quenched? Is such an action good simply because the perpetrator is powerful?

The frightful injustice of God's decisions as depicted in the parable, is another monstrous feature in its insane reversal of the state of things on earth. A passionate revolt against the contrast between the luxuries of the idle rich and the sufferings of the poor, is allowed expression and objective realisation so far as impassioned faith can assure it; but the utter change brought about is of an infinitely worse and more revolting character than anything that can occur during human life upon earth. Faith is so weak in comparison with visible fact, that it has to make its rewards and punishments eternal and of the most exaggerated description possible as its only way of producing some sense of a balance in the general result. The revenge and the envy and the distorted sense of justice which cannot be carried out on earth are bottled up till they burst forth as fires of hell peopled by devouring worms and dragons that never die and never cry enough. And all this nightmare mockery of the calm clear sunshine of true morality is foisted on a credulous world as the noblest justice and magnanimity of a perfect being.

What had the rich man done to merit eternal torture? Nothing, except that he was rich. He is charged with nothing else. He was apparently not uncharitable, for the people brought Lazarus to his gate to be fed with the remnants of his feasts.¹ Even amidst the flames of hell he takes thought for others, and asks, but in vain, that Lazarus may be sent to warn his brethren lest they also come into this place of torment. What has Lazarus done to merit eternal happiness and glory? Nothing, except that God tormented him with sores on earth and drove him to the rich man's doorsteps for the food which his Creator denied him the power to earn.

If it be said that the rich man was also wicked, the charges should have been mentioned in the parable. But the parable is silent concerning any offences attributed to Dives. It is to his riches only that our attention is drawn, and the pretence that the parable is directed against wickedness is a patent fraud.

The callousness of the redeemed in heaven as depicted in this parable, is as horrible as their notions of justice and morality are perverted. Believers are perfectly comfortable in beholding the distressing scenes in hell. Not one tear of pity falls from their sanctified eyes. Not one drop of water will Lazarus or Abraham or God bestow on the rich man amidst sufferings infinitely worse than Lazarus ever had to endure on earth. Even if Dives had refused to help the beggar on earth and had driven him away empty-handed from his gate, why should celestial beings imitate the conduct they condemn? Why be more pitiless still under circumstances that should rend the heart of any but an absolute fiend? The *lex talionis*, the law of evil for evil, is supposed to be forbidden by Christ. But what is this conduct but a revenge of the most hideous and extreme

character? Where is the justice or the moral compensation in making millions of years of hell-fire the necessary sequel of a few years of happiness on earth?

W. P. BALL.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S CONFERENCE.

WHIT-SUNDAY brought splendid weather, and sea and sky looked lovely from South Shields pier. The Lord, or the clerk of the weather, was in a merciful mood. Monday was, if possible, still finer, the wind having shifted a little to the east and swept the sky quite clear. The delegates who were able to stay and take trips in the neighborhood could not have been more favored if they had prayed for a month.

The South Shields Branch made excellent arrangements. Hotels and private houses afforded the delegates and visitors good accommodation, and everybody seemed satisfied. Among the latest arrivals on Saturday night was Mr. E. Truelove, resolved not to miss the Conference despite his eighty years.

Precisely at 10.30 on Sunday morning the Conference commenced in the Free Library Hall, which was tastefully decorated for the occasion. Growing plants gave a fresh appearance to the platform, and the walls were adorned with the names of Free-thought worthies of all ages and nations.

Delegates were present from the following Branches:—Birmingham, Battersea, Bethnal Green, Camberwell, Central London, Cramlington, Chester-le-Street, Deptford, Derby, Edinburgh, East London, Grimsby, Halifax, Huddersfield, Heckmondwike, Hyde Park, Hartlepool, Nottingham, Newcastle, North Middlesex, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Rochdale, Southampton, Sheffield, South Shields, Stockton, Swindon, Sunderland, Westminster, West Ham, West Auckland, Wallsend.

Among those who were not delegates were Mrs. Besant, and Messrs. C. Bradlaugh, G. W. Foote, R. Forder, and W. Reynolds. Many members were also present from Branches in the district.

Mr. Bradlaugh took the chair and rapped the table with his usual punctuality, wielding his famous Richard Carlile hammer as vigorously as ever; sometimes, perhaps, a trifle too vigorously.

He read the Executive's report for the past year. On the whole it was a healthy document, but some thought too much attention was given to the world at large and too little to the N. S. S. The London Secular Federation had a paragraph, and the Science Classes another. Other paragraphs dealt with Free-thought in America, Australia, and India. Attention was given to the Oaths Bill, the Religious Prosecutions Abolition Bill, and the Sunday clauses of Sir John Lubbock's unhappy measure. Regret was expressed that the Communal Council of Rome had refused a site for Bruno's monument, to the cost of which a considerable sum had been subscribed through the N. S. S. Professor Bain was pointedly thanked for taking the initiative in abolishing the oath required from graduates at the Aberdeen University. The Report concluded as follows:

"It is the difficulty of a militant minority, which has to win by gradually overcoming the prejudices of the majority, that its struggle must be long, and often wearying to many of the rank and file. In 1882-3, under the stimulus of the prosecutions for blasphemy, and of the indignation aroused by the severe sentence of twelve months' imprisonment on Mr. G. W. Foote, there was a very large accession of members, and an increased activity in the Free-thought propaganda which has hardly been sustained during the past three years. One of the propositions on the agenda paper invites you to consider how our party organisation may be made more efficient."

Mr. W. H. Reynolds read the Treasurer's report, showing a total balance of £214 5s. 1½d. on the right side. The membership, subscriptions, and balances showed a slight improvement on the previous year.

Mr. Lumley (South Shields) raised a question as to the affiliation fee to the Law and Liberty League, but was told that, if he desired to go into such matters, which were not innovations, he would have to do it by resolution later on. Nothing more, however, was heard of it.

Mr. Foote took the chair while Mr. Bradlaugh was re-elected President. Mr. Bradlaugh, in responding, said he hoped to remain President until compulsory oaths and the blasphemy laws were abolished. He only took office as a fighting President.

All the old Vice-Presidents were re-elected *en bloc*. A letter was read from Mr. LeLubez, who had gone to France, resigning the treasurership. Mr. Bradlaugh paid him a warm tribute of thanks for his services when the N. S. S. had a treasurer but no treasurer. Mr. W. H. Reynolds was then elected Treasurer, and Messrs. Herbert and Early as auditors.

Before electing the Secretary, it was resolved to take the motion of the Plymouth Branch "That the Secretary's salary be reduced by one half." But Mr. Searle, their delegate, refused to move, and the erratic idea dropped dead. Mr. Forder was then unanimously re-elected as Secretary. Mr. Bradlaugh said it would be a great pity to lose Mr. Forder. Branches ought not to ask him to shorten his life by giving open-air lectures, as he was not strong enough for the work.

Discussion followed as to the publication of the Balance Sheet. Branches failed to send in their annual statements, and the result was a misleading report. The Executive recommended "That the resolution relating to the publication of the annual balance sheet be rescinded." This was eventually carried by 33 to 21, Mr. Foote adding a rider that the Branches should still

¹ The Catholic Bible inserts the words, "and no one did give him," but the Protestant Bible has the honesty to omit these interpolated words.

send in to the Executive a copy of their annual balance sheets, so that it might have a full view of the Society's operations.

Mr. Crowther (Halifax) moved "That the Conference be held in London every third year." This gave rise to a long and warm discussion, in which Messrs Bradlaugh, Foote, Bentley, Woffenden, Seago, Walker and others took part. The motion was lost, the majority being five to one. Mr. Seago demanded a scrutiny. Much time was lost, but the result was in one respect instructive. The scrutiny reduced the majority to a little over two to one.

During the interval for dinner (12.30 to 2.30) a good spread was found at the Golden Lion Hotel. Between sixty and seventy sat down. More had been expected, but this was as many as could be reasonably hoped for in a place so far north.

When the afternoon sitting began, Mr. Alward (Grimsby) moved a vote of thanks to the South Shields Branch for their excellent arrangements. His speech was neat, and so was Mr. Lumley's response. The latter gentleman paid a high compliment to Messrs. Peacock and Sanderson.

Then came the motion of the day. It was moved by Mr. Foote, and ran as follows:—

"That a Committee be appointed to consider the whole subject of our Party Organisation, with a view to its extension and efficiency; and that it draw up a written report (if possible within three months), which shall be printed on a separate form and circulated among all the Branches; that the Executive be authorised to take what action it deems advisable when the Committee has made a further summary report on the criticisms and suggestions it has received, and that the rest of the Report be remitted to the next Conference."

Mr. Foote spoke at some length, pointing out the need for improvement in our organisation. We have no room to report his speech. It was listened to with close attention and much applauded.

Referring to Mr. Moss's case, Mr. Foote said he was authorised to tell the whole story. Mr. Moss was in the employ of the London School Board. That was the body which had meanly and illegally ordered him to cease speaking and writing for Free-thought. Such a proceeding called for resistance, and the Secular party should be so organised as to deal with such cases. Mr. Moss had a wife and family depending upon him, and he could not fight the London School Board alone. Mr. Foote spoke warmly on the subject and the meeting was evidently in sympathy with him.

Mr. Laidlaw (Newcastle) seconded the motion in a brief, fervid speech. Mr. R. Forder explained that the N. S. S. had lost many members through emigration. Then again, in London, the Radical Clubs had drawn many members into active political work. Further the N. S. S. had lost through Socialism. Some left the Society because Mrs. Besant advocated Socialism, and others left it because Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Foote *did not* advocate Socialism.

Mr. Bradlaugh supported the resolution, though he "differed from nearly all Mr. Foote had said." With respect to Mr. Moss, there had been no abandonment. If resistance was contemplated, the Society would see what could be done.

Mr. Foote's motion was carried unanimously. The Committee was forthwith appointed, comprising Messrs. Foote, Robertson, Reynolds, Seago, and Standing.

Mr. R. Forder then made a brief speech as Secretary. He hoped the Society would give him more to do, and he promised to do it.

Mr. Nelson (Sheffield) said he would gladly subscribe towards the expenses of Mr. Moss's case; a remark which elicited much approval. After a few more words on the subject from Mr. Bradlaugh the Conference closed.

During the second interval (4.30 to 6.30), a party of delegates went down to the pier, and had their photographs taken in a group by Mr. Salt (Sunderland).

The public meeting at 6.30 was a great success. The hall was crowded and the doors had to be shut; some delegates even were unable to gain admission. Mr. Peacock opened with a capital little speech. He is a member of the South Shields School Board, and he said: "Education is our salvation." Mr. J. M. Robertson followed. His voice has greatly improved, and he has caught the deliberate platform manner. His speech was fluent and pregnant with suggestion. He advocated greater earnestness, and regarded Freethought as primary. Mrs. Besant was, as usual, fervently eloquent, and brought down the house. Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Foote were also in good form. The meeting broke up at 8.30, and everybody seemed highly delighted. South Shields Freethinkers, in particular, expect a considerable increase of strength from the gathering—and they deserve it.

FURTHER DESPATCHES FROM OUR SPECIAL AERIAL CORRESPONDENT.

"ASTREA," APRIL.

BEFORE taking our departure from "Luna" we learn that the young man Jesus Christ and his mother were in a fair way of earning a competency with the itinerant ice-cream barrow by freezing the "youthful innards" at a ha'penny a glass.

Our aerial machine being now in perfect trim we left the simple and trusting Lunites and steered W.N.W., passing numerous planets, many of which we just touched at and witnessed some curious sights. At one we found near the coast a very solemn looking gentleman named "Boses," in the cleft of a rock, sketching the back parts of

Jehovah, having in contemplation the production of a new pattern for trousers for the coming season—"Boses" being a cheap tailor. At another planet we witnessed a very touching scene, a dreadful battle raging, and the general named "Boshua" wanting the daylight prolonged to produce the greater discomfiture to his opponents, had prevailed on Jehovah to stop the whole planetary system for this occasion and was having a high old time of it in the dissecting business, his adversaries being the subjects. We cleared from this planet sharp, singing "There is a fountain filled with blood," (no chorus) and steered for the asteroid, wherefrom this despatch is mailed. We found that a week before we arrived a young man had been executed for plotting against the State and acting the fool generally, having tried equestrianism in their city of Kerjoosalem, outside two jackasses. Events occurred at the public execution of this young man that gave great trouble to the State and were really Munchausen-like to us at first, but by diligence we overcame that feeling, though we are still astounded. At the moment when the culprit lost hold of his wind, the veil of the principal "go-to-meeting house" was rent in twain, and the members of the government were busy day and night opening tenders from all the jerry builders in the land who had offered to renovate the same at the smallest possible cost with the best suburban bricks, etc.

Besides this miraculous event, darkness overspread the land from the sixth to the ninth hour, and such a run on the gas companies so increased the consumption of gas that the supply ran out, and all the tradespeople are going in heavily for damages for loss to their business, although the gas companies very liberally engaged the original burning bush and pillar of fire to parade the streets at an enormous expense.

But the most astounding event occurring at this execution was the waking up of lots of very dead and mildewy saints from their graves. Being wound up they marched, rather in a stiffish and joint-creaking manner, into the streets of Kerjoosalem arm in arm, some of them being captured by the local police, being too gauze-like in their attire—the others reaching their former homes, interviewing their former wives, and fighting in a bloodthirsty and Choctaw Indian kind of manner with the present proprietors of their wives and the wrongful owners of their (the lately late lamented) hearths and homes, as they expressed themselves when interviewed. One thirty old patriarch found his wife's present husband actually wearing the clothes he left behind when "he joined the innumerable caravan which moves to that mysterious realm," besides making himself perfectly free with the cask of family ale in the coal cellar. Another high old saint who'd been dead only a month found his late wife knitting slippers for the resident single curate, so first delivering a highly instructive lecture to his wife, interspersed with gymnastic exercises, he interviewed the curate, whose church is now closed for a few weeks, he giving out that sacramental wine has been assimilated by a blasphemous pew opener and a bibulous boadle, a fresh supply being ordered at once.

The judges will be very busy for a month or two, as all these mildewed resuscitated saints are instituting cases for divorce against their former wives, and are hoping to get damages from the usurpers of their hearths and homes. Some of these cases are very, very sad. One old saint being grieved to find one of the above usurpers had actually pawned the family watch, sold the ticket, and was indulging in the national and gentle game of skittles, defiantly telling the original old saint if he didn't clear quickly from his abode of bliss he'd cut him up into errand boys, and advised him to go back and get himself decently buried again, just asking the local coroner to kindly sit on him and bring in a favorable verdict for the press, so that no member of the lower house would have any reason to ask the Home Secretary nasty impertinent questions.

Now all this is very hurtful to the feelings of these first-class respectable old saints, who in their time have carried on a very lucrative and jolly kind of profession. I deeply commiserate them and think when they have got their joints well oiled, the mouldiness cleared from the crevices of their faces, and more rotundity in their bodies, they may make decent members of society, although nearly all their wives say "they can't bear them," as they have a peculiar odor. I shall interview them and if possible get their experiences of the "land over there," and will mail you further intelligence of this most astounding episode.

REVIEWS.

The Chicago Martyrs; Their Speeches in Court. Published by the London International Socialists. Price 6d. 35 Newington Green Road. Without entering into the question of the justice of executing the condemned Anarchists of Chicago, it is evident from their speeches that here were men worthy of a better fate. This will, however, hardly be the impression of those who see only the cover of this little book, upon which are very badly printed portraits of the "martyrs."

Artificial Limbs, etc., together with a series of articles on Psychology. By JAMES GILLINGHAM, Surgical Mechanist, Chard, Somerset.—Mr. Gillingham is a Spiritist, who believes that Satan performs feats of legerdemain so as almost to deceive God's very elect. After giving a catalogue of his own inventions, Mr. Gillingham argues for the immortality of the soul, because his patients feel their old limbs even when replaced with artificial ones. This seems rather an argument for the immortality of the body. We trust the author's surgical appliances are sounder than his psychology.

Salvationist, (to a Freethinker): "My dear brother, I pray to God for you every night and ask him to give you a new heart." *Freethinker:* "It's my liver that is out of order. If he has a good liver to spare ask him to send it on at once."

Husband: "My dear, that is a long motto you are working." Wife: Yes, John. (He reads on it) "While the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return." "Is it to be hung in the vestibule of the church, my dear?" "No, John; I'll hang it on the chandelier in the hall."

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These Tracts are numbered, but the old heading, "Freethinker Tracts," has been omitted, so as not to frighten people. Number 5 consists of a selection from *Bible Contradictions*. The circulation of such leaflets wholesale will be very beneficial to the Freethought Movement, as they are all specially designed for the common reader.

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