

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.
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SACRED MILLINERY.

“And bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office. And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach.”—EXODUS XXVIII, 40—42.

A NEW OLD STORY.

THERE is a striking passage in Ingersoll’s reply to Gladstone. We beg pardon, there are many striking passages, and this is one of them. Gladstone recommended Ingersoll to read Bishop Butler, as though the chief of American Freethinkers could be ignorant of such a well-known work. This pedagogic advice might have been resented as impertinent, but Ingersoll adopts another course. In one paragraph he gives the whole gist of the *Analogy*, thus showing his mastery of Butler’s argument against the Deists; and in another paragraph he picks out a sentence from Butler, thereby proving his intimate acquaintance with him, and slings it dexterously at Gladstone’s forehead. “Why might not,” Butler asks, “whole communities and public bodies be seized with fits of insanity as well as individuals?” This question, says Ingersoll, throws a flood of light upon the probable origin of most, if not all, religions.

Darwin himself was struck by the same idea. He tells us, in his Autobiography, that when he was pondering the evidences of Christianity he could not help attaching weight to the fact that “many false religions have spread over large portions of the earth like wild-fire.” By

“false” religions Darwin did not mean religions more obviously false than others, but religions that are branded as “false” by Christians, and religions that afterwards perished, and are therefore regarded as false; for dead religions, like dead kings, have no friends.

Hobbes, who was one of the most clear-sighted men that ever lived, went a step further. He declined to draw any distinction, as to truth and validity, between one religion and another. He declared that superstition was simply religion out of fashion, and religion was simply superstition in fashion. There never was a truer saying. While superstitions are in fashion they have temples, priests, expounders and defenders. When they go out of fashion no one troubles to consider whether they are true or false. They are regarded as the inevitable mistakes of the youth of the race; and they excite no more love or hatred, devotion or contempt, than alchemy, astrology, or any other delusion.

Europeans, as Rénan pointed out, have very little experience of the growth of fresh religions. They are therefore prone to look upon the origin of their faith as miraculous. But had they lived in the Orient, the mother-land of religions, where some new ways of credulity is always surging, they would be accustomed to the phenomenon. Even in Christen-

dom, however, every shred of whose faith is of eastern manufacture, we sometimes witness the phenomenon on a diminished scale. Wesleyanism sprang up suddenly and spread rapidly during the eighteenth century; and during the present century we have seen Mormonism, Spiritism, and Salvationism rise without warning and reach gigantic proportions. The fact is, these movements are recrudescences of the superstitious instinct. Deep down in ordinary human nature are the primeval instincts of its savage progenitors. Prize-fighting is put down by law, and we fancy "the ring" is no longer a possible institution; but suddenly the visit of a foreign pugilist excites the old lust of combat, the infection spreads from prince to peasant, clandestine matches are fought and reported, and it becomes obvious that if the law relaxed its hand the institution of prize-fighting would revive with all its ancient vigor. So with these new religious movements. They all trade on the inherited superstition of the multitude. The Baxters and Booths have a comparatively easy task. All their material is ready-made and they have only to build. But Free-thought leaders have to create the material as well as construct the edifice.

We publish in another column an account of the Jezreelites. A madder sect never existed, yet it is said to number several hard-headed business men. Jezreel (an ex-soldier called White) was not to die, but he did; then Mrs. Jezreel was not to die, but she did; and now "the elect" are wondering whether any of them will live to see the Second Advent and fly up to meet the Lord in the air. Yet the sect will probably last on. If reason could kill it, it would have been dead long ago. It may get over the death of "Queen Esther" as it got over the death of "Jezreel." Baxter has been proved a false prophet again and again, but his dupes persist in trusting him. Why then should the Jezreelites collapse? If a man can stand his head being cut off once, why should he not survive a second amputation? Sufficient impudence and ability in a new leader will probably keep the Jezreelites going; for, no matter how many times he has been deceived, there is always joy inexpressible in the bosom of a flat when a sharper takes him in tow.

"Queen Esther" kept her carriage and groom, drove a pair of spirited horses, and sometimes rode like an Amazon. She lived in clover on the cash of her credulous followers. Many Jezreelites gave up good positions, sold their property, and poured the proceeds into the common treasury. Some came to their senses, but they had lost all their money, and were obliged to begin life afresh.

How this recalls the story of the primitive church in the Acts of the Apostles! It is curious, but it is a fact, that these pious enterprises invariably minister to the profit and authority of "the bosses." Just as the Jezreelites handed over their cash to Edward White and Clarissa Rogers, so the earliest Christians handed over their cash to Simon Peter & Company. Ingersoll says it was the apostles who conceived the idea of having things in common; but Gladstone protests that this is a scandalous interpolation. "Colonel Bob" replies that *somebody* must have conceived the idea, and as the Bible does not say who it was we are all free to speculate. "Now it occurred to me," says Ingersoll, "that the idea was in all probability suggested by the men at whose feet the property was laid. It never entered my mind that the idea originated with those who had land for sale. There may be a different standard by which human nature is measured in your country than in mine; but if the thing had happened in the United States, I feel absolutely positive that it would have been at the suggestion of the apostles." A hit, a hit, a palpable hit!

Now when one looks steadily at these modern growths of superstition, and then at primitive Christianity, does he not see that they are all of the same family? Credulity carried to the verge of imbecility; implicit trust in godly leaders; childish simplicity in money matters, and unlimited faith in the wildest promises; such are the common characteristics of all these movements. Christianity, according to its own documents, began like the successful fanaticisms of our own age; and when we remember that it was started nearly two thousand years ago, that the people were then incredibly ignorant, that the miraculous was their staple mental food, that there were no printing-presses and cheap papers, and that mendacity and imposture were almost unchecked—is it any wonder that Christianity went farther than its modern imitations, or that by the time of Constantine it had grown sufficiently to become a

potent agency of despotism and spoliation in the hands of priests and emperors?

G. W. FOOTE.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

I.—PAUL AND SENECA.

SENECA. What new doctrine is this thou preachest in Rome?

PAUL. I preach, O most noble Seneca, the doctrines of truth and righteousness.

S. There is nothing new in that. Plato, Epicurus, Cleanthes, and Cicero, all philosophers alike claim to teach only truth and righteousness, though they differ widely as to what is meant by the former term, if not by the latter. Yet none of these teachers were disturbers of the State, nor were they followed by troops of wild fanatics such as attend thy preachings.

P. I am a Roman citizen, and no disturber of the peace. I teach wives to submit to their husbands, slaves to obey their owners, and all to abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good; to live honestly and chastely in the sight of God and man.

S. These are the platitudes of every moralist. Wherein do you differ from the rest?

P. I preach the truth as it is in Jesus Christ and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness.

S. Explain thyself. Who is Jesus Christ, and who is "him crucified"?

P. Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, who has come from heaven to bring salvation from our sins, but was by cruel hands crucified and slain. He is now risen in glory, and will soon come again like a thief in the night, taking vengeance on those who know not God.

S. I fear me, O Paulus, that sunstroke which I heard thou receivedst on thy road to Damascus hath affected thy brain. What heavenly Lord and Savior is this who submits to be crucified and slain? How can one person save another from his sins, and why could not this Savior perform his business all at once instead of having to come again?

P. Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

S. Thy talk is as that of the Egyptian priests, who so confound fact and allegory that they would have us believe the worship of animals is divine philosophy. Was not this Christ of thine a Jew, and do not most of the circumcised race reject him? I have not heard that he preached unto the Gentiles, as thou callest us.

P. Salvation is of the Jews because unto them were committed the oracles of God. But there is none righteous, no not one; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.

S. It surprises me that one acquainted with the schools of philosophy, and with thy gift of discourse, should use such sophisms, deceiving thyself with words. How is it possible that faith in blood can redeem from sin? Thy doctrine, I fear, is a most dangerous one. The vilest wretches, then, may claim forgiveness. I wonder not that it is reported that in your love-feasts and assemblies by night those things are done of which it is a shame to speak.

P. Believe them not, most noble Seneca. God forbid that we should continue in sin that grace may abound. We are members of Christ's body, and have put away carnal things. I teach that it is good for a man not to touch a woman, and that all should abide even as I.

S. I hope thy followers will adhere to thy precepts. But hast thou not thyself declared that things are done among you such as is not so much as named among the Gentiles?

P. They are not all Israel which are of Israel. Some are elect and some reprobate. For God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. We are in God's hands as clay in the hands of the potter.

S. If, as thou sayest, all are in the hands of Jove, why shouldst thou concern thyself to preach and raise sedition in the empire, or why should men listen to thee, seeing their salvation depends on Jove?

P. To us there is but one God—the Father, and one Lord and Savior—Jesus Christ.

S. I care not if thou hast one God or two, or as some say three, so that thou disturbest not the State.

P. We live, most noble Seneca, as awaiting the coming of the Lord, which draweth nigh, when we who are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

S. A dangerous fanaticism in the hands of the crafty. Is it true that Christians have all things in common?

P. It was so at the first, when believers sold all their possessions and laid the money at the apostles' feet.

S. And did not some die who kept back portion of the price?

P. Ananias and Sapphira lied unto the Lord, and were smitten by the Holy Ghost.

S. There should have been inquiries made. Doubtless there was foul play somewhere. When fraud and fanaticism combine, they are a deadly peril to the State. Such religious doctrines as thine tend to make men disregard earthly duties in seeking to obtain celestial favor. No sect can be permitted to set itself above the laws of the empire and display intolerance towards those of other faiths. Thou teachest there is no salvation save through thy Jesus Christ.

P. Neither is there any other name under heaven whereby men can be saved.

S. What, then, becomes of the millions who have never heard that name?

P. God hath given them over to strong delusions, that they might believe a lie and be damned.

S. Thy God is worse than the gods of savages, who require bloody sacrifices. I warn thee not to preach sedition, for I foresee that, should thy sect ever obtain control of power, their triumph would be the ruin of this great Roman empire, which preserveth the peace of all the world.

P. I engage to put them in mind to be subject to the powers that be, for the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power of Nero, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

S. Above all, I trust that thou wilt impress on them thy doctrine of perfect continence, for then may we hope that the world will be peopled by other than fools.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

WE have no sympathy with the *Times* in the present libel suit, and we have as little with Frank Hugh O'Donnell. When he was in the House of Commons, at the most critical part of Mr. Bradlaugh's struggle, he lost no opportunity of making himself something worse than disagreeable. One of his actions on that famous day when the Atheist was "chucked out," was simply disgusting. It could never have occurred to the mind of any man who was not "a cad." Spent with his struggle with the fourteen "chuckers out," Mr. Bradlaugh was seated panting on a chair at the door of the narrow passage through which he was ejected into Palace Yard. Frank Hugh O'Donnell was showing a lady around, and he deliberately walked her along the pavement and through the doorway, so that she might see "Bradlaugh" in his extremity. Her dress trailed over the Atheist's boots as she passed him. O'Donnell wore his eyeglass and his most supercilious smile, but the close observers of the scene noticed that he discreetly interposed the lady between himself and his enemy.

FORTUNATELY for the reputation of humanity there was only one person who relished this piece of brutality. To do her credit the lady looked annoyed, if not disgusted. She pretended not to see Mr. Bradlaugh and bent her head a little as if ashamed. Being a woman, she of course admired physical courage, and it is probable she felt more respect for the brave man who had fought a gallant battle against such heavy odds than for the ill-mannered coward who had dragged her into such a false position.

NINETY odd Bishops in one cathedral, all dressed in full canonicals, and marching like a stage procession! Gods, what a sight! The pious flunkys who witnessed it at Canterbury will be envied by all the other pious flunkys in the kingdom. It was a fine spectacle, and such a beautiful illustration of the Sermon on the Mount. Who could help feeling that "blessed be ye poor" and "blessed are the meek" were full of divine truth?

WHAT hypocrites priesthods are! When the Spaniards established slavery in America, treating the helpless natives with a cold ferocity that has no parallel in history except in Alva's harrying of the Netherlands, the Papacy countenanced their infamies on the ground that the Americans could not be considered amongst the descendants of Adam, and might therefore be treated as animals. Yet now, when the conscience of

humanity has broken the slaves' fetters, the Papacy pretends to be a great friend of emancipation. It congratulates Brazil, and says it is anxious to see African slavery abolished. No doubt Catholic children are told, just as Protestant children are told, that the Church abolished slavery. There only remains another lie, and why should the Church hesitate to tell it? Inform the children that slavery was started and maintained by Freethinkers, and the swindle would be complete.

THE *Echo* detects "one eminently satisfactory feature" in the pious Conferences which are held in London, and that is "the extent to which they are permeated by the modern spirit." Call you this backing of your friends? Surely Christian Conferences should be permeated by the Christian spirit, and that is nearly two thousand years old.

YET the *Echo* is right as to the fact. Christianity, as such, is slowly dying. Conferences shun dogmas and all the essentials of faith. They take up with questions of the day; now poverty, now purity, and now the sweating system. Perhaps the last Conference will discuss bustles and high-heeled boots.

DR. ROBERT COLLYER, of New York, was so moved by Ingersoll's Memorial Day address that he afterwards declared, in a sermon to the Cornell students, that he was willing to admit "Bob" as a member of his church. No doubt. Collyer is willing but Ingersoll isn't.

FANCY Ingersoll a member of Dr. Collyer's church! He would want a bigger place. A temple to suit him would have to be like the one described in one of Charlotte Bronte's most splendid pieces of impassioned prose—"too wide for walls, too high for dome, a temple whose floors are space."

THE thoroughly biblical belief in witchcraft still prevails widely. In parts of New Mexico no one dares to refuse a witch food, wood or clothing, and no one will eat anything she may offer. People believe that living gnawing animals would form in their stomach if they did so. The terrorising by witchcraft is something horrible in those who really believe in it. Yet this and far worse beliefs are upheld by the Word of God.

THE scenes during the recent floods in Mexico are described as appalling. Numbers of people were crushed beneath the falling buildings undermined by the waters. The whole district resembled a huge lake, and in some part bodies are floating about on the waters as thick as driftwood.

WHILE God overwhelms Mexicans by the thousand with his floods, he withholds rain from Bengal and Northern India. The crops are withering and if there is not a change soon an awful famine will ensue in which millions may perish. But what does God care? He who stayed the sun and moon to facilitate slaughter will not divert the wind and the rain from their work of mischief in one quarter to a work of beneficence in another.

THE *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* has had a long correspondence on the Darwinian theory and the formation of the earth. The opponents of Darwinism base their opposition on religion. One correspondent sums up the controversy pretty accurately as "Darwin versus God." Another writes: "There is one serious obstacle in the way of the Darwinian theory of evolution, and that is the account of the Creation as given in Genesis. We have first to get rid of the veracity of that great 'cloud of witnesses' who have declared the Bible to be the 'Book of the Lord,' the Word of God, though recorded by human instrumentality." Yes, and scientific research has already got rid of the veracity of the great "cloud" of witnesses by whom the truth is obscured.

THAT gushing writer the Rev. H. R. Haweis is indignant at the "revolting pictures" with which the editor of the *Universal Review* has illustrated his article on "The Parson, the Play and the Ballet." A sketch of a masher ogling the ballet girls seems much too personal to please him.

THE censor of the press at Warsaw corrected a newspaper passage in which the Pope was spoken of as the "Viceroy of Christ," because the post of Viceroy or Viceroy has been abolished in Poland and the title made illegal. The worthy censor, therefore, struck out the obnoxious word and substituted the legal equivalent, "Governor-General." The Holy Father duly appeared in the columns of the paper as "Governor-General of Christ."

"OH, my God, help. Heaven protect me, or I am lost." These words, scrawled in pencil on a piece of brown paper, were found in a corked and sealed bottle on Kennetpaus beach. They are signed by Ralph Newman, S. S. Whitehall, 20th June, 1888. Other words indicate that the ship was going down. Supposing it not to be a hoax, this message from the sea is full of pathos. How many sinking wretches have called on God for help, and the next moment have had their supplicating mouths filled with water. "The sea is his," says the Bible, and he uses it as a drowning-tub for his children.

THE Rev. James Jack, Free Church minister at Chapelhall, is mulcted in £10 and costs for slandering constable Parvin. This is in a sense good news. Hitherto the ministers of religion have been chartered libellers. They enjoyed a license of saying what they liked of whom they pleased. But now they have the fear of the law before their eyes, and cannot with impunity tell more lies than their neighbors.

QUERY. Would not capital punishment have been abolished long since if it were not for the Bible? As Ingersoll remarks, in his *Reply to Gladstone*, "under the government of Jehovah death was the penalty for a hundred offences—death for the expression of an honest thought—death for touching with a good intention a sacred ark—death for making hair oil—death for eating shewbread—for imitating incense and perfumery." Is it not probable that the frequency of the death penalty in Scripture has hardened men's hearts to its folly and brutality?

CAPITAL punishment has this great defect, if it has no other. It is irrevocable. If an innocent man is hung a frightful evil has been committed which can never in any sense be undone. Such cases are not unheard of, and one has recently come to light in America. A negro under sentence of death at Freehold, New Jersey, confesses that he murdered Angelina Herbert, a white girl, for which crime another man was hung two years ago. Fancy the horrid tragedy! A man, knowing his innocence yet unable to prove it, marched to the scaffold by men he knows to be mistaken, ignominiously put to death, and feeling that although he has done no wrong his name is covered with infamy.

"PULPIT Plagiarists" is the title of an article in the *Echo*. The writer, who confesses himself "an occasional preacher," doesn't see why preachers of small calibre should not deliver the sermons of their betters, and frankly tell the congregation what they are doing. But would not telling the congregation spoil the sport? Minus this addition, the plan is identical with that recommended by Addison in one of the Sir Roger de Coverley papers. Sir Roger made his chaplain a present of all the best sermons written in English; the worthy man of God arranged them judiciously, and they "made a continued system of practical divinity." When the chaplain came up one Saturday night, as Sir Roger was talking to Mr. Spectator, "upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow, he told us the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon." The following day those eminent divines preached by proxy, the chaplain reading with a clear voice and a good delivery, so that it was "like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor." Addison wished the "country clergy" would follow this example "instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own."

"LABORIOUS" is good. It suggests mental straining and cudgelling of brains. Addison knew that most of the clergy could say with Iago, and with far more truth,

"My invention
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frize,—
It plucks out brains and all."

THE Rev. Mr. Higgins, of Tarbolton, has been applying such words as "absolutely untrue," "lies," and "wilful falsehoods," to the local inspector of the poor. The inspector claims £500 damages. If Mr. Higgins has to shell out that sum he will smart severely. But a still worse fate may befall him in a future life, if merely calling your neighbor a "fool" brings you in danger of hell fire.

MR. MONTAGU WILLIAMS said to an applicant at the Wandsworth police-court, "You should not sigh after lords; they are not always the most honest of men." Indeed! Then what is the use of praying in church every Sunday that God will be pleased to endue "all the nobility with grace, wisdom, and understanding."

HUNDREDS of sets of baby clothes were presented to the Pope during his jubilee. Fie, fie, ladies! The good man is a bachelor.

CHAMPAGNE was sent to His Holiness by the hundred dozen. One big room at the Vatican was literally packed with champagne cases. Such are the trials of the "servant of the servants of the Lord."

EVERYBODY knows that our hospitals admit patients without distinction of creed. Nevertheless they are sectarian institutions, for the nurses have all to be Christians and generally Church communicants, while the busy bees of every denomination are allowed to buzz about the wards and gather honey for Jesus. Here is a significant extract from an article on hospitals in the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

"Upon the list of the officers ranks a chaplain, assistant chaplain and a Scripture reader. The chaplain has a residence within the grounds, and there is a chapel in the hospital. Agents of all religious bodies are allowed full access to the patients, and well-intentioned people are always moving about among them. Really sympathetic, talented visitors often do a world of good. The intentions of the visitors, however, are often a greater quantity than their discretion. The other evening a lady went up to a patient and boldly demanded of him, 'Have you found Christ?' When the lady's back was

turned the poor fellow pathetically remarked, 'I wish she would tell me rather how I am to get my tools out of pawn!'

THE Tory Government is going in for economy at last. Matthew Arnold's literary pension is not to be continued to his widow. This will enable the Government to build about two feet of a new torpedo boat.

MATTHEW ARNOLD lived a modest life, wrote out the best that was in him, did high service to literature and education, and died worth £1,000. Contrast his case with that of some of the pensioners we delight to honor—and support, and then ask whether this is not a perfect Daniel of a Government.

THE shocking case of clerical immorality reported from Beaune, in France, proves that the evils are still rife which in all ages have arisen from monkery and New Testament-taught celibacy. Through the confessions of a boy who ran away from a Jesuit school at Citeaux, it transpired that those holy fathers were addicted to practices attributed in the Bible to "the cities of the plain." An inquiry has been made. Two of the order, Brothers Hyacinthe and Philippe, have been placed under arrest, and four others have taken flight. Over eighty witnesses have been examined, with the result of showing that some two hundred and fifty boys have been corrupted by these teachers of morality and followers of Jesus. No such scandal has transpired for some time, and it is probable that the French Parliament will deal with the institution.

JOHN LIVESEY, of Rochdale, was so influenced by a Salvation Army meeting that he said he should be in hell in an hour. He left the meeting and jumped into the canal, where he was drowned. Probably he felt that water would put out the fire which religion thrust before his eyes with such disastrous results.

JOHN HICKEY and Thomas Harrold had a stand-up fight on Holmes Common, Lincoln, for a woman, who egged on the combatants, and kept reminding them that the winner should have her. There were a hundred spectators of this elegant performance, which took place in the most Christian country in the world, where forty thousand sky-pilots are energetically preaching kingdom-come, and where a deluge of Bibles flows from pious printing-presses. Very likely several of the spectators had graduated in Sunday-schools and had listened to many sermons.

DR. KNIGHTON, in a paper read before the Royal Society of Literature, traces modern Spiritism to the knockings and rappings that were heard in the house of the elder Wesley. Had those noises been investigated thoroughly, like the famous Cock Lane Ghost, the mischief might have been nipped in the bud.

It is a curious fact, bearing out Dr. Knighton's theory, that American Spiritualism started in 1846 from mysterious noises in the residence of a Wesleyan family of the name of Fox, living at Hydesville, New York. So rapid was the spread of the mania that in a few years there were 30,000 circles cultivating intercourse with spirits by means of table-turning and other idiotic antics.

WHILE writing on Spiritism, we venture to ask this simple question—What single truth have all the spirits imparted to mankind? We pause for a reply.

AT the opening of the Episcopal Conference a clergyman fainted just as the Bishops were about to sing "Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire." The Bishops should limit the amount of Holy Ghost called down into each individual, and not overwhelm any one with a quantity of spirit which he is unable to carry.

JAMES ADOLPHUS PEARCE, of Devonport, has been remanded on the charge of being found in possession of a marked half sovereign stolen from the post office. Prisoner is a local preacher and superintendent of the Bible Christian Sunday school.

A FAITH-CURE healer at Salina, Kansas, tried to cure a case of small-pox by the laying on of hands, and now the doctor and his patient are quarantined in a suburban blacksmith's shop.

THE *Scottish Highlander* reports a result of religion in the shape of the suicide of a landed proprietor named James Maclean. He shot himself at Cluny Hill, Forres, on Sunday morning. Several people heard the report, and a few minutes after the unfortunate man was found lying on one of the paths quite unconscious, but still breathing. There was a bullet wound in his right temple, and a small revolver was on the ground by his side. Deceased was about thirty years of age, and was suffering from religious mania.

ST. GILES' CHURCH, Camberwell, not being furnished with a conductor, was struck by lightning. A portion of the vestry was damaged, and the sacramental wine was spoiled. We suppose the old one got excited by the recent debate in Camberwell, and hurled his lightning at a venture.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, July 8, at 11.30, Midland Arches, back of St. Pancras Station, "Salvation"; at 7.30, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., "Plain Truth about Jesus Christ."

July 22, Kingsland Green (morning). 29, Camberwell (morning and evening).

August 5, Pimlico Pier (morning); Hall of Science (evening). 12, Albert Embankment (morning); Hall of Science (evening). 19, Battersea Park (morning); Camberwell (evening). 26, Camberwell.

Sept. 2, Manchester; 9 and 16, 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. B. 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.

H. W. RILEY.—No wonder the reverend gentleman declines to give you any information. No "prominent Freethought advocate," called Thomas Ragg, was ever converted, for the simple reason that no prominent Freethought advocate of that name ever existed. Prominent Freethinkers are not so numerous that a Ragg could be lost in the crowd.

W. ROGERS.—*Supernatural Religion* is a good book but expensive. The three volumes are published at 36s. It appears to us that John brings Mary Magdalene to the sepulchre alone. When she says "we know not where they have laid him," she is probably speaking colloquially. It is equal to None of us knows, or Nobody knows. Had the narrative appeared in any other book, and had there been no discrepancies to reconcile, no one would have thought of supplementing a statement of fact by a forced interpretation of a pronoun in a hurried speech. Notice that Mary Magdalene says, "They have laid him." Would it therefore be argued that she knew a number of persons had taken him away and had buried him elsewhere? Both *they* and *we* are colloquial expressions. It is all very well to say that the Gospels differ as to the time of the crucifixion because one uses the Jewish and another the Roman time. If the Jewish time is not meant, it may be Roman time; and if it is Roman time in one why may it not be Roman time in the other? If one is selected as Roman and the other Jewish, on what principle is the selection made? All the Evangelists are supposed to have been Jews though all wrote in Greek. Why should one use Roman time more than another?

A. LOVERT.—The heading was taken off "Freethinker Tracts" for the reason stated in the advertisement. There were several complaints of people being frightened by the word "Freethinker" at the top. You must be rather squeamish if you declined to read in public a phrase like "cock-crowing, s'elp me God, Peter." This is a fair summary of the matter. You must have an extraordinarily subtle mind to see anything objectionable in cock-crowing. We presume, therefore, that you stumble over S'elp me God, a phrase which is used thousands of times every day in the legal courts of this country. The only other word is Peter, and that was the apostle's name.

ARGUS.—Many thanks for your splendid batch of cuttings. We deeply sympathise with you in the loss of your lamented brother.

FREETHINKER.—The Anglo-Israelite delusion is a mixture of British vanity and prophetic craziness. Naturally the Jewish prophets predicted every conceivable good for Israel if it remained orthodox, and naturally the British Philistine considers his country the proud possessor of all the good things they predicted.

W. TREADWELL.—Your verses are very unequal, but they contain good points and you might do better with practice and care.

D. PROVAN writes:—"Your *Bible Handbook* is the most faith-shaking little volume ever handed through the Christian camp here. It has already awakened several Christians to a knowledge and appreciation of innumerable biblical truths of which they were before ignorant. I hope every Freethinker will obtain a few copies and hand them about freely amongst his Christian friends, as the wide circulation of such a volume cannot fail of good results to the Freethought party." Our correspondent is thanked for the cuttings.

F. M.—Hardly equal to your previous efforts. Several lines are halting.

C. PROUDFOOT.—We are glad to hear that Messrs. Smith and Sons do supply all Freethought literature to a Birmingham newsagent. Other newsagents complain that this firm will not supply the *Freethinker*. We have forwarded a copy of our permanent placard to the newsagents you mention. Those of our readers who can get one or more of these placards displayed do us a real service.

A. MCPHERSON.—Such cuttings are always welcome.

INVICTA.—Received 5s. for the London Secular Federation. Thanks also for your good wishes. It is curious, as you observe, that so many of the open-air apostles of the gospel of charity are full of personal bitterness, while some of them are regular traffickers in lying and slander. We note your generous offer.

SPHINX.—Shall appear.

T. A. WILLIAMS asks us to announce that a special meeting of Bristol Freethinkers will be held at St. James's Hall this evening (July 8) at seven, for the purpose of arranging an open-air propaganda in that city. We trust there will be a good attendance, perfect agreement, and a firm resolve to push forward this excellent work.

R. HANKEY.—Stamps received. The *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* is still in print, price 6d. See advertisement page.

R. TAYLOR.—Sent. Please forward future orders direct to Mr. Forder. C. DURRANT, 17 Andover Place, Kilburn, N.W., invites the Freethinkers of the district to meet at his house on Wednesday, July 11, at 8.30, for the purpose of reorganising the local Branch.

B. M. SMITH.—Thanks for the trouble you have taken. See what we say on the subject in "Sugar Plums"

YOUNG FREETHINKER says: "I write for two reasons. First, I have been a reader of the *Freethinker* for more than a year, and I take more interest in it than in any other paper I read. Second, the Christians of Oakenshaw have again suffered defeat in attempting to exclude the *Freethinker* from the Literary Institute."

G. KING, R. RICHARDS, J. T. V., AND OTHERS.—There are 53 Sundays in 1888. Hence subscriptions to *Freethinker* expire on Dec. 23. Christmas numbers are not included in the subscription.

FOREIGN FREETHINKER.—We accept your good wishes, but cannot make out what you are driving at.

C. D. (Liverpool).—Your suggestion shall be placed before the committee and duly considered. We shall be glad to receive the notes you mention.

R. FOX.—Thanks for the cuttings.

TAM O SHANTER.—We are not at all annoyed. Honest, good-natured criticism is a compliment, and facts are always useful. Pray thank, on our behalf, the friends you refer to for their interest in this journal.

OLD OXFORD RAD.—Thanks for the cutting. Talmage's lucubrations are very often noticed in our columns. Being so extensively read, the man must exercise a certain influence; but he is little else than an inflated chatterbox.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Church Reformer—Women's Suffrage Journal—Freethought—Freidenker—Freireligiöses Sonntags-Blatt—Star—Boston Investigator—La Lanterne—Le Mot d'Ordre—Tours Journal—People—Secular Thought—Victoria Road Chapel Magazine—Liberty—Lucifer—Glasgow Weekly Citizen—Shields News—Vespa—Coming Man.

EDITORIAL.

A NEW Radical weekly is to be started and published at the office of this journal. The first number will probably appear in a fortnight. Further particulars will be given in these columns next week, as well as in the press advertisements. Having ourselves an interest in this venture, we solicit the patronage of our readers for what we promise them will be a lively organ of advanced politics.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE had a hearty welcome at Wood Green last Sunday morning. Though the station has only just been opened, there was a large meeting, and the collection realised £1 0s. 5d. for the Propagandist Fund. Among the crowd we noticed Mr. E. Tralove, who stood all the time despite his eighty years, and followed all the points with a youthful alertness.

THERE was a loud-mouthed, and not very clean-mouthed, Christian discoursing a little way off at the rear to a handful of the faithful. He made a characteristic exhibition of Christian charity. His lecture was a running libel on the Freethought leaders. Some of his slanders on Mr. Foote were worthy of a Bible student. Instructions have been given to watch this person, and if he repeats one of his libels to take down his precise words in the presence of two or three responsible witnesses. It is high time such fellows were taught that their trade is a dangerous one.

OWING to the splendid weather the audience at the London Hall of Science last Sunday evening was only of moderate dimensions, but Mr. Foote's lecture was highly relished and he received quite an ovation at its close. This evening (July 8) Mr. Foote lectures on a new subject, "Plain Truth about Jesus Christ." This should bring a good audience.

NORTH and Central London Freethinkers should bring their Christian friends to hear Mr. Foote's open-air lecture at the Midland Arches this morning (July 8). Such opportunities should not be neglected. A collection will be made for the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund.

TWO fresh numbers of *Bible Heroes* will be ready next week. One will be devoted to what Professor Newman calls "that tiger of a man," Jehu; and the other to the later prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea.

COLONEL INGERSOLL is more than ever in request as an occasional orator. His last appearance was at the anniversary of the Actors' Fund of America, celebrated in the Madison Square Theatre, New York. The theatre was crowded. Among those present were Lotta and Dion Boucicault. The latter referred to Ingersoll as "this eminent orator, who never lost a case, even when Gladstone was his opponent in the ring."

READING Ingersoll's *Reply to Gladstone* through again in our reprint, we are still more delighted with it. Gladstone's criticism is torn to shreds, and it is all done with perfect courtesy and good humor. Nothing could better serve the Freethought cause than the wholesale circulation of this racy polemic. We trust

that those who purchase it will lend it among their friends and acquaintances.

INGERSOLL is always so careful to state his opponent's case before refuting it, that little is lost by not having read Gladstone's article. The G.O.M.'s points are all picked out by his lucid antagonist, and the reader has the advantage of getting them without the author's verbiage.

"A LIBRARIAN" writes as follows to the *Athenæum*:—"The June number of the *North American Review* contains a reply by Mr. Ingersoll to an article by Mr. Gladstone in the May number of the same. This number is abundant. The curious thing is that the May number does not seem to have reached this country, or certainly not anything like the usual supply, as many institutions and subscribers have not received their copies. Can anyone explain this?"

WHAT can be the reason of this? Is the May number of the *North American Review* kept back purposely? Surely Mr. Gladstone does not take a big cheque for an article which he would rather keep from his own countrymen. When we asked leave to print his article with Colonel Ingersoll's he replied that he was obliged to decline, as he had "made an arrangement in another quarter." Well, we hope the arrangement will soon be carried out. Legally, we are informed, we are free to publish Mr. Gladstone's article, owing to the absence of copyright law between England and America. But we do not choose to play the Shylock, and we cheerfully concede the G.O.M.'s moral right to decide what firm shall issue his writings. At the same time, however, we peremptorily deny his moral right to keep this article back from the British public; and if he does not issue it within a reasonable time we may feel compelled to reprint it ourselves.

THE *Athenæum* has a dig at *Present Day Tracts*, issued by the Religious Tract Society. It describes them as "a well-meaning appeal to the sun to stand still." Criticising one of the Tracts in the latest volume, it says—"The Dean of Canterbury shows that it is possible for a divine with some reputation for learning to be as uncritical as if he had lived two hundred years ago."

THE author of that able and important book *Antiqua Mater*, who soon after its publication contributed an article to *Progress*, has in hand a new work on the *Rise of the Catholic Church*.

"THERE is being prepared in England," says the *New York Truthseeker*, "a biographical dictionary of Freethinkers, which we think will be a great accession to our statistical literature." This refers to the work Mr. Wheeler is engaged on, and which we hope to begin publishing in the autumn.

ADDRESSING the Teachers' Association at Hudson, New York, the Hon. A. S. Draper, State superintendent of public instruction, declared himself in favor of strictly secular education. "There has been much discussion," he said, "in regard to the 'Bible in the public schools.' Where any objection is made, the only course, in justice to all, is to 'take it out.'"

A POPULAR American novel of similar tendencies to *Robert Elsmere*, by Mrs. Humphrey Ward, is curiously enough entitled *John Ward, Minister*. It is by Margaret Deland, and is published by Houghton, Mifflin and Co.

AN anecdote is related of the late Matthew Arnold to the effect that when he read *Robert Elsmere* he said, "Ah! I see Mary (Mrs. Ward) has got to where I was thirty years ago." Arnold got to see that a personal God was as unverifiable as the miraculous element of Christianity, but he never got over his early reverence for the Jew books.

MR. WALLACE NELSON'S lines "I would not be an Angel" are copied from the *Freethinker* into the *Boston Investigator*.

THE next congress of the American Secular Union takes place at Pittsburgh in October. Mr. E. A. Stevens, of Chicago, is secretary, and hopes to organise a successful congress.

A WRITER in *Freethought* proposes that Col. Ingersoll should be nominated for President of the United States. He says "There are at least one million Liberals who would vote for Colonel Ingersoll." But it is not likely the Colonel would suffer himself to be nominated.

THE *Church Reformer* devotes an article to the case of Mr. Moss, and reproduces his letter which appeared in our columns. Mr. Headlam commends this story of bigotry and persecution to the constituents of Mr. John Richards Kelly, and to the electors of the London School Board, and in particular to the Rev. Frederick Festus Kelly, vicar of Camberwell, who, he says, will of course remonstrate, as a brother and a priest, against conduct so unworthy of a Christian gentleman and so likely to bring the Church into contempt.

MR. C. STANILAND WAKE has in the press a work on "Marriage and Kinship among Primitive Peoples," which is designed to

form a third part of his important work on *The Evolution of Morality*. Mr. Wake is a diligent anthropologist, though we fancy somewhat too ready in challenging the conclusions of men like Sir John Lubbock.

AT Portsmouth the High Church Schools, started by the Rev. Robert Linklater, now of Stroud Green, have been closed for want of funds. Dr. Linklater wails in the *Evening Mail*, but nobody seems to mind.

CHRIST'S PARABLES.—XV.

MINOR PARABLES.

IN the story of the Wedding Guest (Luke xiv., 7-11) we are taught to humble ourselves in order that we may be exalted. We are to take the lowest seat at the feast in order that the host may bid us take a higher one. The motive is just as selfish as ever. We are merely to take the best means of avoiding humiliation and of securing such exaltation as is possible for us. The morality of such conduct is of a poor character, and the idea that humility deserves and brings exaltation is a fallacious one. It is a man's actual conduct to others that is the all-important point—not the foible of his special pride or the supposed virtue of his calculating meekness.

In the parable of the Rich Man, who built himself greater barns (Luke xii., 16-21), Christ plays upon the fear of death and condemns conduct which is in no way wrong. Surely Jesus could have spent his time to much better purpose in attacking such grave evils as polygamy and slavery, rather than in teaching poor people that it is a serious offence to provide for future comfort, and to build bigger barns when those in existence are not big enough to hold the crops. But the Christianity of Christ is directly antagonistic to riches, and foresight, and worldly prosperity and enjoyment. Christ goes on to say, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on." He points to ravens, who are partly birds of prey, as examples to us because they neither sow nor reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn (verse 24)—which is not altogether true, seeing that the ravens notoriously have a habit of secreting and hoarding up things. We are to sell our possessions for the benefit of others, and take no thought for the morrow. All this is utterly subversive of civilisation and common sense.

The parable of the Drunken Servant (Luke xii., 45-48; Matt. xxiv., 48-51) represents the vengeance which God will take on those who abuse the power and position he entrusts to them. It is spoiled as a moral lesson by the revengeful severity of the punishment of the servant; the lord, that is God, will "cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." This treatment of unbelief as equivalent to gross wickedness is a thoroughly libellous attack on opponents. Coming as it does from the very fountain-head of true religion, it would justify us in saying that Christianity identifies itself with lying and slander against others. The severity of the parable is palliated by one reasonable statement. Those who sin ignorantly—those who "knew not"—are to be beaten only with a few stripes. This will satisfy the consciences of the more liberal Christians who cannot believe in the absolute damnation of the heathen who "knew not"; but as no such concession is made those who perceive the falsity of Christianity, the civilised unbeliever, together with such heathens as have the misfortune to hear a Christian missionary without being converted, will still be subject to the full penalties, which are to be so consoling to the thoroughly Christian spectator of the future scenes of divine vengeance.

The parables of the Lost Sheep and the Piece of Silver (Luke xv., 3-10) we associated with that of the Prodigal Son, and are liable to a similar condemnation. The greater rejoicing over one thing being found than over ninety-and-nine not being lost, is not a sound foundation of a law of conduct. The man who neglects the good for the sake of the bad, and who habitually cares less for the pound in hand than the penny in the bush, will be likely to go wrong.

The "pearl of great price" is merely a compliment which Christ bestows on his own teachings. The similitude may be significant in a way which was unsuspected in Christ's days. The pearl, like the religion it symbolises, is not a healthy sign. It is a result of disease or injury. The larger the pearl formed the worse for the living organism that has to endure its presence.

The parable of the Mustard Seed (Matt. xiii., 31, 32) is as faulty as it is short. Christ says that the mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds. This is very far from being a fact, and, if it were, the symbolisation of the kingdom of heaven as "the least of all seeds" is not very flattering to religion.

That the seed when it is grown is "the greatest among herbs" is also not particularly complimentary to Christianity, nor particularly illustrative of its supposed importance and dignity. The rash attempt to remedy this defect by saying that the mustard seed "becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" is also a failure. It is foolish exaggeration to say that the annual mustard plant or "herb" is "a great tree" (Luke xiii., 19). If Christ had compared religion to an acorn springing up into an oak, or even to a fig-seed growing up to a fig-tree, he would have honored religion better and might more reasonably have talked about the birds of the air lodging in the branches.

When Jesus likened the kingdom of heaven to leaven, the comparison was more accurate than he thought. Leaven is dough in the sour stage of putrefaction. It communicates the process of organic decay and converts a portion of the food into poisonous carbonic acid gas, which forms bubbles that lighten the bread. But the living germs which insidiously convert the substance of the bread into poison must soon be killed by baking, or else the process of putrefaction will go too far, and the dough will be unfit for food. Religion is indeed like leaven in corrupting the bread of life into sourness and decay; and the only hope for mankind is in thoroughly arresting its action at an early stage of the putrefactive process.

Parables like those of the barren fig-tree (Luke xiii., 6-9), the house built on a rock (Matt. vii., 24-27), and the two sons (Matt. xxi., 28-32), would be fairly good if morality instead of religion were the lesson inculcated. But the fruits of the fig-tree are religious works, and the rock on which the house of man is to be built is superstition. The wise man who builds his house upon a rock is the man who carries out the thoroughly impracticable and mischievous sayings of the Sermon on the Mount! The man who takes thought for the morrow and does not turn the other cheek also, builds on the sand and comes to grief, according to this unvarnished parable! In the parable of the two sons Jesus tells the clergy of his time that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before them, because the said sinners believed John the Baptist. Such teaching is religious folly rather than moral sense.

The few remaining parables, so-called, are so short as to be merely metaphors or similitudes, which need no special criticism after the remarks made on the larger parables, wherein the Christian doctrines are put forth more fully and decisively.

W. P. BALL.

COLONEL INGERSOLL'S POPULARITY.

(From the "New York Sun.")

THE great and widespread interest excited by the discussion of Christian theology between Colonel Ingersoll and Mr. Gladstone may fitly be called a sign of the times.

Religious discussion and theological controversy were formerly far away from the general public interest, though there is no other department of literature so voluminous; but when it became known that the *North American Review* for the present month would contain Colonel Ingersoll's reply to the English statesman, there immediately sprang up an enormous advance demand for the publication.

This review was originally a quarterly of a highly respectable reputation and a very limited circulation, so that when it was purchased by Mr. Thorndike Rice ten years ago and brought from Boston to New York, it was almost unknown to the great mass of readers. Now, because of his skilful editing, it has become one of the most extensively circulated monthly magazines in the world, the chief of the English magazines of the same general class being left far behind in that respect. But of all the many subjects which have been discussed in its pages under the editor-ship of Mr. Rice, there is none that has approached this controversy between faith and Infidelity, in its attraction for the public.

That extraordinary interest manifested in a demand for Colonel Ingersoll's views and arguments that will probably run up the sales of a relatively high-priced magazine to at least one hundred thousand copies, is, of course, explained in large part by the charm of the literary style of that opponent of religion. If Colonel Ingersoll were as dry and dull a writer as the theological controversialist commonly is, the *North American Review* would not now be selling like a fresh novel by Clark Russell. But, no matter how alluring the style, there would not be the present eager demand for Colonel Ingersoll's assault upon the religion of the Bible, if the public interest in the subject were not deeply stirred at this particular time.

It is significant, too, that the demand for the words of the now famous Infidel far exceeds the demand for the arguments in reply to him, whether they come from a clergyman like the Rev. Dr. Field, or a statesman of world-wide distinction like Mr. Gladstone. Five, perhaps ten times as many people read the iconoclastic arguments

of Colonel Ingersoll as pay attention to what is written by the others in defence of biblical story and theological dogma.

This profound and widespread interest in what he says on the subject is the more significant because it is exhibited in chief part by those who were brought up in religious faith, and by ordained teachers and ministers of religion themselves. Yet the attacks of Infidels of the past have been mild in comparison with Ingersoll's. He does not assail the mere form and ornamentation of the ecclesiastical edifice, but strikes at the very foundation of religious belief as a relic of childish superstition.

This great popularity of Colonel Ingersoll as a writer, and the enormous audience to which he appeals whenever he rises to make war upon the Christian faith, are facts of the day to which we call the undivided attention of churches and theologians now at variance within the citadel of religion, upon which this Infidel leader is gathering his hosts for assault.

A DISAPPOINTED MIRACLE-WORKER.

A CONVERTED Brahmin, exposing the follies of his former faith, thus describes an attempt which he once made to perform a miracle:—"Immediately after the performance of the sacred-thread ceremony—a ceremony consisting of putting the Brahminical badge round the neck—I was confined for three days in a close room, and was not allowed to have intercourse with anyone except my grandmother. During these three days she became my teacher, and reminded me of my new duties and responsibilities, and what honor I could justly expect from the lower orders of society simply because I was a Brahmin. I was told that I was in possession of Divine power, and could destroy anyone who would dare stand against me, simply by the breath of my mouth. I thought of making an experiment, immediately after my release, on one of my playmates, who belonged to a caste next to the Brahmin, and with whom I was not always on good terms. So, after I was set free to walk about the village, one of the first things that I did was to find an occasion of a quarrel with the boy whom I wanted to destroy. I found the occasion very soon, and in the quarrel gave him two or three severe blows, and then warned him not to touch my person, as I had now the power of reducing him to ashes. Notwithstanding my warning, he retaliated, and had given the same number of blows, or perhaps more. I tried in vain to destroy him by the breath of my mouth, and at last threw my sacred thread at his feet, thinking that this time he would be burnt up with fire. But seeing that I was defeated in my attempt to destroy him, and all the magical power of my sacred thread failed, I ran crying to my grandmother."

If the converted Brahmin would apply a similar text to Christian promises, he would find his new faith as hollow as his old one. Christ promised that those who believed should be able to work miracles of the most striking character (John xiv., 12; Mark ix., 23; xi., 23; xvi., 17, 18). The Christian journals which publish this exposure of the follies of Brahminism would never print a similar account of the failure of Christian miracle-workers who relied on the promises of Jesus Christ. What is sauce for the goose is *not*, in their opinion, sauce for the gander too.

THE "NEW AND LATTER HOUSE OF ISRAEL." DEATH OF "QUEEN" ESTHER.

CONSIDERABLE sensation has been caused at Chatham by the death of Mrs. Esther Jezreel, the leader of the New and Latter House of Israel, which occurred at her seat, the Woodlands, on Saturday. The deceased was known to her followers as "Queen Esther the Virgin, the Mother of Israel," and they were taught to believe that she was "The Woman" who, "broom in hand, had been placed to sweep the house (or body) in search of the piece which the first woman lost, and which the last Eve shall now find"—Mrs. Jezreel being the last Eve. "Queen Esther" had been ill only twelve days, the cause of death being inflammation of the kidneys. Among "the faithful" the greatest consternation prevails; but they have tried in vain to prevent the fact coming to the knowledge of the "Gentiles," as they term the public. The removal of Mrs. Jezreel (writes a correspondent) is a striking, if sad, commentary upon the central doctrine of the New and Latter House of Israel. According to this they are an elect people, who are to be preserved from the grave and corruption. It is their mission to collect together "the remnant" from all parts of the world of the people of Israel—the 144,000 spoken of in the Book of Revelation—and who are never to see death, and when the ingathering is complete then they are to enter into the enjoyment of the second resurrection, and are to live for 1,000 years with Christ upon earth, which is to be converted into Heaven! This extraordinary doctrine suffered a great shaking about three years ago, when the Prophet of the House of Israel—James Jeroboam Jezreel—the man divinely chosen to collect the people who should not see death, himself went "the way of all flesh." But "the faithful" got over the difficulty by saying that "the good man was not good enough," and that some imperfection of which his followers were in ignorance unfitted him to be one of the genuine "remnant." Mrs. Jezreel succeeded her husband as the head of the house, and it is thought that her unexpected death will result in the entire collapse of the movement. In a history of the religious eccentricities, not to say delusions, of the present decade, the story of this strange sect—a sketch of which appeared not long since in the *Daily News*—would form one of the most striking chapters. The saddest feature in connection with this religious delusion is the ruin it has brought upon many families. Men and women—Americans as well as English and Scotch—infatuated with the Flying Roll, and believing in Jezreel and his wife as Heaven-sent messengers—gave up lucrative positions, broke up their homes, converted all their possessions into cash, and poured the whole into "the Lord's treasury" upon "gathering" at Chatham, and then when after a time the scales have fallen from their eyes they—men with wives and families—have been compelled to go out into the world and begin life again. The history of the sufferings of some of these people would make a heartrending story.—*Daily News*.

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