

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 263.



WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR BOYS?

Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. . . .

And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.—GENESIS XXII, 2, 9, 10.

STRANGE PICTURES.

Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD'S *Robert Elsmere* is now issued in one volume at what her publishers may regard as the people's price. But the masses of the people work hard for very moderate wages, and six-shillings is a sum beyond their means. The price is a *bourgeois* price, not a popular price; and although the novel now appeals to a wider circle than it did in the old three-volume form, the circle is still limited, and its pictures of working-class life may still pass as true. Should the novel, however, fall into the hands of the *proletariat*, they will see that while its upper-class pictures *may* be true—as they probably are—its lower-class pictures are too often absurdly false. There is considerable power in Mrs. Ward's work. She has a constructive imagination, a good grasp of character, and sometimes—as in the case of Langham—a striking subtlety of insight. She writes, also, the most pure and lucid English. But we doubt her experience of the London life in which she plunges Robert Elsmere; and as imagination is helpless where experience does not assist, it is no wonder that she breaks down in these portions of her narrative. We know nothing of her personally, but we should imagine her to be a woman of somewhat retired

habits, mixing only in very select society; and we feel pretty confident that her "knowledge" of East-end life in London is derived from nothing but hearsay.

Robert Elsmere, having resigned his pulpit because he no longer believed the dogmas of the Church of England, retains a passionate love of Jesus, and Mrs. Ward obviously speaks for herself when she makes him say that the problem of our age is to "reconceive the Christ." Elsmere's state of mind, which is evidently her own, is easy to understand. The emotions engendered by a creed survive when the intellect has discarded its dogmas, and those who are compelled to linger in the old atmosphere of faith frequently cling with a blind tenacity to a portion of the rejected creed, which, taken by itself, while it may look to the eye of fondness as the very essence of the whole, looks alike to those who retain the faith and to those who utterly reject it as a mere chimera. Jesus was god or man—there is no middle course. Those who accept his godhead are logical in making him the object of their daily worship; but if he is once regarded as a man, it will be found the world has far more pressing tasks than to "reconceive" one of the many figures that crowd the galleries of history. Nor is the "reconception" easy, even if possible. Mrs. Ward is very unfamiliar with historical criticism, or she strangely misreads its results, when she declares that "we

may now discern the true features of Jesus of Nazareth." Another female writer—George Eliot—who was far better informed, stated the real truth in one of her letters, when she asserted that the materials for a biography of Jesus do not exist. We go a step farther, and affirm that a character once surrounded with mythology, and infused with the miraculous, is lost for ever. Nothing is possible but that arbitrary method of reconstruction which is affected by Mrs. Ward and her school. They form a new ideal by selecting every good and beautiful feature of Jesus as human, and dismissing all the rest as mythical. But this is not scientific, nor even plausible. It leaves everything in uncertainty, and one man's conception of Jesus is pitted against another's, until the futility of the method is exposed to the point of absurdity.

This kind of "soft soap" has been tried on the London workmen by a few "Liberal Christians," but with no very striking success. Mrs. Ward's hero, however, creates a startling sensation with it, and Christianises swarms of infidel artisans. "Upon the genuine London artisan," says Mrs. Ward, "the Church has practically no hold whatever." But the reason is that "Religion on the whole has been irrationally presented to him." When it is *rational* presented to him, *à la* Elsmere, he will accept and spread it as the quick-witted men of the Greek cities of Asia Minor accepted and spread the gospel of primitive Christianity. Well, prophecy is easy; the proof will be found in experiment. The London artisan understands the *irrational* religion of the Churches; he recognises it as the true article, and he very largely rejects it or neglects it. But he does not understand Mrs. Ward's *rational* religion; it seems to him neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring. He is too hard-headed for Theosophic moonshine, and would probably sympathise with the old Agnostic squire who tells Elsmere that he is simply "playing into the hands of the Blacks," and remarks, "All this theistic philosophy of yours only means so much grist to their mill in the end."

Down in the East-end Robert Elsmere, having reconceived the Christ, gives lectures which are described as wonderfully powerful, though the words put into his mouth do not bear out the description. Then he visits a club "with a large debating hall, in which the most notorious Secularist lecturers hold forth every Sunday evening"—a club, by the way, which never existed outside Mrs. Ward's imagination. When she becomes acquainted with London clubs she will know that the leading Secular lecturers do not "hold forth" in them on Sunday evenings. But let that pass. Mrs. Ward's club was next door to a "little dingy shop, filled to overflowing with the coarsest Freethinking publications, Colonel Ingersoll's books occupying the place of honor in the window, and the *Freethinker* placard flaunting at the door." Here is another false touch. Colonel "Ingersoll's books" should be "Colonel Ingersoll's pamphlets." But let that pass too, for there is a "startler" coming. There was "more highly seasoned literature than even the *Freethinker* to be had inside." There was in particular "a small halfpenny paper." This "unsavory sheet" was extensively advertised, especially during Lent—God alone knows why; and soon "every bit of hoarding and every waste wall was filled with the announcement:

Read *Faith and Fools*. Enormous success. Our *Comic Life of Christ* now nearly completed. Quite the best thing of its kind going. Woodcut this week—Transfiguration."

We can fancy our readers smiling at this curious jumble which Mrs. Ward's readers no doubt regard as accurate. That halfpenny paper never existed. The *Freethinker* is the only illustrated paper known to our party in England. Nor has the proprietor of any Freethought journal been rich enough to make an overwhelming display on the London hoardings. As for that "Comic Life of Christ," it appeared in the Christmas number of the *Freethinker*, for which the present writer enjoyed twelve months' retirement at his country's expense. Neither have we heard of a pamphlet called *Faith and Fools*, though we are not sure such a title will not be necessary if Elsmereism spreads to any extent.

That halfpenny paper plays a part in Robert Elsmere's career. One evening he saw the Club workmen reading it outside in the street with "chuckles and spirits of laughter." He dashed into the shop and bought a copy, the woman who served him giving him his change "with a business-like *sangfroid*," as though shop-keepers were in the habit of sharing their customers' emotions! Elsmere opened his

ha'p'orth under a lamp in the next street, and what he saw there shall be told in our next. G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

RELIGION IN STATE SCHOOLS.

THERE is every indication of a strong reactionary effort being made by the clerical party under the present Tory Government in the matter of education. The Report of the Royal Commission on Education, of which men like Cardinal Manning and Canon Gregory were the moving spirits, is evidently designed to promote denominational rather than national interests, and to afford an excuse for reactionary legislation. Indeed the Majority actually propose that the teaching of religion shall be made compulsory in all schools. Throughout that report, as was pointed out by Mr. J. H. Ellis—a gentleman we strongly hope to see on the next London School Board—the slimy trail of Cardinal Manning may be seen. There are other indications no less deserving attention. The powers conferred by the Local Government Bill on the new County Councils will afford facilities to the opponents of School Boards for securing their dissolution. The Technical Instruction Bill, moreover, by authorising School Boards and other local authorities to supply technical instruction to denominational schools by means of parochial rates gives sanction in an insidious manner to the principle of payments out of rates to denominational schools—a principle which may hereafter be extended to other branches of education.

All this is bad enough. But it is not the worst. The worst, in our view, is that almost the whole of the Nonconformist body are apathetic or sympathetic in the matter. Against Church rates and religious tests, as against every other detail of the Church Establishment, they and we fought on the common principle that the State had nothing to do with the teaching of religion. But on the question of education—a question of eminently greater importance than Church rates—they deserted this principle, the only one upon which they have any status as against a dominant Church, and asked only that no more religion should be taught than *they* approved of. "Unsectarian education" is still the cry even of those who call themselves advanced Unitarians, as though what seems unsectarianism to one man is not rampant sectarianism to another.

We shall not be sorry at the breakdown of the compromise if it induces Nonconformists to reconsider their position, and in future to base their demands on principle. But at present they seem only determined not to let other denominations get an unfair advantage of them, and to attempt to find some common denominator which will exclude only the Secularists. Of course, they say that Secularists may avail themselves of the conscience clause. But the experience of eighteen years shows that the conscience clause is a delusion and a fraud. From the nature of things it could be little better than a dead letter—giving an appearance of the widest toleration, but in practice rather the engine of persecution. All school arrangements must be made with reference to simultaneous attendance and a regular programme, and parents must be regular Spartans of Freethought if they subject their children to all the indignities occasioned by their withdrawal from religious instruction. The reference to the conscience clause is but a red herring to lead minds away from the central fact—that public money, public buildings, and public servants are employed in the teaching of religion.

But where is this common denominator of unsectarianism upon which it is supposed that at any rate Christians may agree? One man finds it in one place, and another in another. One teacher will be astonished to learn that it is sectarian to speak of the doity of Christ; another will think it quite unsectarian to declare that all Atheists are fools and very wicked people. The work of education in the past was almost monopolised by religions, and teachers are still largely drawn from denominational colleges. Whatever regulations are laid down, it will none the less happen in practice that unsectarianism means that explanation of religion which the teacher happens to approve. But there are other Nonconformists who say that in the simple reading of the Bible, without note or comment, there is nothing of which anyone can disapprove. How illusory is this assumption I shall have no difficulty in showing.

J. M. WHEELER.

(To be continued.)

ACID DROPS.

BISHOP STROSSMAYER, the Pan-Sclavist Catholic who has just been rebuked by the Emperor of Austria, is a great admirer of our Grand Old Man. "Gladstone," he said to M. de Laveleye, "is a true Christian. Oh, if all ministers were so, what a radiant future of peace and harmony would dawn on our unhappy race."

WE wonder what the relatives of those thousands of poor Arabs whom Gladstone slaughtered in the Soudan would say to this glowing eulogy. Mr. Gladstone has rendered great services to England, but he has worked no miracles for the peace of the world, and his Egyptian policy showed how much regard for men of a different faith is to be expected from your "true Christian."

GLADSTONE may be a "true Christian," but is not Lord Salisbury one also, and do not the two cases balance each other? Then there is Lord Salisbury's nephew—Bomba Balfour. He is so much a "true Christian" that he is to read a paper at the Church Congress on Practical Christianity, which will doubtless be illustrated with crowbars and battering-rams.

NOTHING could be more absurd than Bishop Strossmayer's line of reasoning. It is indeed the most transparent sophistry. By choosing your facts you can prove anything—until somebody comes along who displays the facts you have omitted. Pick out a Christian gentleman, and we will pick out a Christian black-guard; against your Christian hero we will set a Christian coward; and side by side with your Christian man of honor we will place a Christian scoundrel.

"WE," says Bishop Strossmayer, "must raise the depressed peoples and the disinherited classes." *We!* Why you—that is, your Holy Church—have had at least fifteen centuries to do it in, and you are now going to make a beginning. Why didn't you perform this work of redemption in the old days of your unquestioned ascendancy? Why did you wait until science, Free-thought and democracy had leavened the human mind? Why are you always talking of what you *mean* to do? How is it you are able to point to so little that you *have done*? Do you want another fifteen hundred years of power to show what you might have done during the fifteen hundred years you wasted?

THE tithe war continues in Wales, and the clerical Shylocks are getting the worst of it. There were some exciting scenes in Cardiganshire on Monday. A set of harness had been distrained, belonging to Dr. Davies and his brother. But when an auction was attempted the crowd would not let the bailiff read the conditions of sale until he had pledged himself never to perform such dirty work again. The officials were pelted with clods and rotten eggs, and, although the police tried to protect them, they were glad to drive off to more comfortable quarters. At another farm, occupied by a widow lady, a haystack was sold with great difficulty, an effigy of the rector being displayed on the top of the fodder. After the sale a collection was made, and the widow received not only the value of the hay, but a handsome present in addition.

AFTER denouncing the *Freethinker* for treating religious questions in a spirit of levity, "Nunquam," of the Manchester *Sunday Chronicle*, goes and commits the same offence himself. He tells his readers how he was smoking his pipe and taking his case, when he was rudely ordered by his "familiar demon" to get up and write copy; and he did so, "as Jacob, however unwilling, had to get up and wrestle with the angel."

NOW we should like to know whether "Nunquam" thinks the dragging in of Jacob and his ghostly visitor in this way is likely to be agreeable to the feelings of his orthodox readers. Men and women who regard the Bible as God's word, and believe every part of it literally, would, we should fancy, be dreadfully shocked at such profanity.

"NUNQUAM'S" profanity does not shock *us*. What shocks us is the loose way in which he deals with the Bible, a volume he pretends to admire, and sets higher than Shakespeare. If he reads the story of that big wrestling match—God *v.* Jacob—again, he will see that it was not Jacob who was "unwilling," but his antagonist. The god or angel begged Jacob to let him go, but the prince of Jeremy Diddlers held on like grim death, and would not release "the other fellow" until he bestowed his blessing.

BE as profane as you like, dear "Nunquam," only don't claim a monopoly of blasphemy, and, above all, be as accurate as your "laziness" and "dreaminess" will permit.

A SAD case of suicide occurred in London on Monday. A woman about thirty years of age poisoned herself at Liverpool Street Station. In her pocket a letter was found addressed to "Dear Tom," apparently her husband. Short as the note was, the name of God appeared in it twice. Another instance of "the consoling and sustaining power of religion."

MR. JARMAN, an ex-Mormon, travels about in England exposing "the cruelties of the Mormon faith." At Swansea he made personal attacks on a local Mormon elder, Mr. David Williams, whose windows were broken by the mob. The stipendiary magistrate read Mr. Jarman a lesson on toleration, saddled him with costs, and bound him over in £100 to keep the peace for three months.

THE Swansea Christians, who broke Mr. Williams's windows, have never read their Bibles with any attention, or they would know that polygamy is a good old Bible doctrine. All Jehovah's favorites had as many wives as they could keep, and a few over. Solomon, the wise king, had the biggest harem on record. And of such is the kingdom of heaven.

THE Roman Catholic Church pretends to champion the sanctity of marriage, yet it allows the Duke of Aosta to wed the daughter of his own brother. Of course the Church organs plead there were special circumstances, but a similar case has just happened at San Francisco. For a considerable sum of money the Vicar General has granted a dispensation whereby Joseph Bijani was allowed to marry his niece. The groom took the girl and a priest aboard a tug and went outside the jurisdiction of the United States and had the ceremony performed on the high seas. This was done under the sanction of a Church which declares that the marriage of divorced persons is illicit.

THE Dean of Peterborough pleads for a larger toleration, and asks Christians to "gladly recognise the sacred freedom of intellectual conviction." Is he in earnest? Is he really hard at work effecting the abolition of the Blasphemy Laws? Or is he, like most of the religious advocates of freedom, only seeking a toleration which is to be strictly reserved for Protestant Christians?

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* says—"Canon Isaac Taylor, whose speech at the Wolverhampton Church Congress last year as to the failure of missions caused such a sensation, is understood to be investigating the returns of the leading Church societies as to the number of their converts, the method of keeping their accounts, and the expenditure upon home organisation. Whether the new indictment is made on the platform or in the press, it is likely to cause even a greater scare than his original utterance."

"CAPTAIN" REDSTONE, who was dismissed by "General" Booth, writes a book on his experiences in the Salvation Army. A preface by the Rev. Cunningham Geikie, D.D., describes Booth as immeasurably more despotic than the Pope. He and his family rule without appeal. Dr. Geikie never saw such an abject terror of superiors as seems to be a characteristic of the Salvation Army. Booth guarantees no wages, so that there is no legal claim on him.

"CAPTAIN" REDSTONE believes in the Army though he is indignant at the treatment he has received. He says that "for real Holy Ghost power and life" the Army meetings surpass all other religious meetings he has ever seen. Some of the incidents he relates are curious. At one station he was cheered with the company of twenty tambourine lasses, but when they discovered that he was a married man, they decamped. The soldiers at this station used to openly pass packets of sweets, one to another, during prayer and holiness meetings. On one occasion he happened by chance to pray, "Oh Lord, if there is anyone here who wears two faces under one hat, save them." One of the members rose and with a number of his friends resented this, and began to abuse their "Captain." For a quarter of an hour the place was in a commotion, and quietness was not restored till the disturbers had been turned out.

A LETTER in the *Daily News* from "M.D." complains of the annoyance caused by the Salvation Army at Walthamstow. He thinks there ought to be a law passed to protect people from disturbance, and from depreciation of property such as has occurred at Clapton, where empty houses and diminution of trade have followed the exodus of the more respectable tenants from the neighborhood of the noisy head-quarters of the army. M.D., whose professional work keeps him in London during the day, returns to Walthamstow for the evening and for Sunday rest. These are exactly the times in which the Salvationists are shouting and singing and playing to noisy assemblages of idlers and larrikins. However hot the weather may be, M.D. is often obliged to keep all his windows shut on the side of the house nearest the tent in which the salvation is dispensed. His neighbors "all suffered greatly from the almost constant annoyance." M.D. uses his evenings in literary pursuits, including the editing of a monthly magazine. He finds his work seriously interfered with, and has had in consequence to decline a special literary commission, which had to be executed within a certain time. The health of one at least of the members of his family is also affected by the incessant tumult.

THE superstitious Neapolitans are delighted at the discovery of a picture of a Madonna and child on a wall. The lower classes flocked to it in crowds. They knelt down and recited prayers, and called out "A miracle! a miracle!" and collected

coppers wherewith candles were purchased, and a splendidly illuminated altar was erected. Litanies are recited and fireworks let off. An old lady who has lived for forty years in the house where the picture was found says that it preserved the house from falling. All manner of legends are already current concerning the history of the picture, which really was only walled up in 1861, when the suppression of images was ordered. The religious emotions of the people are also highly excited by the renewal of the Feast of Piedigrotta which has been prohibited by the authorities since 1881. The police are to content themselves with preventing the fights and disturbances which disgrace this religious scene, but in other respects the devotees are not to be interfered with.

A VOLUNTARY case of suttee has just occurred in India. The widow of a Brahmin made her way unperceived to the burning pyre, and was found dead beside her husband's remains. Horrible customs that have received the religious sanction linger on in the hearts of believers long after they have been prohibited by law. If this custom of self-immolation by widows had been universal among Hindoos, instead of applying only to the priestly caste of Brahmins, the British Government might have been unable to suppress it. As it is, the sacred caste are apt to resent the suppression as an unwarrantable interference with religious liberty.

THE Rev. T. Lodwick, a Congregational minister, of Festiniog, North Wales, died on his wedding day, after being taken ill the day before at Neath, where he had arranged to preach. Prayers and piety leave the clergy open to such misfortunes just the same as other men.

THE Rev. G. H. Scott, vicar of Gringley-on-the-Hill, who is evidently of an ungovernable temper, has summonsed Mr. Marrison, the churchwarden, for assaulting him in the churchyard. The fight arose through the vicar insisting on removing the coping stone of some graves in consequence of a difficulty about the payment of fees. For the defence it was stated that the parson came up in great anger, seized the iron bar, and deliberately swung it so as to cut Mr. Marrison's lip and loosen five teeth; and that only then, when the churchwarden was covered with blood and smarting from the wound, he struck the vicar. The majority of the bench thought the evidence conflicting and the case was dismissed.

PEDRO CASTRO RODRIGUEZ, parish priest at Olavarria, in the Argentine Republic, married secretly, and subsequently murdered his wife and child. He prepared a coffin in the church, put the bodies in it during the night, and forged a certificate of death, which he gave to the sexton. The sexton's suspicions were aroused by seeing spots of blood on the wall of the church and in the passage leading to the priest's house. This led to the discovery of the murders.

THE vicar of Roydon prefers fighting a creditor to paying his little account for work done. After getting the best of the fight and knocking his man down he summonsed him for assault. The bench declined to fine the defendant, but ordered him to pay 15s. costs.

THE Rev. Albert John Burnett, who gave a Dublin address, was fined 5s. at Manchester for drunkenness. He had behaved in a most objectionable manner at the railway station, and had made use of bad language to ladies. So drunk was this laborer in the Lord's vineyard that he had to be carried to the police-station on a stretcher.

ANOTHER spiritist swindler, calling himself Professor Peter, has been caught in Missouri doing the dark science business with bells in each hand and a tambourine in his mouth.

"OH what a fall was there, my countrymen." The great Jezreelite building which was erected for the accommodation of the 144,000 elect, who were to be gathered from all parts of the earth before the second coming of Christ, is to be converted into a jam factory; and the unbelieving inhabitants of Chatham flatter themselves that the change will be beneficial to their town. The deluded enthusiasts who embarked their capital in the abortive enterprise, are now saying: "That's the way the money goes. Pop goes the weasel."

HENRY WARD BEECHER'S beautiful country house on the Hudson is in a neglected condition. The place is for sale, but as an income of £10,000 a year would be needed to maintain it, there is difficulty in finding a purchaser. All professions don't pay so well as preaching.

EXTRACT FROM A DEACON'S DIARY.

I wish to-day with all my heart,
The wife would mount Elijah's cart,
And meteor-like to God be driven,
And rest her weary tongue in heaven.

THE Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, preaching at the Polytechnic on Sunday afternoon, said: "The religion of Christ is the religion

for me, for it casts the damned pride out of a man's heart." If a Freethought lecturer spoke of the "damned pride" shown by religious people, he would be put down as insufferably vulgar and profane. But in a Christian preacher such expressions are so commendable that the *Christian Commonwealth* hastens to print them and circulate them among a still wider congregation of ardent believers who are dreadfully shocked at the bad taste displayed by Freethought writers.

HARRISON, the American revivalist, reports from his Sing Sing camp meeting—"1,000 souls blessed: converted 500, sanctified 150, reclaimed 125, glorified 100, redeemed 50, seeking light 75." Not a bad haul. J. C. and the apostles were small fry in the conversion business compared with Brother Harrison. But how did it happen that the number of Heathen Chinese blessed was exactly a thousand? Round numbers always suggest cooking.

THE *British Weekly* tells of a man who was employed by a priest to have his leg tied up as a cripple at a franc a day, and then went to Lourdes to be cured. Of course such things never happened down in Judee.

THE *Christian World* has been having a controversy on Abraham's command to sacrifice Isaac. The editor says that to assume that the command was divine is to beg the question. Not to speak of the fact that the Old Testament legend is distinctly vouched for by St. James and the Epistle to the Hebrews, no one can read it without seeing that no distinction can be drawn between it and the rest of the patriarchal history. But that history is so bound up with the Christian stories, that if the one be false the foundations of the other are gone. How can Christianity be true, if the books upon which it is built are legendary?

A VISITOR spoke to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe about her great work, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and she replied, "I did not write it, God wrote it; I merely did his dictation." This is a far more explicit declaration of inspiration for her book than any put forth by Bible writers. In its moral and literary excellence, and in its effect for good, her work is infinitely ahead of the books that compose the Word of God. Will Christians add the great American work of fiction to the Levantine work of fiction which they have adopted as their fetish?

A HAMPSHIRE incumbent is responsible for saying that in his parish it was quite customary for a bridegroom to say, "With my body I thee wash up, and with all my hurdle goods I thee and thou." He says women are generally better up in the service than men, but he has nevertheless heard a bride promise to take her husband "to have and to hold from this day fortnight for betterer horse for richerer power, in siggerness health to love cherries and to bay."

THIS reminds us of what the *Saturday Review* reported of a Somersetshire school girl. Asked to name the books of the Bible, she began very fluently—"Devonshire, Exeter, Liticus, Numbers, Astronomy, Jupiter, Jumbo, Ruth."

THE Countess Leo Tolstoi, the wife of the Russian novelist and reformer, does not sympathise with her husband's adoption of primitive Christianity, and threatens that if he carries out his purpose to sell all he has and give to the poor, she will apply for an official investigation into his sanity.

THE witty E. M. Whitty, in his *Friends in Bohemia*, tells a good story of heaven and earth being worshipped together. A lady abbess of an Irish convent had a picture of J. C., before which, with unquenchable sorrow but inextinguishable hope, she daily prostrated herself. The picture—by an accident of art, or more probably by the artist having used him as a model—was a portrait of her first lover.

THERE has been a controversy in the local papers as to the reason why St. Stephen's—the Camden Town parish church—has only about an average attendance of twenty. The unpopularity of the clergyman, the Rev. John Fitzgerald, seems to have something to do with it. The fact that the attendance included only five males may suggest there are other reasons.

A DERBY Roman Catholic priest named J. P. Val d'Eremao has put out a book entitled *The Serpent of Eden*. With an utter disregard to Jewish views of their own writings, he maintains that the serpent of Gen. iii. should be translated "Satan." This fanciful but by no means novel view is authorised by crackbrain John of Patmos, who calls the devil "that old serpent." The funny thing is that Father Val d'Eremao thinks this interpretation relieves the biblical account of the Fall from the mythological air which it wears in our English Bibles. As if a personal Satan was not as much a myth as a talking serpent.

Sunday-school teacher: "Why were the Jews, especially their rulers, so stiff-necked?" (Silence for a space of about three seconds.) Reflective small boy: "Why, because the high priest always wore a carbuncle."—(See Exodus xxviii., 17.)

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, September 23, Secular Hall, Rusholme Road, Manchester; at 11, "Bible Morality: a Reply to the Royal Commission on Education"; at 3, "Ananias and Sapphira"; at 6.30, "Plain Truth About Jesus Christ."

Sept. 30, Camberwell.

Oct. 7 and 14, Milton Hall; 21, Newcastle; 23, Hall of Science.

Nov. 4, Leeds; 11, Middlesboro'; 18, Portsmouth; 25, Birmingham.

Dec. 2 and 9, Hall of Science; 23, Camberwell.

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.

G. WARD.—The paragraph sent appeared in the *Freethinker* about a year ago.

E. A. V.—We shall be happy to send you some bills, and other things for gratuitous distribution, if you will let us know precisely where to send them. Delighted to hear you have made four *bona fide* converts in six weeks at the works where you are engaged. Such active and earnest propaganda is in the highest degree useful. Go on and prosper in the cause.

J. EDMUND.—A tetrarch was a Roman Governor of a fourth part of a province. Both Herods were Jews. Herod the Great was king, but Herod the tetrarch was only a petty ruler in Galilee. The Jesus who cried "woe, woe, to Jerusalem" was brought before Albinus the Procurator before the war, and was killed in the siege. The Romans were besieging the city because the Jews had revolted. Jesus, or rather Joshua, was a very common name among the Jews.

YOUNGSTER.—Glad to hear you and your friends mix with the audience on Peckham Rye and help to keep order. We will send you some tracts for distribution.

G. NAEWIGER.—Shall appear directly we can find room.

W. G.—Much obliged for the cutting. See "Acid Drops."

W. H. MORRISH, of Bristol, in reply to Lucian's query, sends us his address. It is, Bright Villa, 141 Cheltenham Road. Our veteran friend has retired from business, but is as earnest as ever "in the faith." He tells us he "likes the *Radical Leader* much."

G. A. M.—Jokes are always welcome.

C. HEATON.—Thanks, but we only deal with cases which appear in the newspapers.

INCOG sends 2s. for the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund, and some verses. The latter are vigorous and thoughtful, but too rough for publication.

GERMAN FREETHINKER.—The Bishop of Carlisle calls the Mosaic cosmogony childish in his little shilling volume on "Creation."

H. ROTHERA.—We are obliged for your budget of jokes. Send again whenever the spirit moves.

J. D. POTTAGE reports a collection of 27s. at Mr. Foote's Regent's Park lecture for the School Board Election Fund.

T. J. M.—We have a recollection of the matter, but you can hardly expect us to spend hours in looking through the *Freethinker* file. The clergyman's name was the Rev. C. W. Leadbeater. We printed the full circumstances at the time from the newspapers. We believe the reverend gentleman was a curate in Hampshire, and we remember reading in the Indian papers of his reception at Colombo in Ceylon. In future, if you cite facts in debate, you would do well to have the evidence at hand; for the ordinary Christian disputant will question that twice two are four if he knows you haven't a copy of the multiplication table.

A. DE LA VEGA.—We have a copy of Mocatta's book. It is used in chap. viii. of *Crimes of Christianity*. If you will favor us with your private address, Mr. Wheeler will communicate with you respecting your former letters.

CANDID.—We quite share your opinion of the person.

ANONYMOUS correspondents are warned that their letters go straight into the waste basket.

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

LETTERS are still arriving, and as there is no desperate hurry we shall defer our synopsis for another week. This announcement may be regarded as final. All who mean to write should therefore write at once.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THERE was a very big audience at Mr. Foote's lecture in Regent's Park last Sunday morning. The rostrum was a wooden chair, set under a patriarchal tree, whose lower branches nearly touched the speaker's head, and acted as a kind of sounding board. A semi-circle of ladies sat on chairs, and beyond them

was a crowd of listeners who patiently stood till the proceedings terminated. Mr. Foote was in good voice, and, judging from the laughter and applause, the audience greatly relished his discourse. Mr. James Rowney made an excellent chairman. He had a little bother with a would-be opponent who is notorious for his ignorance and ill manners. This precious disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus, though debarred from the platform—that is, the chair—on account of previous misconduct, was allowed to ask a question; but as he could not do that without calling the lecturer "a liar," even the few who cried out that he should have a chance were satisfied that the chairman had taken the elderly ruffian's measure pretty correctly.

At the Hall of Science in the evening an improved audience met to hear Mr. Foote's lecture on "The Cost of Creeds." The orator spoke with much vigor, and, the hall being warm, he perspired as freely as Joshua Josephson in the garden of Gethsemane.

AFTER an absence of many months, Mr. Foote visits Manchester to-day (September 23), and lectures three times in the Secular Hall. The subjects are attractive and there should be large audiences. The Manchester committee appear to think "Nunquam" of the *Sunday Chronicle* hardly worth a lecture. At any rate they prefer a lecture on something else. Mr. Foote, however, will deal with "Nunquam" briefly before the evening lecture.

The Bradlaugh Fund bids fair to go beyond the £1,500 asked for. Most of the names in the subscription list are those of Freethinkers and Radicals. A few ministers—all honor to them—have subscribed; but everybody can see how silly, as well as imprudent, was the boast of that "Conservative Churchman" in the *Pall Mall Gazette* that the majority of the subscribers would be found to be Tory in politics and orthodox in religion.

MR. WHEELER'S *Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers* will soon be ready for the press. The work will be issued in monthly parts, and when completed it will be well bound in cloth. Good type and paper will be employed, and the volume should find a place in every Freethinker's library. Several attempts have been made to achieve this task, but Mr. Wheeler is the first who has succeeded.

THE twelfth annual Conference of the American Secular Union will be held at Pittsburg on October 5, 6, 7 and 8. Practical business connected with organization will form the chief topic of discussion. Among those expected to attend are Mrs. M. A. Freeman, Mrs. M. P. Krekel, Mrs. Lucy Colman, Miss Helen H. Gardener, Mr. Charles Watts, Mr. L. K. Washburn, Prof. W. S. Bell, Prof. D. G. Crow, Mr. T. B. Wakeman, the editor of the *Truthseeker*, Mr. J. E. Rensberg, Mr. H. L. Green. Colonel Ingersoll's name is not included as yet. Mr. Putnam resigns the secretaryship.

MR. L. K. WASHBURN, with whose name many of our readers are acquainted as that of a talented American Freethought lecturer and writer, will, we understand, be nominated as the next President of the American Secular Union. Mr. Washburn is forty-two years of age and was educated for the Unitarian ministry, but proved too broad for that church. He lectures about eighty times a year, and some fifty of his lectures have been published either in the *Boston Investigator* or in pamphlet form.

THE Middlesboro' Co-operative Hall has been secured for Mr. Foote's lectures on November 11. We understand there was a good stiff fight over the matter. The voting resulted in a tie, and the Chairman happily turned the scale in favor of liberality and fair-play. The Middlesboro' Freethinkers, we believe, intend to join the Co-operative Society in full force, so as to strengthen a good movement, and to prevent the loss of their present advantage.

ORTHODOXY of the most rigid type seems to flourish in Ipswich. The circulating library of that town has tabooed *Robert Elsmere* with the result that people who would have read the book in the hurried and perfunctory way characteristic of the bulk of library subscribers, are now buying it and going through it at their leisure. Probably the self-constituted guardians of the faith in Ipswich did not foresee this contingency.

THE American papers have been crowing a little over Gladstone not coming up to the scratch with Ingersoll. Says the *Ironclad Age*: "We don't see England's 'grand old man' rushing madly back to the defence of prostrate orthodoxy. One knock down seems to settle him as it did the great jurist Black."

THE Sunday morning lectures begin again at the London Hall of Science in October. Mrs. Besant opens the ball on the 7th.

THE *Radical* for September contains a fair portrait (with spectacles) of Dr. H. A. Allbut, the gentleman whose Malthusian heresies have excited the bigotry of the Edinburgh College of Physicians. Accompanying the portrait is a well-written biography.

REPUBLICAN France educates her children thoroughly and turns religion out of the public schools. And what is the result? At the moment there is a wider circle of readers of good literature than in any other country in Europe. The *Athenæum*, in a review of Lenormant's great work on the Ancient History of the East, says "there is no country but France where a publisher could venture to produce" such works.

THE GRANDMOTHER OF GOD.

As Mary was the "Mother of God," St. Anne, who was the mother of Mary, must have enjoyed the honor of being the Grandmother of God. But although Roman Catholics are never tired of saluting Mary as the "Mother of God," they are not quite so fond of hailing St. Anne as the Grandmother of God, though they annually celebrate her festival on June 26. Nevertheless, one Roman Catholic hymn, at least, addresses her as "Grandmother of the Eternal God," so that it must not be thought that this devout expression of Christian belief is a mere invention of the irreverent Freethinker, bent on ridiculing sacred pretensions.

As was highly proper, the Grandmother of God was a miraculous personage. The history of her principal achievements is recorded in the Gospel of the Birth of Mary, and in the Protevangelion or Gospel of St. James, which latter is described as "a compilation of early traditions, facts, and fables, thrown together in a narrative form" by some converted Jew in the second century. Imitating the story and even the name of the mother of Samuel, St. Anne, or St. Anna, was twenty years without children, although she and her husband were so pious that they gave one-third of their income to the priests of the temple, and so charitable that they gave yet another third of their substance to the poor and needy. Joachim, the husband, on bringing his gifts to the temple, was scorned by the high priest for his childlessness, and being ashamed and afraid to return home lest his neighbors also should reproach him, he went to live with the shepherds. The stories told in these rejected Gospels display even greater discrepancies than those told in the more successful and orthodox Gospels. Reconciling the tales in the orthodox fashion by piecing them together as best we can, it appears that Joachim fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness. After this remarkable but not original feat, an angel appears to him, orders him to offer a hundred goats and other animals, and informs him as usual in this kind of story that he shall have a child, whom he is to devote to the service of the Lord. Similar information had been imparted to Anna, who had been lamenting in the garden and envying the fulness of a sparrow's nest. The angel's promise is of course fulfilled. The Grandmother of God bears a child who in due time is to become the mother of God. At nine months old this infant is recorded to have walked nine steps, to the great delight and edification of her mother; and at three years of age, when taken to the temple to be brought up there, "she danced with her feet" on the third step of the altar, and went up the stairs in a most miraculous way for so young a child. Such marvellous phenomena (though not at all uncommon now-a-days) filled her parents with wonder at the "miracle," and made them praise God for giving them such evident signs of the future greatness of their child.

The older documents seem to make the birth of Mary miraculous, just as were the births of Samson, and Samuel, and Isaac the son of the Shunammite woman, and John the Baptist; but they did not dispense with human fatherhood. The Christian Church, however, ventured to take this further step in the direction of the miraculous or supernatural. As God had to be born of a virgin, so it was felt the Mother of God must also be born stainless and free from the taint of original sin. Therefore the belief arose that Anna bore Mary through the influence of the Holy Ghost, and without a human father, just as Mary subsequently conceived Jesus. This belief was finally made authoritative and binding upon the Church by Pius IX., who in 1854 issued his "solemn definition" that the Immaculate Conception of Mary by her mother Anna was of a truth contained in the original teaching of the Apostles, and was an article of divine faith. This doctrine of the Immaculate Conception then promulgated did not refer to the virginity of the Mother of God, for this fundamental dogma of Christianity is common to Protestants, and there was not the slightest need to proclaim afresh so

thoroughly established a doctrine. It was the Grandmother of God whose virginity was vindicated by the new edict of the Infallible Head of the Church.

But if, in order that Jesus should be sinless, it was necessary that his mother should be a virgin—and that this mother should also have been born of a virgin—surely it must have been necessary that the Grandmother of God must also have been born of a virgin in her turn, and this virgin of another virgin, and so on till we arrive at Eve herself. Otherwise the taint of human depravity and original sin must have been in the blood, and Jesus could not have been entirely free from it.

The Grandmother of God had the happiness of seeing her daughter become the mother of God at the precocious age of fourteen.

Some accounts say that Anna only married once, and that Mary was her only child. According to other accounts the Grandmother of God married three times, and bore a daughter, in each case named Mary, to each husband. But these latter accounts are obviously prompted by the desire to explain the Marys of the Gospel, and the discrepancies in their relationships and genealogies.

The Grandmother of God, as might perhaps have been expected, remained a miraculous personage even after her death. Knowing how highly she would be esteemed, and how much she might aid in inspiring faith and devotion, she multiplied the relics of herself in the usual orthodox and saintly fashion. It is noticed that she left many more arms than heads. These priceless relics were often brought from the Holy Land by crusaders and pilgrims. One of her skulls is at Apte, another at Chartres, another at Castel-bona, in Sicily, and a fourth at Duren in Germany. Nothing need be said concerning the multiplicity of these relics, for where the miraculous steps in all opportunity for criticism is taken away. Solemn veracities must not be subjected to the ridicule of reason, and none but impious unbelievers in falsehood will cruelly disturb the cherished beliefs of religious devotees. W. P. BALL.

THE LATE R. A. PROCTOR.

THE name of Richard Anthony Proctor, who died at New York on the 12th instant, will long remain as that of one of the most hard working and versatile of the popularisers of science. Few names in connection with astronomy are better known than his, for though he did but little in the way of original research, he had wonderfully fertility of mind, a ready accessibility to ideas, a strong grasp of facts, and a clearness of presentment which rendered him unrivalled as a popular exponent of the queen of the sciences, astronomy.

Mr. Proctor was born at Chelsea, March 23, 1837. In consequence of ill-health, he was at first educated at home and afterwards at St. John's, Cambridge, where he took his B.A. degree in 1860. In 1866 he became a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, of which he afterwards became hon. sec. and editor of the Society's Proceedings. His principal astronomical achievements were his stellar maps, which led to his new theory of the stellar universe. He maintained in 1869, on grounds of pure reason, the since established theory of the solar corona, and also that of the inner complex solar atmosphere, afterwards discovered by Young of America.

He was a man of fortune until he lost his all in a bank. The private loss was a public gain; Mr. Proctor was compelled to turn his varied knowledge to account. He wrote, lectured and edited far and wide; and has left something like fifty volumes. Most of these deal with astronomical subjects, but he has also written largely upon such subjects as Chance and Luck, Whist, The Great Pyramid, Wages and Wants of Science Workers, etc. He was an indefatigable worker. In addition to his books, he wrote continuously in magazines and papers. For many years he poured out stores of information of all kinds to readers of the *English Mechanic*. In 1881 he started *Knowledge* as a weekly, which he altered to a monthly in 1885.

In religion Mr. Proctor was a thorough Freethinker, and had gone through sufficient phases of thought to be acquainted with all sides of the religious question. Attracted by the writings of Newman, and, what he deemed the consistency of Catholicism, he became at one time a convert to that system. During his first sojourn in the United States he thought out the question of Catholicism and science; and in a letter published in the *New York Tribune* in November, 1875, he formally declared that he renounced that religion as irreconcilable with scientific facts. We believe that the theological denunciations of Professor Tyndall's Belfast address were a precipitant cause of this conclusion. Since that period Mr. Proctor has shown that his renunciation of Catholicism meant a complete renunciation of Christianity. Many of his papers in *Knowledge* sufficiently indicate this. He did not so directly attack theology as seek to explain it. His remarks on the so-called Star of Bethlehem, published in *The Universe of Suns and other Science Gleanings*,

illustrates his method. To the January number of *Knowledge* last year he contributed a striking paper on "The Beginning of Christianity." He entirely rejected the miraculous elements of the gospel story, which he considered largely a *rechauffé* of solar myths. In other articles which he contributed to the *Freethinkers' Magazine*, of Buffalo, and the *Open Court*, of Chicago, he pointed out the coincidence between the Christian stories and solar myths and also with stories found in Josephus. The very last article he published before his untimely death was a vindication of Colonel Ingersoll in his controversy with Gladstone in the *North American Review*.

COLONEL INGERSOLL ON SECULARISM.

COLONEL INGERSOLL has been recently interviewed and asked the question, "Do you regard Secularism as a religion?" He replied: I understand that the word Secularism embraces everything that is of any real interest or value to the human race. I take it for granted that everybody will admit that well-being is the only good; that is to say that it is impossible to conceive of anything of real value that does not tend either to preserve or to increase the happiness of some sentient being.

Secularism, therefore, covers the entire territory. It fills the circumference of human knowledge and of human effort. It is you may say, the religion of this world; but if there is another world, it is necessarily the religion of that as well.

Man finds himself in this world naked and hungry. He needs food, raiment, shelter. He finds himself filled with almost innumerable wants. To gratify these wants is the principal business of life. To gratify them without interfering with other people is the course pursued by honest men.

Secularism teaches us to be good here and now. I know of nothing better than goodness. Secularism teaches us to be just here and now. It is impossible to be juster than just. Man can be as just in this world as in any other, and justice must be the same in all worlds.

Secularism teaches a man to be generous, and generosity is certainly as good here as it can be anywhere else. Secularism teaches a man to be charitable, and certainly charity is as beautiful in this world and in this short life as it could be were man immortal.

But orthodox people insist that there is something higher than Secularism; but, as a matter of fact, the mind of man can conceive of nothing better, nothing higher, nothing more spiritual, than goodness, justice, generosity, charity. Neither has the mind of man been capable of finding a nobler incentive to action than human love.

Secularism has to do with every possible relation. It says to the young man and to the young woman: "Don't marry unless you can take care of yourselves and your children."

It says to the parents: "Live for your children; put forth every effort to the end that your children may know more than you; that they may be better and grander than you."

Secularism says: "You have no right to bring children into the world that you are not able to educate and feed and clothe."

Secularists say to those who have diseases that can be transmitted to children: "Do not marry; do not become parents; do not perpetuate suffering, deformity, agony, imbecility, insanity, poverty, wretchedness."

Secularism tells all children to do the best they can for their parents, to discharge every duty and every obligation.

Secularism defines the relation that should exist between husband and wife, between parent and child, between the citizen and the nation. And not only that, but between nations.

Secularism is a religion that is to be used everywhere and at all times; that is to be taught everywhere and practised at all times. It is not a religion that is so dangerous that it must be kept out of the schools; it is not a religion so dangerous that it must be kept out of politics. It belongs in the schools; it belongs at the polls. It is the business of Secularism to teach every child, to teach every voter. It is its business to discuss all political problems, and to decide all questions that affect the rights or the happiness of a human being.

Orthodox religion is a firebrand; it must be kept out of the schools; it must be kept out of politics. All the churches unite in saying that orthodox religion is not for every-day use. The Catholics object to any Protestant religion being taught to children. Protestants object to any Catholic religion being taught to children. But the Secularist wants his religion taught to all; and his religion can produce no feeling, for the reason that it consists of facts—of truths. And all of it is important; important for the politician—for the president—for all in power; important to every legislator, to every professional man, to every laborer and to every farmer—that is to say, to every human being.

The great benefit of Secularism is that it appeals to the reason of every man. It asks every man to think for himself. It does not threaten punishment if a man thinks, but it offers a reward, for fear that he will not think.

It does not say, "You will be damned in another world if you think." But it says, "You will be damned in this world if you do not think."

Secularism preserves the manhood and womanhood of all. It says to each human being: "Stand upon your own feet. Count on no one! Examine for yourselves. Investigate, observe, think. Express your opinion. Stand by your judgment, unless you are convinced you are wrong, and when you are convinced you can maintain and preserve your manhood or your womanhood only by admitting that you were wrong."

It is impossible that the whole world should agree on one creed. It may be impossible that any two human beings can agree exactly in religious belief. Secularism teaches that each one must take care of himself; that at the first duty of man is to himself, to the end that he may be not only useful to himself, but to others. He who fails to take care of himself becomes a burden. The first duty of man is not to be a burden.

Every Secularist can give a reason for his creed. First of all, he believes in work—taking care of himself. He believes in the cultiva-

tion of the intellect, to the end that he may take advantage of the forces of Nature—to the end that he may be clothed and fed and sheltered.

He also believes in giving to every other human being every right that he claims for himself. He does not depend on prayer. He has no confidence in ghosts or phantoms. He knows nothing of another world. He knows just as little of a first cause, but what little he does know he endeavors to use, and to use for the benefit of himself and others.

He knows that he sustains certain relations to other sentient beings, and he endeavors to add to the aggregate of human joy. He is his own church, his own priest, his own clergyman, and his own pope. He decides for himself; in other words, he is a free man.

He also has a Bible, and this Bible embraces all the good and true things that have been written, no matter by whom or in what language or in what time. He accepts everything that he believes to be true, and rejects all that he thinks is false. He knows that nothing is added to the probability of an event because there has been an account of it written and printed.

All that has been said that is true is part of his Bible. Every splendid and noble thought, every good word, every kind action—all these you will find in his Bible. And, in addition to these, all that is absolutely known—that has been demonstrated—belongs to the Secularist. All the inventions, machines—everything that has been of assistance to the human race—belongs to his religion.

The Secularist is in possession of everything that man has. He is deprived only of that which man never had.

The orthodox world believes in ghosts and phantoms, in dreams and prayers, in miracles and monstrosities—that is to say, in modern theology. But these things do not exist, or if they do exist, it is impossible for a human being to ascertain the fact.

Secularism has no "castles in Spain." It has no glorified fog. It depends upon realities, upon demonstrations; and its end and aim is to make this world better every day, to do away with poverty and crime, and to cover the world with happy and contented homes.

(To be concluded)

THE HOLY BOOK AND VEGETARIANISM.

VEGETARIANS claim that the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments, supports their theories concerning the dietary best adapted to sustain the energy and health of the human body. At a public meeting at Shoreditch Town Hall on the 6th inst., the chairman, Mr. A. F. Hills, after enumerating several more or less cogent arguments in favor of Vegetarianism, urged a religious reason why butcher's meat should be discarded and fruit, grain, nuts, and whole-meal bread substituted as all-sufficient. He declared that it was the will of God that life should not be taken, and quoted the words, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." "Thou shalt not destroy any life," was the Lord's commandment, he said.

These declarations were vigorously applauded—which establishes one proof more that the Holy Book is worshipped blindly. The fourth chapter of Genesis clearly disproves the assertion. Cain's grain, fruit, and vegetables were disdainfully rejected, whilst the firstlings of the flock, with the fat thereof, which Abel offered, were joyfully accepted.

There are also frequent references to the delight afforded to Jahveh's nostrils by the smell of sweet savors from burnt sacrifices. Deuteronomy (see chapters xiv. and xvi.) also contains explicit directions, given by Jahveh personally, for killing and roasting animals. After reading Deuteronomy right through, how can it be asserted that Jahveh hated "taking any life"? Bible history is largely a record of the slaughter of men, women, and infants, to say nothing of the animals ordered to be killed for sacrifices. To impress the command, "Thou shalt not take any life," forcibly on the mind of children, God sent his only son into the world to be killed, and declared that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." The body of Christ, moreover, is still eaten, and the blood drunk by the faithful in their religious ceremonies. Are there any members of the Vegetarian Association who belong to the Established Church?

It may be concluded that the much-needed reforms in the diet of mankind, would be better promoted by avoiding disingenuous statements. There are sound reasons for the adoption of some of the views enunciated by vegetarians, but food reformers and drink reformers had much better fight shy of the Holy Book.

JUDISHER FREIDENKER.

[NOTE.—"Judisher Freidenker" might also have quoted the express command given to Peter, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat" (Acts x., 13). Our Bible vegetarians also conveniently overlook this passage.]

PROFANE JOKES.

Woman always was a siren. Even the five foolish virgins of Scripture, whose lamps went out, did their best to beg ile!

"I take my text dis morning," said a colored preacher, from dat portion ob de Scriptures whar de 'Postol Paul pints his pistol to the 'Resions.

The chief difference between the nice little Sunday-school boy and the nice little cannibal island boy would seem to be that the former keeps a cent for the missionary plate and the latter a plate for the missionary sent.

A little squint-eyed Chicago boy pranced up to his mother one day and said: "Ma, hain't I been real good since I've begun to go to Sunday-school?" "Yes, my lamb," answered the maternal, fondly. "And you trust me now, don't you ma?" "Yes, my darling," she replied again. "Then," spoke up the little innocent, "what makes you keep the cookies locked up in the pantry the same as ever?"

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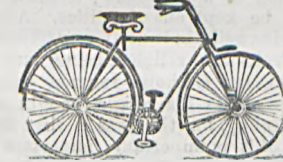
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