

# THE FREETHINKER

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

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No 268.



## HOW TO STOP SUNDAY TRADING.

Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.—EXODUS XXXI., 15.  
All the congregation shall stone him with stones.—NUMBERS XV., 35.

## A NEW DEFENCE OF FAITH.

THERE is one Christian in all England whose brilliant and subtle intellect one would like to see matched against Colonel Ingersoll, and that is Cardinal Newman. But the great priest whom people make pilgrimages to see at Birmingham is very old, and even if he were younger he would probably shrink from a public encounter with an Atheist; first, because he might think it beneath the dignity of his Church; and secondly, because he attributes conviction to faith rather than reason.

In default of the only Cardinal in whom any thinker takes the slightest interest, Cardinal Manning rushes into the arena. He does so with an extremely serious air, yet his appearance is somewhat grotesque. His article in the *North American Review* stands under the main heading of "The Gladstone-Ingersoll Controversy," but it does not mention either of those disputants, or allude to a single one of their arguments. The sub-title, which is apparently the Cardinal's own, is "The Church its own Witness." Had he possessed a grain of humor, he would have seen the profane retort to which he makes himself liable. Men do not give themselves a character until no one else will stand sponsor for them, and the Church is its own witness because it cannot get an independent witness to enter the

No. 379.]

box on its behalf. Any scoundrel at the Old Bailey would be ready to describe himself as the pink of innocence, especially while the verdict was in suspense. Mrs. Gordon Baillie would still be at large if the jury relied upon *her* testimony.

Then, again, a little sagacity would have shown the Cardinal another objection to his title. It invites a criticism on the worst features of his Church. Why is it so fond of posing as its own witness? Because ago after age, it crushed out every witness to its damnation. Had the process been a little more thorough, had cruelty and cunning done their work a little more completely, the free spirit of man might have been hopelessly crippled, and the Church relieved from the humiliation of arguments and apologies.

Cardinal Manning's article is a stream of heated rhetoric. His style is as hasty, and sometimes as vicious, as his argument. He tells us for instance, that "the Church is visible to the eye, audible to the ear." Why did he not add "smellable by the nose"? Is anything visible to any organ *but* the eye? Or does the Cardinal know persons who hear with something else than their aural appendages?

The gist of the Cardinal's argument is this. The Church has lasted a long time, it was always the same in a world of change, and it always claimed a divine origin and authority. Therefore it is a superhuman institution, what it says must be true, and its commands must be obeyed.

What a pretty syllogism to filch a man's birthright of freedom! No, no, Cardinal Manning; you will never do it unless you catch the man asleep.

The Catholic Church has not been always the same, except in impudence. Saint Peter was not the first Pontiff, except in lying legends. The Church has launched new dogmas and repaired and altered old ones. Undoubtedly the Church is wide, but Buddhism is no less so. Certainly the Church is old, but Buddhism is older, and Brahmanism was hoary before Christianity was born. Mohammedanism itself, which founded its first empire on the ruins of Asiatic and African Catholicism—the Crescent defeating the Cross on a hundred battlefields—has lasted for more than twelve centuries. The Catholic Church only beats it by three or four hundred years. Does Cardinal Manning mean that a Church which has existed for twelve hundred years is human, and that a Church which has existed for sixteen hundred years is divine?

Equally specious is the Cardinal's plea that other faiths have broken up, while Catholicism has remained intact. Endless divisions, he says, have gone out of his Church, but they are like lopped branches, and "the identity of the tree remains the same." Well, Buddhism went out of Brahmanism, and, for all we know, a hundred minor "heresies." Yet Brahmanism remains the same. Does this prove that Brahmanism is divine?

Cardinal Manning is a curious logician. If, he says, the Catholic Church "be only a human system built up by the intellect, will and energy of men, let the adversaries prove it." "The burden," he repeats, "is upon them." This is calling upon his opponents to prove a negative. Surely the burden of proof lies upon those who make a positive assumption. If an old man tells me he is immortal, and requires me to disprove it, I reply "I am not so foolish; wait a while, and very likely you will die." The presumption is that every man is mortal, and the presumption is that every institution is human. If you contest the presumption—that is, if you assert an improbability—the burden of proof lies upon you.

We need not follow the Cardinal through his long-winded dissertation on the imperial claims of his Church from the days of Irenæus. Reiteration is not evidence. The longest succession of learned doctors inside the Church, who declared its divine authority, proves nothing, for the moment they hesitated they were turned out. Unanimity was not a growth, but a manufacture. All are necessarily of one opinion, when every other opinion is stamped out. Nor can length of time make good a bad claim. Truth is always the same. Reasons are not young or old. Any good argument in favor of the divinity of the Catholic Church must have been just as good seventeen hundred years ago, and any bad argument then must be just as bad now.

Catholics are numerous, and Cardinal Manning leans upon the fact. He forgets that Protestants are overtaking them. He also forgets that Catholics and Protestants together are outnumbered by Buddhists. But, in any case, numbers are no criterion of truth. What does a sensible man care whether seven hundred or seven million bishops knelt before the Pope in 1870? His brain is his own, single, inviolable; and he has to think for himself. Counting heads is a poor method of deciding what is true or false. Had Europe been polled, Copernicus, Newton, and Darwin would have been declared wrong. And there is another fact the Cardinal should remember. Were the whole world polled, a verdict would be given against the Catholic Church, and even against Christianity.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded).

#### GORDON AND THE BOOK.

VIDE HIS STATUE IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE, OCTOBER 1888.

(The General is said to have been slain reading the Bible.)

The Bible was his favorite book,  
Great faith and hope it gave him,  
But when the Mahdi Khartoom took,  
This fetich could not save him.

The bronzed Gordon in the Square  
Still grasps the treacherous volume:  
An awful warning stands he there,  
Beneath the Nelson Column.

*Nolite confidere Diis!*

CHAS. KNOLL LAPORTE.

#### THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW" AND CHRISTIANITY.

THE devotion of the first long heavy article in the *Quarterly Review* to an attack upon Mrs. Humphrey Ward's popular novel *Robert Elsmere* is a good deal like seeking to crush a butterfly upon a wheel. The attempt becomes the more ridiculous when we perceive that, despite the most ponderous preparations, the butterfly soars away untouched, while its antagonist fairly flounders in the mire.

The chief complaint the venerable Quarterly Reviewer makes against *Robert Elsmere* is that the hero becomes a sceptic too easily, and upon arguments utterly inadequate. The Reviewer should be grateful. We smile when we read in religious novels of wicked Atheists suddenly turned to Christianity; but the orthodox writer rages against Mrs. Ward for representing a clergyman as resigning Christianity owing to "losing his head in a mass of fallacies." "Elsmere himself is," says the Reviewer, "in fact, to a great extent the victim, not, as Mrs. Ward would represent, of truth, but of a superlative conceit." But the reason he attacks the work at all is plainly only because he thinks its numerous readers may come to similar conclusions to those of Robert Elsmere. If any person held that Iago was a noble-minded friend to Othello, and not, "as Shakespeare would represent," the reverse, we should tell him to go and write a new Othello himself. When orthodox Christians write novels they can place all the good arguments in the mouths of their saints, and make the sceptics as stupid and as wicked as they please.

In the face of the numerous Christian novels in which this is done it is a little too ridiculous for the antiquated Quarterly Reviewer to be so angry because he finds a novel in which Christianity is spoken of as "a religion which can no longer be believed," and its miracles referred to as "fairy tales." We may be quite sure the Reviewer would not notice the work at all were he not convinced that the authoress is not only a cultured lady herself, but that she represents the opinions of cultured persons in Society. Indeed, he admits that her portraiture of well-known persons at Oxford is truthful, and therefore this Rip Van Winkle of orthodoxy falls foul of the Abolition of Tests at the Universities. "To please people who were willing to pay the price of unchristianizing a University for a Liberal or Nonconformist triumph, the government and discipline of Oxford are now committed to men who are emancipated from obligation to any form of belief," and he urges that "it is time English parents should thoroughly understand that this is the condition to which the Universities have been brought, and that if they send their sons to a college like St. Anselm's they expose them in the immaturity and excitability of their early manhood, to have their faith deliberately undermined by the maturer intellectual force of a philosophical deist like Mr. Grey, or a hopeless sceptic like Mr. Langham." In the same breath he informs his readers that the arguments of these Oxford professors are of the most fallacious and untenable character and have often been refuted.

We notice by the way that whenever a Christian comes across an argument he does not care to meet he usually says either that it has been refuted again and again, or that the position has been given up by the best German critics. In one part of his article the Reviewer makes out that the rationalists have given up their case. In another he calls Professor Huxley's irrefutable description of the gospels as documents of unknown date and of unknown authorship as "nothing less than immoral." But the worst vials of his wrath are reserved for Sir Fitzjames Stephen. That writer as our readers will remember,<sup>1</sup> endorses the position of Professor Huxley and says "The statements of the gospels are uncertified hearsay." That a person in his position, whose competence to judge evidence cannot be questioned, should venture thus to challenge the fundamentals of the Christian faith, quite overcomes the Reviewer. Having no case he of course abuses the plaintiff's counsel. "These attacks upon our religion by a person holding the great office of a judge" are declared to be immoral. Justice Stephen is indeed as good as declared to be unfit for his position. The Reviewer says, "the part he has taken in this controversy is a grave abuse of his position as a judge. It is a recognised consequence of a judge's position that he should

<sup>1</sup> See *Freethinker* October 23, 1837.

abstain from speaking or acting to the prejudice of established institutions. But so long, at all events as the Church is established, Christianity is the established religion of the country."

What nonsense! Sir J. Fitzjames Stephen did not write in his position as Mr. Justice Stephen, but in his private capacity, in which he has exactly the same right to form and promulgate his opinions as any other citizen. The Reviewer ought to know that in the trial of the editor of this journal Lord Chief Justice Coleridge laid it down that it was no longer true that Christianity was part and parcel of the law of the land. Jews, who deny Christianity, are judges in England; so also are Roman Catholics and Dissenters, who abhor the Established Church. Parsees, Hindus, and Mohammedans, who equally deny the Christian religion, are judges in our Indian Empire. To say that such persons must in their private capacity conceal their views, or, as the anonymous Christian suggests, write anonymously, is only another evidence of old fogginess. Indeed, this antediluvian fossil winds up his article of thirty pages with an appeal to the Boycott, as the one great defence against the inroads of infidelity. "The Christian world," says this representative of Mrs. Partington, "will have to draw a fence around itself, and to ostracise books and philosophers and institutions alike by which the bloom is taken off all the most gracious and tender instincts of a Christian soul." Just so. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." The Christian world has tried the policy of excommunication for eighteen centuries. The final result has been simply to leave it in the condition of the Quarterly Reviewer—bigoted, narrow-minded, impervious to ideas, and utterly ridiculous.

J. M. WHEELER.

## ACID DROPS.

MR. GRIFFITHS lost the Merthyr election, though he was the nominee of the Liberal caucus, an independent Liberal candidate, Mr. Pritchard Morgan, winning the seat by a big majority. It is said that Mr. Griffiths "alienated the Roman Catholics by some indiscreet remarks on national education," so they voted *en masse* for his rival. This is a significant fact. When Home Rule is carried, we shall probably see the Roman Catholic vote cast dead against every liberal measure affecting the highest interests of the country.

EVEN unbelievers in spirit influences were struck by the circumstantial story told by Elizabeth Watts, who identified one of the victims of the Whitechapel murderer as her sister, and gave a marvellous account of the manner in which, at the moment of the murder, she felt and heard three kisses on her cheek, and knew by this supernatural warning that some disaster had happened to her sister. The missing sister has turned up alive and well, and complains bitterly of the way in which Mrs. Watts has taken away her character by a string of malicious falsehoods. Many of these stories of the supernatural rest on no better ground than the irresponsible fancies of hysterical women; but the exposure does not always come to light, as in the present case. The tale of Mary Magdalen about the risen Savior probably owed its success to the absence of public inquests and newspaper reports.

THE *Christian Herald* prints an account of a Chinese demoniac, written by a missionary, the Rev. W. P. Chalfant. The man had been "possessed of a devil" for ten years, and he came and fell down before one of the missionaries, beseeching him to heal him, just as the demoniacs in the New Testament besought Jesus. Mr. Chalfant tried to calm the man by telling him he thought it was merely a nervous disease, but he soon saw that he was "hopelessly in the minority" among his Christian companions. His own helper politely hinted that, with all deference to western rationalism, he thought there was actually a devil in the man. Mr. Chalfant then submitted to the superstition, and directed the attention of the family to one who had cast out demons in a land "not so very far from China." Prayers were then offered for the expulsion of the demon with which the man might be possessed. Is it worth while sending missionaries thousands of miles to encourage Bible superstitions which the more educated missionaries themselves reject?

THE efficacy of prayer is a great relief to the poor. So the *Christian Herald* teaches. It relates how a poor shirt finisher in Stepney rejoiced over a dozen shirts that had come in after long waiting and "a deal of prayer." "She lives in a room on the ground floor at the back of the house—a small, dark place, without much furniture. Her bed is made of boxes, an old mattress, and a piece of sacking. She had no fire when I called, and she had no food; but she did not complain while she sat at her work,

although she shivered so much that she could scarcely hold her needle. She was anxious to get the work done to carry it home, in order to buy some food. An old table stood near the window, and she explained that she worked in a draught because she could not afford a light. The shirts would bring her in 4½d. when finished; but she could not take them to the sweater before the next morning, so she must go to bed without any supper, or, rather, lie awake under the bit of sacking, thinking how much she could buy with 4½d." After this who will say that prayer is not efficacious, and that those who recommend it to poverty-stricken sufferers are not Good Samaritans of the first water?

SPURGEON continues to suffer intensely from his rheumatic gout in spite of all the prayers offered up for his recovery. Of course he still retains his old belief in the complete efficacy of prayer all the same.

A GREAT demonstration against the majority report of the Education Committee has been held in Manchester. The Rev. H. Price Hughes declared that the reactionary proposals of the report were the most unjust and the most irritating proposals ever made for the concurrent endowment of the Church of England and the Church of Rome. The question was, whether the English people were to go back into the ecclesiastical nursery, or whether they were to assert the independence of self-respect and the dignity of mankind. He thought that they might congratulate themselves that for the very first time in the history of this great educational controversy, all the great Non-conformist bodies were now standing shoulder to shoulder. The pious reactionaries have apparently stirred up a resistance which they hardly expected. It is to be hoped that this resistance will be sufficient to defeat their pious intentions.

THE two youths, Gower and Dobell, who committed a shocking murder at Tunbridge Wells together with a series of other crimes, made each other's acquaintance at the Wesleyan Sunday-school. Eaten up by vanity, one of them wrote a letter to the *Advertiser* describing the murder, and signing himself "Another Whitechapel Murderer." The police treated this as a hoax. Ultimately one of them, after attending a Salvation Army meeting, called on the captain next day, and after saying he believed his mate "got saved last night," was induced to confess the murder on the condition that the "captain" would keep it a secret. The captain informed the police, and the criminals were duly arrested. Some will argue that this shows the usefulness of the Salvation Army, or of religion. In the case of superstitious criminals of the lowest type, Christianity, or vanity, or stupidity, or credulity, of course may sometimes afford means of detection, and there is no need to rob superstition of whatever credit may be due to such incidental effects. On the whole, superstition causes more crime and misery than it prevents.

GOWER's penitence may be judged by the general frivolity and boastfulness of his language, and by his remark that sometimes he and his companion felt sorry for what they had done and sometimes felt that if Lawrence (the murdered man) were to rise again they would do just the same. Next day Dobell, the younger criminal, who had fired the fatal shot and who had been converted and "saved" without any idea of confession or penitence, received a letter from his companion commencing thus: "My dear mate,—The Holy Ghost entered your heart last night. God only knows I wish it had mine." In court the converted prisoners displayed no penitence or remorse. They stared jauntily about and were thoroughly reckless, defiant and hardened in their demeanor. In their cells they sang, yelled, whistled and laughed, and at the railway station Dobell threatened to "do for" someone whom he recognised in the crowd. Yet according to the Bible these youths are sure of heaven. They have come to Jesus, and they believe, and therefore they are saved. One of them, at least, has the Holy Ghost in his heart. If it be said that he only mistakes his own feelings for the presence of God, how do we know that all other Christians do not make exactly the same mistake?

How these parsons love one another! The clericals cannot refute Canon Isaac Taylor's proofs of the Great Missionary Failure, but they have found one point against him, and both the *Church Times* and the *Record* rejoice therein. It appears that, whereas the reverend Canon thinks one halfpenny per head is ample for the conversion of the heathen, he is content to accept £1,048 and a house for the care of a parish of 802 souls. In other words, he considers £1 6s. 1½d. per head not excessive remuneration for his own services, whereas ½d. per head should suffice for the conversion of the heathen.

DISTRAINTS for tithes are still being carried out in Wales by the aid of the police, and amid the protests of indignant crowds. Elligies of the vicars are commonly stuck up on the haystacks. The Clergy Defence Association is carrying on this Christian campaign of benevolence and love. Somehow the Welsh farmers are not being rapidly converted to the creed of the Church which thus demonstrates to them the noble and kindly character of the acts which flow from its teaching.

POPULAR opinion is hard on the lawyers. According to one story, a lawyer once gained admission to heaven. He soon sought opportunity for litigation. Going to St. Joseph, the greatest of all the saints, he argued that the precedence given to St. Peter as keeper of the gates of Paradise was a breach of justice after his betrayal of his heavenly master; and that, being the greatest saint, he (St. Joseph) should have the highest office. With this argument he won over many of the saints, and it was decided that a petition should be presented to St. Michael, the Archangel, and the question argued. This was accordingly done, the lawyer drawing up the pleadings on behalf of St. Joseph. But when the case came on for hearing, St. Michael decreed that, as St. Joseph had been provided with a lawyer to conduct his cause, and St. Peter was without an advocate, the case must be deferred till a second lawyer should arrive—and that till then St. Peter should remain in possession of the keys. As no other lawyer has yet managed to get into heaven, Peter is still safe.

In the case of a poor industrious woman at Finchley who was summoned for not sending her child to school, Mr. Homans, one of the magistrates said to her, "No doubt God sent your child into the world to nurse the baby, but the law says it must go to school. It is a very hard case." If God sends the child into the world to remain uneducated, the fault is God's, and Mr. Homans had better have him summoned, not only for defying the School Board, but for sending the bitter poverty which drives the mother to work to keep her children from starving, and so necessitates keeping the child at home to mind the baby while the mother goes out to earn food for her helpless family.

CHARLES FLAXINGTON, telegraphist of Leeds, is a nice specimen of Christian religiosity. A Sunday-school teacher at St. Simon's church, he there met and courted Gertrude Berwick. He wrote letters abounding in piety, exhorted her to "Trust in the Lord for ever," and "remember your prayers," quoted hymns to her, took the communion with her, prayed that God might breathe into her soul "that calm, sweet, and unspeakable joy which he can and will give," seduced her, and then recommended her to procure abortion, and finally deserted her and refused to acknowledge the child, for which he has now been ordered to pay four shillings a week for sixteen years.

In a Kentucky Sunday school the teacher addressing a boy, said, "Whom do you consider the greatest man in the Bible?" "Cain." "Oh no; he was wicked. Why do you regard him as the greatest man?" "'Cause he drowned Abel." "Yes, but Samson killed a large number of men." "He did? Well, then, I reckon he was the greatest." The boy has evidently hit on a sound Scriptural method of estimating greatness.

THE *Church Times* rejoices that "at length and perforce a stop must be put to the desecration which Westminster Abbey has suffered at the hands of those who have regarded the sacred building as nothing more than a great national Valhalla." It laments that "it has come to be thought that the Abbey is no longer a Christian church, and hence many men have found a resting-place within its walls who probably in life would never have entered them for the purpose of Christian worship." Men like Grote, Sir Charles Lyell and Darwin are of course alluded to, and probably Dickens and Macaulay might be included in the same category. It appears there is only room for a few more burials, and, in every point of view, it will be desirable that a new secular resting-place be found for our great dead.

CARDINAL SIMOR, Primate of Hungary, enjoys an income of over six million florins attached to his see. Such is the poverty to which Christianity brings its professors.

THE *Christian Herald* gives an account of "a demoniac at a camp-meeting" at Chicago. After a frightful scene of convulsion and raving about hell-fire, "Satan was cast out" by faith in Jesus. The high-class Christian journals give up these debasing superstitions. Only the more degraded or fanatical of them still pander to the superstitions of the vulgar by accepting Bible beliefs as present-day facts.

A LONG paragraph, giving the substance of a Christian forgery to which we called attention some time ago, is again going the rounds of the press and appears in the *Leeds Mercury*, where it is said to be taken from the *Tablet*. The document pretends to be the translation of a brass plate which records the sentence of death pronounced against Jesus Christ. The brass plate, if ever it existed, is as clumsy a forgery as the pretended plates of the book of Mormon. It follows the gospel of John in its historical blunder of making Annas and Caiaphas high priests at the same time; it makes Pontius Pilate governor of Lower Galilee, whereas Herod Antipas was tetrarch of that division of Palestine, and Pilate was procurator of Judaea only.

THE last number of *Diplomatic Fly-Sheets* is devoted to the subject of "The new crusade against Islam under pretence of abolishing slavery." Before ascribing all the evils of the African slave trade to Mohammedanism, Cardinal Lavigerio should reflect upon the consequences which would ensue upon ascribing all the crimes of Christians to the discredit of Christianity.

THE Rev. Robert Morton, of Sunderland, in lecturing at Grimsby on "Woman, her Place and Power," repeated the trite falsehood that "Paganism, Mohammedanism, and almost all other religions degraded woman, while Christianity was the only one that elevated her." Mr. Morton should read the recent articles contributed to the *Contemporary Review* by Dr. Donaldson.

TEN of the clericals concerned in the scandalous and unreportable doings at Citeaux have been sentenced to imprisonment for terms varying from several years to three months.

ACCORDING to the *Leeds Mercury* it is not true that certain Irish Landlords intend to place Protestant families on their farms. "The men would require," it says, "to be constantly armed, and they would live in perpetual conflict with their Catholic neighbors." How these Christians love one another.

THE Bishop of Salisbury in pronouncing a blessing upon two clergymen sent out from the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, gave them no hint of the proofs offered by Canon Taylor that they are not wanted by the educated Hindus and Mohammedans of that city. He trusted that these missionaries were the beginning of a mighty stream which would overflow the continent of India. The Christian stream has been long enough about it, considering that St. Thomas is said to have gone to convert that country some eighteen hundred years ago.

MR. IRVING says it is from the English theatre that the people derive "the food and stimulants which the higher nature requires." Good God! What about the Bible then? The Almighty takes the trouble to give us a revelation, and Mr. Irving wants to cut him out with the drama. Won't he get it warm some day.

MR. IRVING, however, stands up for the good old English Sunday, and repudiates the notion of his ever playing on the Lord's day. But Mr. John Gritton, the chief English representative of the Lord God of Sabaoth, wants to know if Mr. Irving does not countenance Sunday recitals. He also wishes to know whether Mr. Labouchere could desecrate Twickenham with open-air dramas on Sunday without the assistance of profane-minded actors. Mr. Irving lies low, and lets the Gritton wind blow over him.

MR. W. T. STEAD, writing in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, says:—"The practical importance of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ has always seemed to me to lie in the fact that it invests His teaching with the authority of the Categorical Imperative." What a grandiloquent way of saying that belief in Christ saves you the trouble of thinking.

MR. STEAD says the grand thing is "to do as Christ commanded." We doubt Mr. Stead's readiness to do anything of the kind. We will give him twenty orders from the Sermon on the Mount which he disregards every day of his life. Mr. Stead spells his pronouns relating to Jesus Christ with capitals, and that is about all the practical deference he shows to his Savior.

If the Bishop of Bedford's advice is followed, we may expect to hear reports of far greater success in converting the Jews of the East End to Christianity. The Bishop suggests that those who are baptised should be assisted to go abroad where they could more easily obtain a living than in England. As a great number of the Russian and Polish Jews who arrive here only do so in order to obtain as much cash as will take them to America, we expect a good few will not allow a sprinkling of water to deter them from Christian help to obtain their end.

## REVIEW.

*National Secular Society's Almanack, 1889.* Edited by Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant. Freethought Publishing Co. (6d).—A valuable repository of useful information for Freethinkers, containing lists of Secular organisations and other interesting items. The Calendar is very full and represents years of careful collection. But some errors have crept in, perhaps through repeated printings. A few of these caught our eye in turning over the pages, and of course there may be more. Cervantes and Shakespeare did not die on the same day. Both died nominally on April 23, 1616, but the Cervantes date is old style, and should be April 13 in our calendar. John Hampden was not "killed" on June 23, 1643. He was mortally wounded on June 18, and lingered for six days. Etienne Dolet was not burnt "for Atheism," though his contemporaries suspected him of being an Atheist. The great point in his indictment was heresy as to the immortality of the soul. The battle of Worcester was fought in 1651, not 1657. Hobbes died in 1679 not 1671. Such blunders, however, are slight considering the fulness of the Calendar, and they can be easily corrected in the next issue. The usual supply of articles by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Foote, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Standring, and others, completes an excellent number.

"Let us dine together," said the native king to the missionary. "With great pleasure," replied the good man; "but I must be host." "I have planned it differently," said the king, with a bleak light in his eyes; "you shall be the dinner."

## MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, November 4, Old Assembly Rooms (behind the Corn Market), Leeds; at 11, "Bible Morality: a Reply to the Royal Commissioners on Education"; at 3, "Mr. Balfour's Religion"; at 7, "Plain Truth about Jesus Christ."

Thursday, Nov. 8, Marylebone Radical Club, 9 Whitfield Place, Tottenham Court Road; at 8, "London and its Landlords."

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

Dec. 2 and 9, Hall of Science; 16, Manchester; 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.

THEOLOGOS.—Bishop Ellicott's *Commentary* is orthodox, one-sided, and only pseudo-critical. We know no complete *Commentary* that can be recommended, though there are some good ones on particular books.

R. MACKAY.—The soliloquy of Jonah in the whale's belly beginning "What house is this? Here's neither coal nor candle! Where I nothing but guts of fishes handle!" was written by the Rev. Zachary Boyd, a Scotch minister who made a metrical paraphrase of the Bible, in which also occurs the longest Alexandrine on record: "Was not Pharaoh a great rascal, Who would not let the Children of Israel go into the wilderness with their wives and their sons and their daughters and their flocks and herds, for forty days and nights to celebrate the *Paschal!*"

D. PROVAN.—Cuttings received with thanks. See "Acid Drops." No. 12.—Pleased to hear from you. Keep pegging away. You will meet many bigots, but you will sow some seed in fruitful ground.

G. ORROCK.—Glad to hear the article and sketch were so acceptable. We don't know what you allude to in reference to Mr. Dent. We have heard of no testimonial. He has been a very active worker in the East End.

CHelsea FREETHINKER.—We cannot say at the moment who is the best School Board candidate for the Chelsea division. The Central Democratic Committee, on which the London Secular Federation is represented, will issue a list of recommendations a week or ten days before the poll.

TRUTHSEEKER, in sending his subscription for the *Radical Leader*, says, "I take a great interest in it and think it a proper companion for the *Freethinker*." Our correspondent is informed that he has no remedy against the exorbitant clerical charges he refers to.

G. WEIR.—We wish both parties in Edinburgh success, and trust fiction will be as far as possible avoided.

W. T. LEEKEY.—We are obliged.

J. F. HENLEY.—We wish the Hyde Park Branch all success.

B. B.—The subject is outside our special scope. If you think Mr. Bradlaugh would be able to answer your question, why do you not write to him direct? We are no authority on legal matters.

G. NAEWIGER.—Shall appear.

EX-METHODIST.—We are always delighted to hear from one of our converts *Bible Romances*, which acted as an earthquake to your orthodoxy, is at present out of print, but will be republished by-and-by. Sorry to know our organisation is so indifferent in Leeds, and hope something will be done after Mr. Foote's course of lectures. We will look through your MS. if it is not too long.

C. J. NICHOLSON, secretary of the Edinburgh Branch N.S.S., complains of our paragraph in last week's "Sugar Plums." He says that the seceders, who have formed a fresh society, are "energetic" but backward in paying subscriptions, and they left the Branch when it was in debt. Mr. Nicholson asks us to publish his facts; we have done so without printing his details. There the matter must end as far as we are concerned. We took no sides, and we take none. The Edinburgh Freethinkers must settle their disputes themselves.

ALL TOGETHER.—As Vanini remarked, when he cried "O God!" on seeing the stake, it is only a fashion of speaking. When we said "the Bible is full of absurdities," we meant "full up." Of course there wasn't room for nothing but absurdities, as a lot of other objectionable matter had to be shovelled in.

G. V. BALL.—We note your suggestion.

A. R. ATKEY (Nottingham).—Your Branch report is very creditable. Such hard work should command success.

W. LUMLEY.—We wish we could say yes, but our correspondent did not light upon the *Freethinker* in that manner.

F. NATHAN.—We do not know of a Freethought club that would meet your views. Freethinkers are not sufficiently numerous to have clubs in every district.

G. SCOTT.—Cuttings are always welcome.

W. COSFORD.—The filthy handbill is beneath contempt. One can only conclude that the fellow is mad. If ever you meet with that farmer who threatened to shoot the Almighty for spoiling his corn and was struck stiff with the gun in his hand, you might send us word, and we will pay him a visit when we are in that part of the country. We have heard many Gospel stories of the same character, and we dare say this is as true as the rest.

DOLPH.—Received and under consideration.

T. WRATISLAW says, "I have recently purchased the *Crimes of Christianity*, and am delighted with it, so far as that is compatible with the feeling of horror I experienced in reading such pious atrocities." Our correspondent's MS. is under consideration.

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

## SUGAR PLUMS.

CONSIDERING the wet, there was a good audience at the London Hall of Science on Sunday evening. After the lecture, Mr. Foote stayed to help form a committee for Mr. Bland's candidature in Finsbury. Mr. G. Standring and Mr. R. O. Smith having got the committee in hand, Mr. Foote went off to the Progressive Club, Kennington, and started a committee for Mr. J. H. Ellis's candidature in West Lambeth. Mr. Victor Rogers is acting, for the present, as secretary, and the committee includes several members of his own club as well as some active spirits from the Camberwell Branch. The Battersea Branch is forming a sectional committee for that part of the division.

FREETHINKERS in Finsbury or West Lambeth who are willing to render any assistance in the struggle should communicate at once with Mr. G. Standring, 7 Finsbury Street, E.C., or Mr. V. Rogers, Progressive Club, Kennington Road, S.E.

A LIST of election meetings will be announced in our next, though some will have taken place before then.

SUBSCRIPTIONS in aid of this fight should be sent to Mr. R. O. Smith, 142 Old Street, E.C., or to our office. Funds are urgently needed.

THE *Star* printed a long letter on Monday from Mr. Foote on "The Coming Education Struggle." The letter "went for" the timid Radicals who go in for "unsectarian" instead of "secular" education.

SIR EDMUND CURRIE is standing as a School Board candidate for the Tower Hamlets division. This may prejudice Mrs. Besant's chance of success. Freethinkers should therefore give her all possible support.

THE entertainment given by the London Secular Federation at the Hall of Science last week was a capital one. The programme was good from beginning to end, and those who attended certainly got more than the worth of their money.

MR. FOOTE lectures to-day (Nov. 4), in the Old Assembly Rooms, Leeds. The local Branch has been for some time rather quiescent, and we hope there will be a special effort made to give publicity to the lectures and obtain good audiences. The occasion should be used to enrol fresh members and set the Branch well on its legs again.

THIS week's *Radical Leader* contains a bright biographical, social, and political sketch of "Labby" (Henry Labouchere, Esq., M.P.), Mr. Bradlaugh's colleague in the representation of Northampton. We commend it to our readers' attention.

ONE of our readers sent Mr. Forder an order to forward twelve copies of last week's *Freethinker* to as many gentlemen in his own district, furnishing the requisite addresses. Mr. Forder thinks other readers might be inclined to follow this example.

OUR comic sketch "Is Marriage a Failure?" was exhibited in the window of an empty shop in Holloway Road. It was cut out from the *Freethinker* and stuck on the top of a paper called *Will and Wisdom*. Lots of people stopped and had a good laugh, but alas, we lost the advertisement.

THE Hyde Park Branch has arranged for a course of Sunday evening free lectures at the West Marylebone Workman's Club, 123A Church Street, Edgware Road. Mr. Forder opens this evening (Nov. 4) at 6.45. We do not know the title, but it will be a Freethought lecture.

How dreadful! A discussion was opened in the crypt of St. Augustine's Church, Lynton Road, Bermondsey, on "Should the Bible be read in Board Schools?" The Rev. Lees Bell, a member of the London School Board took the chair, and another parson, the Rev. Lewis Lewis, opened the debate. The upshot was a majority of 20 against "the blessed book."

THE Unitarians boast another remarkable convert, Father W. E. Addis, late of Sydenham. Father Addis was bred for the Catholic priesthood, and was at one time a writer on the *Tablet*. He is joint editor with Mr. Arnold of the most important *Dictionary of Catholic Theology* in the English language. Many of his articles in this work were subject to considerable revision by the Romish authorities, and this, which must have shown him how impossible it is for a Roman priest to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, probably was the initial cause of his heresy. Mr. Addis is still a young man, and the Unitarian Church, that feather bed to catch a falling Christian, as Erasmus Darwin called it, may only prove the half-way house to complete rationalism.

THE *Tablet* writes very despairingly on "The Temporal Power of the Pope." It evidently thinks, though it will not admit, that

the result of the Emperor of Germany's visit is altogether unsatisfactory to the Church. It concludes by saying, "Some trust in chariots and horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord." If it has come to that, the Pope's cause is not only dead, but may as well be buried.

THERE are Christian bigots out in South Africa, and Mr. E. B. Rose received from one a letter worded as follows: "Belgravia, 22nd Sept., 1888.—If E. B. Rose, the adventurer, does not desist in his so-called Freethought lectures after this notice, he may find himself the centre of a pitiless mob. After this let him mount the platform if he dares again.—By order of THE BROTHERHOOD." The reply of Mr. Rose was the announcement, which his brother sends us, that he would deliver one more lecture, subject "Who is the Devil?" We have not learnt if the Brotherhood or the pitiless mob put in an appearance.

JULES LEMAITRE, one of the cleverest and most sceptical of French critics, says in the *Revue Bleue* (Oct. 15) that Buddhism is the oldest of all the philosophies, and also the newest. The conception of the world and of life formed by the banks of the Ganges 3,000 years ago, is what many amongst us are coming back to, and which is perfectly suited to our state of mind. Nothing in it can be proved, but every mood finds in it some satisfaction.

WE understand that the English translation of Renan's second volume of the *History of the People of Israel* will be ready during the present month. M. Renan here deals largely with Sultan Solomon, who he considers brought his country to the brink of bankruptcy and ruin.

MISS ADA CAMPBELL, who has achieved much success as a Freethought lecturess in Australia, has gone on a tour to America and is shortly to lecture at Chicago.

MR. GEORGE E. MACDONALD, "the man with the badge pin," who used to enliven the columns of the *New York Truthseeker* and who has, together with Mr. Putnam, established *Freethought* in San Francisco, has, we gather from some original "poesy" of his own, entered into the connubial state. He seems to be just the sort of man to make home happy.

UNDER the title of "An Heretical Literary Trinity," the *Boston Gazette* calls attention to three novels by three feminine sceptics. The three novels are *Robert Elsmere*, *John Ward*, and the *Story of an African Farm*. Of these the last named is the most pronounced. The authoress, Olive Schreiner, who uses the pen-name of Ralph Iron, was a governess at the Cape and the daughter of a missionary who died when she was at the age of eleven, when she was left alone and friendless. The *Story* contains much of her own autobiography.

#### ANOTHER SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

THE Sunday School lesson given in the *Christian Commonwealth* on the Fall of Jericho is succeeded by another on the "Defeat at Ai." This is said to be so strikingly different from the last lesson that "it would be difficult to imagine scenes more utterly wanting in resemblance." This variety is admired as "one of the Scripture beauties." There are such varied pictures in the pages of the Bible, we are told, that there is "something suited for every circumstance and character." This is rather too true. The tyrant, the polygamist, the slaveholder, the ruthless persecutor, the assassin, can only too easily find texts and pictures supporting all their views.

The lesson commences with the "melancholy event" of the loss of thirty-six of the men who failed in their attempt to seize the city of Ai in order to massacre the whole of its "12,000" inhabitants. On humanitarian views this should be presented to children—if presented to them at all—as a happy escape of 12,000 people from the sanguinary designs of merciless cut-throats who have attacked them without any quarrel or offence for the mere purpose of robbery and extermination. But religious people do not regard matters in this light. The Christian teacher perceives "the very rash manner" in which the chosen cut-throats made their onslaught, but is as blind as a stone statue to the atrocious nature of the enterprise on which they were engaged. This is tacitly assumed to be everything that is proper and honorable and manly. The children are to regard the failure of the enterprise as a most unfortunate disaster. They are to pity poor Joshua, and to feel, "as all noble souls will feel," that he is suffering this sorrowful check through other people's sins. They will sympathise with the baffled slaughterer of millions, for, as their teacher tells them, "it is this sympathy which lies at the root of Christian endeavor of all kinds."

The writer of the Lesson entirely ignores the massacres of harmless women and children. Although she teaches us

that we really are not required to "justify the ways of God to men," seeing that he is quite able to take care of his own name, she does not dare to refer plainly and distinctly to the extermination of the seven nations, but only to the disappointment of Joshua. This latter is a serious blow. It is a check to piety. The other is a trifle light as air, which no one need think of apologising for, because God orders it and God can take care of his own good name. The systematic massacre of the whole population is only referred to as in the euphemistic word "conquest," and the "conquest" is then treated as a thoroughly laudable and pious work.

The attention of the pupils is next fixed on the *cause* of the dreadful calamity which saved 12,000 lives. This cause turned out to be the "covetousness of Achan," who, against orders, has appropriated some of the treasure taken at Jericho.

"Achan, the person who sinned in this matter, was therefore exceedingly guilty. And until the wrong was confessed, discovered, and the wrongdoer punished, no success could attend the movements of Israel. But this was all rigidly performed, and then the tide of battle took a favorable turn."

The alliterative lesson derived from this, and intended to be chalked up on the blackboard, is inserted in a diagram with one huge capital C to commence the three lines thus:

<p>C OVETOUSNESS, A CHECK TO CONQUEST. CONCERN OF JOSHUA.</p>
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If covetousness is a check to "conquest" of the biblical type, and if it troubles and hinders the chief perpetrators of such "conquest," then covetousness ought to be regarded as a very useful virtue. But the children are not to regard these matters from a moral or humanitarian point of view. The base teachings of a hoggish utilitarianism are beneath the Christian's notice. When religion is concerned he rises far above such gross considerations as human lives and human happiness. Achan was very wicked to hinder the national enterprise of massacre by taking the gold of the people he had piously slain. The children are to be taught that "It was morally impossible for success to attend the nation while low aims and purposes were actuating any of the individuals composing it." As if the whole business on which the nation was bent was not one of the vilest and most atrocious specimens of "low aims and purposes" possible to conceive.

In the "Hints for Junior and Infant Classes" the teacher is told to recall the last lesson and "tell how the taking of Jericho was only the beginning of conquest—there was still a great deal of work to be accomplished before the Promised Land really came into the possession of the Israelites." Although the nature of this "work" is not described, the "infants" are to be assured that if the chosen people had only been good and obedient they would have found their task easy.

Just as the massacres are ignored, so, too, nothing is said of the method of detecting Achan by lot, or of the punishment—death by stoning and fire—inflicted on all his numerous family, and even on his cattle. There is merely the "hint" that the teacher is to question out the facts relating to the defeat at Ai, to Achan's sin and its punishment, and to Joshua's grief, and the subsequent success.

A number of moral lessons are somehow deduced—such as the folly and unfairness of wrong-doing, and the wickedness of deceit; and the final "application" of the lesson is: "Cultivate a happy spirit, and think of the blessings you have rather than of those you have not." One very sound passage runs thus:

"It is part of the mysterious system of things that one man's actions bring good or evil to very many of his fellows. A man by his drunkenness will cause suffering to a whole family. The lie of a single individual has frequently plunged a whole nation into wars and confusions. It is just this awful truth which makes all thoughtful people careful to avoid evil-doing. What right have I to bring suffering upon the heads of my innocent fellow-creatures?"

How all this is to be extracted from a record of utterly unjustifiable murder and robbery without the inculcation of insidious lessons of approval of sanctified "conquest" and

theft and cruelty and superstition, is a puzzle. In their moral blindness Christians set about gathering grapes of thorns and figs of thistles.

A Christian could similarly give moral lessons from the *Police News* or the *Newgate Calendar*. A Sunday School lesson on Jack the Ripper would teach children the deserved success that God grants to noble courage, attended by supreme coolness and self-reliance. If, as surmised by sundry doctors, the murderer is a religious fanatic, then lessons of trust in God can be added like those so frequently founded on Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter, Abraham's willingness to cut Isaac's throat, Ehud's assassination of Eglon, and the thoroughness of Moses, Joshua, Samuel, and other Bible heroes in exterminating various nations. The *Newgate Calendar* would however possess one great disadvantage from the religious point of view. The true nature of the deeds described is not covered by the religious sanction, and the criminals come to grief. This is not so comfortable or convenient as a scheme which glorifies crime by religious associations, and so sets God's people free to follow villainy on condition of regarding it as a religious virtue. W. P. BALL.

#### FURTHER NEWS FROM OUR EXTRAORDINARY AERIAL COMMISSIONER.

"PARTHENOPE," November.

AFTER having my steering apparatus repaired I left "Circe," and for a time was lost in the immensity. Roaming among numerous large and small planets, all of them with inhabitants in different stages of civilisation, the thought would force itself upon me of you earthmen's egotism in thinking yours the only planet needing the sacrifice of a third part of a deity for your small salvation. Why, some of the worlds I passed would look on your globe as so petty that a moderate-sized sun would receive it and burn it up as a furnace would the debris of a little garden.

After passing some of the larger worlds, being too modest to land, I arrived at "Parthenope," and was astonished that so small an asteroid should have a cult almost identical with that of our own earth. The towns were very similar to ours in some respects, but education had caused the Parthenopean civilisation to advance far in front of ours, and the inhabitants were able to show me ruins of very ancient railway stations with excavations by savants, who hoped to find skeletonised porters or petrified third-class passengers—a search in which they were encouraged by having found the waiting-room Bibles and Scripture texts intact and as perfect as when they were first placed there, with the exception of jocose scribbling on the fly leaves.

I paid an early visit to a large dilapidated Abbey, where I patiently listened to a heated discussion between the Parthenopean parsons and a recently-arrived visitor whom they called Jesus Christ, they accusing him of having delayed his coming so long as to allow education to so permeate the majority of the people that his mission would prove a failure. Christ retorted that "Parthenope" was numbered four thousand and three on his tablets, and he had attended to it in its due order of precedence. He really could not visit all the planets at once. The priests remarked that a mistake had somehow occurred. Jesus then made use of the trite remark that "it's no use crying over spilt milk," and said the best thing to do was to play down to the masses, he offering to do anything in his power to assist the parsons, so that there might not be a financial failure. Should he at once have a crucifixion and ascension, he suggested. But the priests would not agree to this as the different coroners were of such an inquiring disposition. A monster baptism would be too tame, and the season, besides, was too cold. One priest thought they should commence by betraying Christ to Mr. Pilate, the chief justice, and generously offered to do the job for "thirty bob" as he irreverently put it. Another sombre gentleman (whose face, though, betrayed good living) thought it best to engage a large hall at the East End of Parthenopolis, get the local water company to lay on an extra supply of water, and turn the whole lot into wine as it came through the tap. Another parson offered to provide five small loaves to be turned into wine biscuits for the multitude. They all thought something in the conjuring way had better be done at once, or all faith in the young fellow's mission would be lost, and his engagement prove a monetary failure. I left them cogitating, and waited anxiously for their final decision. In the meantime I sauntered through their principal town, and found that apartments had been engaged for Jesus Christ in Vicegerent Street, a brass plate on the front door being engraved thus: "Jesus Christ, of the firm of Jahveh, Son, and Paraclete. Knock and ring." The tradespeople had already made use of the new excitement to advertise their wares, some tailors' shops, for instance, bearing placards inscribed, "Trousers made to Jesus Christ by appointment." The hoardings also bore large posters, one of which I quote:—"Ask for Tackett's Blacking, and see you get it; same as supplied to the Holy Family." One enterprising feather-dresser had up, "Plumassier to the Holy Ghost. New wings supplied. Tail feathers cleaned and altered."

I found the decision arrived at by the apostles (as the priests styled themselves) was of a nature to suit the people whom they thought could best be imposed on. They arranged a grand gala at their Crystal Palace, including an "all night with Jesus" for those so inclined. The bill puts forth a tempting programme suited to the class represented by your Salvation Army. First there are to be holiness meetings all over the grounds, addressed at intervals by Christ. Imitations of birds will be given by the Holy Ghost, who will also give exhibitions of swift flight. N.B.—People outside the enclosure are earnestly requested not to shoot the Holy Pigeon.

Imitation Crucifixions and Ascensions will take place at stated hours during the day, Jesus ascending two miles, and then outdoing Baldwin in his descent by turning two complete somersaults and firing two pistols at the same time. The whole is to conclude with a grand display of fireworks, finishing up with a representation of Christ preaching on horseback, and known as the "Sermon on the Mount." The admission is to be one shilling, and there will be dancing on the Crystal Platform by special permission until 2 a.m.

Although such a tempting bill of fare is put forth, the educated classes simply ignore it, and although Jesus Christ is often in the streets he is never mobbed, but is allowed to pass through the best thoroughfares almost unnoticed. Certainly his good sense in clothing himself saves him from being annoyed, his frock coat, polo collar and neat necktie not making him more peculiar than the other pedestrians, besides which the climate is too severe for the linen drapery usually affected by him as a preparation for sky performances.

I leave here this week, and trust my aerial machine will now carry me through safely, as my relics collected from churches, etc., in different planets make me rather anxious.

#### A NEW APOCALYPSE.

ONE night as I was lying down in bed,  
My eyes in peaceful sleep refused to close,  
For a sound enough to irritate the dead  
Insisted on disturbing my repose.  
There was tootle-tootle, squeak, and rum-ti-tum,  
I imagined it to be a German band,  
And I swore to send the lot to kingdom come,  
As I took a jug of water from the stand.  
Then in anger to the window-pane I strode;  
When distinctly in the moonlight I could see,  
*In nigger garments, marching round the road,*  
O grisly sight! the celebrated three.  
There was Jesus with a fiddle next his chin,  
And the Comforter assailing a guitar;  
While Jehovah on a whistle made of tin,  
Played a melody fantastic and bizarre.  
I gazed, they halted, Jahveh ceased to whistle,  
And, after a preliminary "Hem!"  
In trumpet tones, that caused my hair to bristle,  
He sang this vocal gem.

The sins of the world filled the Lord with dismay,  
So he kindly descended to take 'em away;  
But the racally Jews didn't favor his views—

Eli! Eli! Lama, Sabachthani!  
Talitha cumi! Anathema Domini!  
(Chorus and march with astounding vigor.) Alpha and Omega! diddum, gamoni!  
Never was known such a spree.

They collared him tight, and with tenpenny nails,  
In spite of his struggles, and curses, and wails,  
They appended the "Host" to a sort of a post.—Eli, etc.  
Then I tempted a wicked old buffer named Joe,  
To purchase the corpse for a tanner or so,  
He intended it then for medical men.—Eli, etc.  
He put the remains in a suitable sack,  
And carried 'em off on his competent back;  
But the corpse of a God is erratic and odd.—Eli, etc.  
For it crept from the sack and to glory arose,  
With its fingers extended, and thumb to its nose;  
The identical wight you perceive on my right.—Eli, etc.

Then off they marched in single file,  
Along a moonbeam's slope;  
They played "God save the Queen" the while,  
And got safe home—I hope.  
But why they came and sang to me,  
Let none presume to say;  
No doubt 'twill all expounded be,  
Upon the Judgment Day.

EX-RITUALIST.

#### PROFANE JOKES.

Minister (to widow): "I hope the dear departed was prepared to die." Widow: "Oh yes! he was insured in three good companies."

A little boy who had 1,000 buttons on a string explained it by saying that his father is a minister and "has the sorting of the collection basket."

Wife (returned from church, to her husband who had stayed at home): "You should have heard Dr. Doe's sermon this morning, my dear. I don't know when anything has made such a profound impression upon me. I think it will make a better woman of me as long as I live." Husband: "Did you walk home?" Wife: "No, I took a tram; and do you know, John, the conductor never asked me for my fare, and so I saved twopenny! Wasn't I lucky?"

THE PARSON'S DOG.—One day, while walking in the suburbs of the city of Cork, Father O'Leary met the Rev. Mr. Flack, a Protestant clergyman, talking with Mr. Solomons, a Jew—both friends of his. Mr. Flack's dog was running on before them. "Good morrow, friends," said O'Leary, "what interesting topic engages your attention now?"—"To be candid with you," replied the Protestant clergyman, "we were just conjecturing what religion this dog of mine would be likely to embrace, if it were possible for him to choose."—"Strange subject, indeed," said Father O'Leary; "but were I to offer an opinion, I would venture to say he would become a Protestant!"—"Why?" asked the Protestant clergyman and the Jew.—"Well," replied Father O'Leary, "he would not be a Jew, for, you know, he would retain his passion for pork; he would not become a Catholic, for I am quite certain he would eat meat on a Friday. What religion, then, could he become, but a Protestant?"

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