

THE FREETHINKER

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

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No 269.



THE BIBLE BLONDIN.

It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers.—ISAIAH XL, 22.

A NEW DEFENCE OF FAITH.—II.

HAVING, in a very brief compass, exhausted Cardinal Manning's argument in favor of his Church, we proceed to deal with his praise of Christianity. Like Mr. Gladstone, he begins his laudation with a flagrant caricature of the ancient civilisation; and, for the purpose of his argument, he is obliged to assume that the world—God alone knows when—began with a pure monotheism, and gradually sank into polytheism; whereas every student of human culture is aware that the actual process was precisely the reverse. The Cardinal tells us that men ceased to worship God—the Cardinal's God, we presume—and took to worshipping the creature. In consequence they "became perverted with every possible abuse," and "the world rushed headlong into confusions, of which the beasts that perish were innocent." Now, with regard to those "confusions," we have to remark that unnatural offences are still frequent in Christendom; witness our assize reports, in a country which boasts of being the most religious in the world. Further, the Jews themselves, the chosen people, the worshippers of the one true God, were addicted to very beastly vices, or else they are terribly libelled in their own Scriptures. Their "line of light," therefore, seems little superior to the darkness of the Gentiles, on

which the Cardinal lays such false emphasis. "I am pure, I am pure," is an exclamation found in the Egyptian "Book of the Dead," and it came from lips that were dust before the Jews were heard of; and certainly some of the noblest sentences on purity were penned before Christ and Paul dosed the world with their unnatural doctrines of contempt for the flesh; doctrines, by the way, which the Cardinal flourishes, for he says that marriage is "not the highest state," since "virginity unto death is the highest condition of man and woman."

Condescending to particulars, the Cardinal tells us that "the state of Athens—its private, domestic, and public morality—may be seen in Aristophanes," while "the state of Rome is visible in Juvenal." A more contemptible trick was never resorted to by the vilest Jesuit. Aristophanes was a comic poet. He employed his exquisite genius in ridicule; and, like the French sapper in the proverb, nothing was sacred to him. Gods, men and women, were all held up to laughter. He made his game of their vices and follies and had no concern with their wisdom and virtues. Juvenal also was a satirist, full of indignant bile, which he expended on the crimes and vices of idle luxury; and everything odious and contemptible is therefore to be found in his verses. But to say that these writers give us a true picture of society as a whole is, at least in a man of education, an exhibition of downright dishonesty. Did

not Athens produce writers like Æschylus and Sophocles, whose moral grandeur has never been excelled? Do not their dramas display the highest reaches of virtue, and were they not performed before popular audiences? Should we not also consult historians like Thucydides, and philosophers like Plato and Aristotle? Why is Aristophanes picked out, except to point a libel and adorn a lie?

Amidst all this fancied degradation of the human race, Jesus Christ came and "gave laws hitherto unknown to men." Did he? We invite Cardinal Manning to name a single one. This easy audacity of assertion is what the Church has always trusted to; it never thinks of advancing proofs. According to Buckle, the historian of Civilisation, whoever asserts that Christianity revealed any new truths to the world is guilty either of gross ignorance or wilful fraud. Why does not the Church reply to Buckle instead of repeating the old assertion with the same airy impudence?

Jesus being crucified, his obscure apostles "preached throughout the empire and beyond it." Cheap assertion again, based upon nothing but the fantastic legends of the Church. Such, likewise, is the statement that of "the first thirty Pontiffs in Rome, twenty-nine were martyred." The early martyrologies are among the most disgraceful frauds of the most disgracefully fraudulent Church that ever hamboozled the world. And when Cardinal Manning, to prove the superhuman endurance of the Christian Church, describes its early history as "one universal and continuous persecution of two hundred years," he indulges in a licence of exaggeration which, if properly denounced, would exhaust every epithet of dishonor. The very "ten persecutions" he refers to as "raging in every province of the empire" were settled by the Church writers with an eye to the ten horns of Daniel and the ten plagues of Egypt.

Nor is there any truth in the assertion that "before the Light of the World no false god and no polytheism could stand." Ten centuries elapsed before the Northern pagans were converted, and their conversion was less due to the Light of the World than to the fire and sword of princes like Charlemagne. As for "polytheism," we would observe that Christianity introduced a fresh variety which supplanted the old one. Its Trinity was one for the more philosophical, and three for the multitude. Then the Holy Virgin was set up for those who needed a female divinity. Finally, saints were invented to supply the place of the old household gods, and the Lares and Penates were simply worshipped under new-fangled names.

That Christianity established monogamy is an assertion which puts a severe tax on one's patience. It is simply false—to use the very mildest epithet. Monogamy was legal in Greece and Rome for centuries before Christianity arose, and it was universal among the German barbarians. Yet God himself had never recommended it to the Jews. His favorites were all polygamists, and the wise king, who is (quite erroneously) supposed to have written three books of the Bible, had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines.

Equally false is the sentence that "neither the Greek nor the Roman world had any true conception of a home." Cardinal Manning forgets many a classic picture of home, from those of Andromache and Penelope to that imagined by the poet who was the friend of Augustus. Listen to Horace, in Sir Stephen De Vere's translation.

But if a true and loving wife
Should share with me the toils of life,
Blithe as Apulia's sunburnt maid,
Or Sabine matron, mountain-bred,
Her husband's stay, her babe's delight,
Making a happy home more bright,
Upon the sacred hearth-stone burning
Old logs to greet her lord returning;—
If wife like this should milk my ewes
Safe penned within the wattled close,
And draw fresh wine from cask of wood,
And crown the board with unbought food,—
How blest my life! I ask no more.

What a lovely picture is in those first eight lines! The Roman poet who drew it died before Christianity was born; yet, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years, a Christian apologist has the—let us say *temerity*, to assert that the Roman world was without "any true conception of a home."

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

THE THEOSOPHIC CHRIST.¹

LIVES of Jesus are plentiful as blackberries. As supernaturalism fades a reconstruction of the old story in some sort of accordance with the laws of history and human nature has been felt needful. Human ingenuity has been exercised to the utmost to bring out from the Gospel narratives some clear, consistent, and complete picture. The results are ridiculously divergent. Some make Jesus a Jewish Rabbi, others a Protestant gentleman, some a political enthusiast, others a moral reformer, others again a poetic mystic. Every sectary indeed seems to set up a little Jesus of his own. This is just what might be expected. The data for any such complete picture is both insufficient and untrustworthy. The gospels give at the most glimpses of a small portion of the life of their hero, and in these they are often contradictory and palpably legendary. The spiritists are fond of representing Jesus as a medium, and in the work before us Dr. Hartmann has taken a leaf out of their book by depicting him as a theosophic adept, that is, one who by a course of self-discipline has acquired extraordinary power. It claims to give "a true history of Christ," only it admits that the Christ is so purely ideal that it really doesn't much matter whether such a personal historic being actually lived or not. None the less it professes to recount his life.

It is curious, to say the least, that this occult history of Jesus should ascribe to him the same origin as that related by Celsus in the second century. Dr. Hartmann says, p. 40:

"Human nature was at those times not fundamentally different from what it is now, and we need not therefore be surprised to hear that one of the stalwart Roman warriors, whose name was *Pandira*, fell in love with one of the dark-eyed daughters of Nazareth, and that the fruit of their 'illegitimate' union was a son whom they called *Jehoshua*."

The only difference between this story and that of the *Jewish Life of Christ* is that Celsus makes *Pandira* a Roman soldier, while the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu* makes him "of the fallen tribe of Judah." Either version is more credible than that Jesus had no earthly father at all. The Talmud calls him the son of *Pandira*, without explaining who *Pandira* was.

This event the occult history, like that of the Jews, places about a hundred years before the Christian era; for, like the Talmud, it goes on to make its hero the pupil of *Jehoshua ben Perachiah*, who was president of the Sanhedrin in the reign of King *Janneus* (B.C. 106 to 79). Under him, it is said, he went to Egypt, and there learnt magic or the occult sciences. According to Dr. Hartmann, he was here initiated by "the mysterious brotherhood." "He was taught the causes of the physical phenomena occurring in the world of phenomena, the nature of light and sound, of heat and electricity, etc. He was also instructed in astronomy and medicine and in the sciences." Whether he knew that the earth was a globe, or really expected to see all its kingdoms from "an exceeding high mountain," and whether he believed epilepsy to be the work of demons or not, Dr. Hartmann does not inform us.

Jehoshua having attained in Egypt some of the lower degrees of adeptship was advised by the superiors to return to Palestine and teach his countrymen. There he met John the Baptist, who is spoken of as having preached to Herodes, so *Jehoshua* must by this time have been about sixty years old. For some time *Jehoshua* remained with this prophet of the desert and his disciples, and afterwards went into the Wilderness where he was tempted by the demon of self, whom having overcome he became a prophet and adept. When he heard of the death of John the Baptist he went to Jerusalem. This Dr. Hartmann, calls "the Great Renunciation." His arrival "was to the Pharisees of the Temple like a thunderbolt coming from a clear sky." Grieved at the desecration of the temple "he overthrew one of the stalls where trinkets are sold, and his enthusiastic listeners followed his example. Immediately the selfish passions of the audience were aroused; their instincts told them that an opportunity had arrived for plunder, and a fright ensued during which the merchants lost their goods and were driven from the temple, while thieves enriched themselves with their stores." This

¹ The *Life of Jehoshua, the Prophet of Nazareth*. An Occult Study and Key to the Bible, containing the history of an Initiate, by Franz Hartmann, M.D. London, Theosophical Publication Society, 1885.

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uproar, in which the followers of Jehoshua ben Pandira proved themselves all adepts—at thieving—was followed by the flight of Jehoshua, who however returned at the Passover only to be betrayed by Judas. Jehoshua was stoned to death according to Jewish law, and after he had expired they nailed his body upon a wooden cross as a sort of a scarecrow. His followers took the body and secretly buried it.

In all this, it need scarcely be said, there is really nothing but a poor attempt to amalgamate inconsistent legends into something like an harmonious narrative. Dr. Hartmann however, with the equivocation which is the besetting sin of his tribe, leaves us from beginning to end in doubt as to whether the story which he professes to recount is to be taken as literal history or only as allegory. It is clear that he himself does not consider any belief in the historical accuracy of the story as essential. At the same time the meaning of such "allegories" is by no means clear. If Theosophy has any truths to reveal it is a pity that it cannot put them forward in a clearer manner. Obscurity is the usual refuge of error if not of imposture.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

MR. KIMBER, of Dulwich, has stood three week's siege by the rector's brokers in quest of tithes on property not occupied by the besieged gentleman. The chain has been kept on his door from sunrise to sunset and all the windows were fastened, so that the representatives of Christianity were completely baffled. The rector has now withdrawn from the siege on some arrangement with the landlord, who is going to redeem the tithes as far as possible. Mr. Kimber deserves praise for the bold stand he has made. His protest will at least call attention to a grave evil. It is monstrous that the law should empower parsons to seize people's goods for other people's tithes. If there were a gleam of justice or right feeling in the ecclesiastical character such a law would not be maintained, and no minister would dare to set so glaring an example of wrong-doing to the flock whom he is commissioned to instruct in the ways of equity and neighborly love.

At the Liverpool Diocesan Conference the clergy debated the subject of gambling. Canon Taylor condemned "bazaars, with their lotteries, lucky-bags, raffles, and drawings." But then these lotteries bring profit to the Church, and races and stock-broking do not. How can the Church condemn that which it practises and profits by? That a taste for gambling is thus insidiously encouraged in the young who may thus be led to seek and find still further excitement of the kind in horse-racing and betting, ought to make the parsons look at home first and put their own house in order as the first step in the crusade against gambling.

A SALVATIONIST named George Stevens has been sent to prison for neglecting to maintain his wife. Although he declined to provide the things that perish, he used to send supplies of the one thing needed—the bread of heaven—in the shape of religious letters. Repeated applications were made to the Salvation Army to ascertain the whereabouts of the prisoner, but no answer could be obtained until the wife threatened to apply to the magistrate. This brought an answer from Mrs. Branwell Booth, which concluded with "God bless you. Yours in Jesus." The prisoner said it was a misunderstanding. Mr. Curtis-Bennett, the magistrate, said it was monstrous that his whereabouts should have been concealed by the Salvation Army and his wife have been allowed to starve. He should make an example by sending the prisoner to gaol for twenty-one days. The martyr Stevens probably relies on the glorious promises made by Jesus to those who desert wife and family for his sake.

WHILE the Christians of Ballycullane were celebrating mass, another Christian who happened to be a landlord entered the chapel. The congregation at once arose and left. When the service was over the congregation pelted Mr. Byrne and his guard with rotten eggs and mud. This is the way in which Christians love their enemies and forgive them unto seventy times seven and do good to them and pray for them.

CARDINAL NEWMAN had a serious fall at the Oratory the other Sunday. Mistaking the position of the chair, he fell back and struck his head against the wall. The blow stunned him. As he is in his 88th year and in a very enfeebled condition, the shock to the system was a severe one—so severe, in fact, that "extreme unction" was administered in anticipation of death. The Cardinal, we are pleased to hear, is now recovering. God ought to be more vigilant in looking after so great a light of modern Christianity. If he send angels to prevent his favorites from dashing their feet against a stone, he ought to send still more angels to guard an aged and honored ambassador against knocking his head against a wall.

THE unveiling of the Dartford Martyrs' Memorial took place last week. In commemorating the atrocities committed in the name of religion, the Protestants of England forget that they are bearing witness to the crimes of Christianity quite as much as to the crimes of Roman Catholicism.

ONE of these Dartford martyrs burned by Queen Mary just three hundred years ago, abused Roman Catholicism and admonished the people to be faithful, even while fastened to the stake and while wounded in the face by the faggots cast at him to silence him. When the reeds and faggots were set on fire he raised his hands to heaven and remained in that attitude without further word or complaint until he was dead and roasted. Such a token did God show upon him, in the language of the Protestant chronicler, to confound his enemies and to strike them with the spirit of darkness and fear. Surely God might have found some better method of shaming his Catholic children than by permitting such ruthless deeds to be done in his name and on his behalf.

THE Pope has issued a new counterblast against cremation. This time it is addressed to the French priests, who are forbidden to sanction in any way this method of disposing of the dead. The Catholic Church doubtless thinks it should have a monopoly of cremation. Only its method was that of burning bodies while they were still alive.

THEY are finding out what "unsectarian education" is in America. In many places the Roman Catholics are numerous enough to effect the removal of Protestant teachers, and to substitute Catholics in their places. The only safety against the evil is the thorough secularisation of the schools and of the state.

THE School Board boasts of the saving it has effected. Partly this is the result of reforms commenced by the preceding Board, and partly of a policy of false economy in diminishing the supply of books and of schools. During their first year of office the Board raised nearly £65,000 more than was wanted, and attributed this to the extravagance of its predecessors. This year the Board raises £31,417 less than its estimated outlay, although this estimate is sure to be exceeded. The clerical party thus raises a surplus while it can discredit opponents with the heavy rate, and subsequently uses up this surplus and runs into debt in order to claim credit for low rates.

HARRIET COOPE, of Liverpool, sued her husband for maintenance, but he proved her adultery with the Rev. W. W. Postance and she was refused her order. The unbeneficed clergyman admitted having the lady on his knee, kissing her, and other ministerial attentions, which, according to the evidence of the servant, included occupying the same bed. Mr. Coope will sue for a divorce.

MRS. MULES has obtained a judicial separation from the Rev. W. Mules, formerly a Lancashire clergyman, on the ground of his cruelty and desertion in company with Miss Brackenridge, a member of his choir.

THE Rev. Charles McLean has been sentenced to five years' penal servitude for certain assaults on a girl aged thirteen, whom he stripped under the pretence that he would examine her as a medical man. The prisoner pleaded that he was a minister and undertook to heal diseases without medicine. The Recorder said he was a hypocrite of the most disgusting and repulsive type, and he was sorry he could not order him to be flogged. Prisoner had formerly been in charge of a Baptist chapel in America, but was discharged for gross immorality. Since then he has been lecturing in Birmingham on spiritualism.

AMONG Mrs. Gordon-Baillie's effects was a well-thumbed Bible. Like many other adventurers she was superstitious, with a turn for piety in the intervals of her depredations.

ANNIE DOOLEY, a "captain" in the Salvation Army at Selston, was charged with stealing clothing from the house where she lodged. Her case was so pitiable that she was discharged although she pleaded guilty. Her whole time was devoted to the service of the Army, and all she received in return was what remained of the collections after all other expenses had been paid. She often received nothing at the end of the week, or else a very small sum, and was consequently destitute and foodless. Hadn't "General" Booth better look after starving captains at home before sending out expensive exhibitions of tomfoolery to amuse the Hindoos? Surely charity should begin at home. But Booth's charity in diffusing the bread of life abroad leaves a poor official in England to steal as the only alternative to starving.

GREAT is faith, as is proved by the following story. A young man of twenty fell down while dressing himself and struck his head on the sharp edge of a chair, inflicting a nasty wound. His father hastened off with him to a surgeon's, where it was dressed. Meanwhile his daughter went to the priest for a little holy water to sprinkle the chair with. The result was the wound soon healed, and the daughter at least has perfect confidence in the efficacy of holy water.

DR. PARKER has been vigorously denouncing the imprisonment of Miss Stirling, of the Salvation Army, for proselytizing children at Chillon. Dr. Parker never whispered a condemnation of Mr. Foote's imprisonment in London. Yet Mr. Foote was propagating Freethought in his own country, and did not go about converting children in spite of the remonstrance of their parents. When a Christian cries out against persecution, you may generally take it that his own side is suffering. He has no eye for persecution when the victims belong to other parties.

THE Rev. Robert Horton, the popular Congregational minister of Hampstead, devotes the first Sunday evening in every month to an address to working men. The *Star* gives a glowing account of this pulpit prodigy, but is obliged to confess that "what are usually called working men formed no appreciable part of the congregation" on Sunday night. The working man is not so easily caught in the net of these "Liberal" fishers of men.

THE Rev. Hugh Chapman, vicar of St. Luke's, Camberwell, was announced to preach at the New Road Congregational Church on the existing differences of Church and Chapel. A large congregation assembled, and the subject was illustrated in an unexpected way. Instead of appearing in person, the vicar had to send a letter explaining that the Bishop of Rochester had warned him that if he preached in a Congregational church he would be breaking the law. Mr. Chapman said it seemed strange, in the face of the drunkenness, misery, and social evils that were in their midst, that the Churches could not be banded together against the common enemy. As he could not come, he sent the manuscript copy of the sermon he was to have delivered, and this was read out to the congregation by their own minister, the Rev. W. Tubbs. Mr. Chapman's sermon expressed his amazement at the way in which the existing differences between Church and Chapel were magnified, while remedies for poverty, injustice, selfishness, drunkenness, and vice were neglected.

If the Church is to reform the world it must evidently begin by reforming itself. Its tyranny where it has the power, and its exploitation of industry, show its true spirit to be one of usurpation and robbery. It cannot recognise the fellowship of other Protestant Christians. Its ministers cannot be allowed to disgrace the true Church by preaching to Christian brethren of a more independent turn of mind. Where is the harmony and brotherly love of which Christians prate so much and display so little?

LAST week most of the Diocesan Conferences were in session. The prospects of the Church seem generally gloomy. At Truro the cathedral is a cause of anxiety. It appears that only about half the sum of £10,000 which was guaranteed in order to finish the completed portion has been subscribed, and the guarantors will have to make up the deficiency. At Liverpool Bishop Ryle complained of the unsatisfactory finances of the diocesan institutions.

AT York, Canon Taylor continued his crusade against the missionary societies. He said he agreed they wanted more prayer, and said he would pray for the secretaries of societies that they might be wiser, for the missionaries that they might be a great deal more judicious, and for the subscribers that they might choose those societies which did not lavish thousands and thousands upon their home staffs, but spent their thousands and thousands in the mission field. He pointed out that out of the whole funds of the Church Missionary Society £70,000 was spent at home. As to the expenditure in the missions, he was told that no account of actual expenditure had been printed or could be sent to him. He expected it would transpire that thousands and thousands were making what in India were called "Rupee Christians" or "Rice Christians," who threw discredit on the whole of the missions.

AT the Newcastle Diocesan Conference the Rev. W. D. Ground declared that "Christianity had lost its supremacy," and to regain it the Church must "make use of an intellect of a far higher order than she is at present employing." These unpalatable truths were sought to be neutralised by the Bishop of Newcastle, who declared that the presence of unbelief was a wonderful confirmation of prophecy!

THE Lord is slack in sustaining his ministers. The Rev. J. C. Holmes walked hurriedly to the Chester Diocesan Conference, and fell dead in the doorway. Ministers are dropping into the category of common men. Death is no respecter of persons. As Solomon said of all the sons of men, "One thing befalleth them."

MR. HOLMES appears to have died of heart disease. This is a common complaint among clergymen. Head disease is still more prevalent.

THE Rev. Henry Lewis, formerly an independent minister, committed suicide by hanging himself to a tree on the banks of the Gwilly River, near Hendy, South Wales, on Thursday, Nov. 1. The jury returned the usual verdict of "temporary insanity." Talmage please note.

A DAUGHTER of Sir George Cornewell has committed suicide at Malvern. The verdict was the common one of religious mania.

WHOM the lord loveth he chasteneth. Mr. Spurgeon seems to be one of his special favorites. The gout is plaguing him again, and he intends to winter at Mentone as soon as he is able to depart and be with the Mediterranean air and sunshine. Mr. Spurgeon addresses his congregation in a letter after—a long way after—the manner of St. Paul, signing himself, "Yours in the Furnace."

"YOURS in the Furnace" is remarkably like the subscription to a letter from Hell. But Mr. Spurgeon hasn't got there yet, and probably thinks he will never get there at all. Indeed, he is on very intimate terms with the Almighty. For our part we cannot understand why the Lord does not call him home, or else vary the "chastisement"; especially as Mr. Spurgeon assures us that "God heals very speedily when so it pleases him." It is really distressing for a great preacher, year after year, to be an object at which rude boys exclaim "How's your poor feet?"

THE *Church Times* says that the home Episcopate is suffering from a serious state of collapse. There is the aged Bishop of St. Asaph unable to rule his diocese; the Bishops of St. Alban's and of Truro in a similar position; the Bishop of Rochester is obliged to leave his diocese in the winter months; the Bishop of Durham lies ill at Bournemouth; the Bishop of Southwell is forbidden to undertake evening work of any kind; while the Bishop of Winchester is so infirm that he must appoint a suffragan. Truly the prayers of the Church are needed for the Episcopate.

COUNT TOLSTOI is declared to be the most Christ-like Christian of the present age, and his growing asceticism is the natural result of his Imitation of Christ. First he became a vegetarian, then he gave up wine, next he dropped his cigarette, and now he thinks of getting "saved from tea."

COUNT TOLSTOI is a thorough-going Christian in another sense. He refuses to patronise doctors. His physical health is failing under his ascetic regimen, and last year he was laid up for months from hurting his foot against a cart-wheel. The family wished him to take the advice of the first physician in Moscow, and to avoid such profane attentions Count Tolstoi incontinently fled.

COUNTESS TOLSTOI entertains more worldly views. She does not believe in this ascetic doctrine, and, like a true woman, she still less believes in dissipating the family property for the sake of "the poor."

WHAT disgusting hypocrisy is this prosecution and condemnation of the works of Zola at a time when the majority of a Royal Commission insist that the Bible, with its chaste stories of Lot and his daughters and its delicate Song of Solomon, shall be used as the foundation of morals in our schools. So far as we are aware, the difference between Zola and the Bible is that the former makes vice repulsive, while the latter rather makes it attractive; and no one ever thinks of putting Zola into the hands of children.

THE case is still more ridiculous, because the works for which Mr. Vizetelly has been fined can all still be procured in the original from any of the French booksellers in London, who are not likely to be molested. Will it be pretended that only those who do not read French are likely to be depraved, or that what the law holds to be obscene in English is not so in another language? This last must surely be the case, since even divinity students are examined in classical writings which outvie any modern in obscenity.

IN answer to the clerical critics who pointed out that Canon Taylor was receiving far more for his own parishioners than he thought that the missionaries received, he says that the Church Mission Society receives from its paymaster, the public, a sum which can hardly be less than £306,500 a year, and it claims 187,598 "native Christian adherents." It is, therefore, paid £1 12s. 8d. for looking after each of its "parishioners" in its world-wide parish. Or, taking it the other way, as the clericals suggest, since it made last year 2,946 adult converts, these converts do not cost a halfpenny a head, but more than £100 each.

THE *Church Times* advertises a nice advowson for sale in North Devon. The population is 1,200, the living is worth £900 a year, and will soon be worth £1,500. There is "excellent hunting, fishing, shooting, and society." Finally, the present incumbent is eighty-three, and may soon be expected to shuffle off this mortal coil.

"YE cannot serve God and Mammon," said Jesus Christ. That's all he knew. He should read the advertisements in the *Church Times*.

SOME curious exchange items appear in the *Bazaar*. One musical gentleman says he "Will exchange Messiah for Dorothy." This is from grave to gay indeed.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, Nov. 11, Co-operative Hall, Corporation Road, Middlesborough; at 11, "Plain Truth about Jesus"; at 3, "Is Christianity True?"; at 7, "An Hour in Hell."

Nov. 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.

EX-RITUALIST.—Shall be glad to receive the verse mentioned. Our Christmas Number is on the stocks and will set sail very early in December.

G. R. BODDY.—As you say, religion should be excluded from all public institutions, but it never will be unless Secularists work hard for that object. "Pious opinions" are of very little use.

F. E. and C. W.—We appropriate your 2s. to the School Board Election Fund, and note its coming from "two laboring men." See "Acid Drops."

J. A. WILLIAMS.—Sorry to hear Bristol Secularists are so disorganised. No doubt some good will result to the whole party from the report, which is in the printer's hands, from the organisation committee appointed at the last Conference.

J. V. M.—Bagster, Paternoster Row, publishes interleaved Bibles.

PHIL.—Thanks for jokes.

H. CALASCA.—We shall publish Ingersoll's Reply to Manning. Only the first part has yet appeared in the *North American Review*. It will be a capital thing to circulate among Roman Catholics. We are obliged for the cuttings.

R. FOX.—We agree with you. It is a great pity our social parties at the Hall of Science, even when there is a good display of talent, are less successful in point of numbers than those held in other parts of the metropolis. There is something wrong somewhere.

F. R. A. wishes the address of a Preston newsagent who supplies Secular literature.

BARNUM.—Thanks. Cuttings are always welcome.

A. GUEST.—That "actual sentence passed upon Jesus Christ" is a Catholic fraud. The *Tablet* must be lost to all sense of shame to publish it, and the fact that it is now for the second time going the round of the press, shows how easily Christians are imposed upon. If such a fraud can be perpetrated successfully in an age like this, how easy must it have been to palm off anything upon the Christians seventeen or eighteen centuries ago. There is, as you say, great difficulty in getting agents to exhibit the *Freethinker*. If they did so our circulation might be doubled or trebled.

A. T. FOWLER.—Glad to hear you find the *Freethinker* useful among the Catholics in Dublin.

F. DRUMMOND.—Mr. Foote would have been unable to visit Jarrow. We are glad to hear from you. We met Dr. Harrison many years ago. He was an able and courteous opponent. There is nothing which calls for special comment in his lecture at Jarrow.

D. F. H.—We note your opinion.

G. PANKHURST.—Always glad to receive jokes.

S. D. (St. Thomas, West Indies).—Pleased to receive a letter from so distant a subscriber. By the time this reaches you you will have seen our remarks on the illustrations.

H. CHURCH.—Received with thanks.

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.

LEEDS is not a particularly dry town. It gets its full share of wet weather even in Yorkshire, and when it does rain there an elephant would be glad of an umbrella. Last Sunday old Jupiter Pluvius was in a fine temper, and, whether he intended it or not, he took a big percentage off Mr. Foote's audiences. Fortunately there was a little improvement in the weather in the evening, and two very good things were done after the lecture. First, a collection was made for the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund. Second, a gallant effort was made to set the Branch on its legs again.

MR. FOOTE stayed to take part in the business meeting for that purpose. The large ante-room was crowded with sympathisers, the general tone was earnest, and a resolution was come to in the right direction. Money was subscribed there and then, more was promised, a trustee was appointed, and the meeting adjourned for a fortnight for inquiries to be made as to what halls were available for a vigorous winter campaign. Mr. Fisher, the Branch secretary, deserves the greatest credit for his share in this successful revival. When the hall is decided upon, we trust that the Leeds Secularists will work together with harmony and energy for "the good old cause." The present prospect is hopeful, and may it brighten and brighten as the months roll past.

MR. S. STANDRING sends us a glowing report of success at Wood Green. The Branch began its outdoor lectures, mainly under the inspiration of Mr. S. Standing, with small meetings of

forty or fifty persons; and the experiment was laughed at as an eccentricity of those wild-headed Freethinkers. But the Branch persevered, and the regular average attendance is now from 200 to 250. The opposition is courteous and generally comes from men of standing and repute. Very fair reports also have appeared in the local papers. This morning (Nov. 11) Mr. S. Stanring delivers a special lecture on "Honest Convictions." "We are hoping," he writes, "for a sort of revival on Sunday, and a good collection for the London Secular Federation, which helped us when we were impoverished."

THE Woolwich and Plumstead Branch is holding a series of Sunday evening lectures in the Lord Raglan Hall, Burrage Road, Plumstead Road. The chair is taken at seven; the prices of admission are modestly fixed at 2d. and 4d., and courteous discussion is invited. Mr. J. Clarke, M.A., formerly a Unitarian minister, lectures this evening (Nov. 11) on "The First Cause." There should be a rally of Freethinkers in the district.

FINSBURY Freethinkers should try to bring some of their local friends to "The Hall, Banner Street, Old Street, on Monday evening. Mr. Hubert Bland, the "secular" candidate, will address a meeting of the electors, and Mr. Foote will be among the speakers and perhaps in the chair. Other meetings will be held during the week, and will be duly announced that evening.

WEST LAMBETH Freethinkers should do the same for a meeting on behalf of Mr. J. H. Ellis's candidature at St. George's Street School, Lambeth Walk, on Friday, November 9; before the date of this number, but after it reaches our London readers. Mr. Ellis will be present, and the meeting will be addressed by Mr. Foote and several local speakers.

MR. GEORGE SMART, one of the retiring members of the Salford School Board, is standing for re-election. We are informed that he has been a useful member, and has constantly supported the "secular" ticket. Mr. Smart is being denounced as an Atheist and the sky-pilots are his bitterest enemies. This should secure him the support of Freethinkers. The election takes place on Wednesday.

THE *Tattler* has an amusing article on "The Reverend H. Varley, ex-pork butcher and Evangelist lecturer" to "men only." The *Tattler* doubts not that his present profession pays a great deal better than the original meat business.

THE people of Brompton have the good sense to keep open their Public Library on Sundays during the afternoon and evening.

THE *Sydney Evening News* both reports and praises highly a recent scientific lecture by Mr. W. W. Collins, delivered at the Technical Hall of the School of Arts before a large audience. A private letter from Mr. Collins to a correspondent mentions that the Freethinkers of Sydney have secured a piece of land, very centrally situated, for the purpose of building a Freethought hall.

ANOTHER *Life of Theodore Parker* is announced. It is written by John Fiske, and is one of a series devoted to American religious teachers.

THE new volume of "State Trials" (1820—22), just published by authority of Government, includes the trial of Mary Ann Carlile for blasphemous libel. The conduct of Mr. Justice Best, who refused to listen to Miss Carlile because she declared that "common law was nothing but common abuse," would hardly be endorsed by any living judge with the possible exception of Mr. Justice North.

CHRIST'S MIRACLES.

II.—FEEDING MULTITUDES.

MATTHEW, like Mark, gives two accounts of the miraculous feeding of a multitude, but all the Gospel accounts are probably varying versions of one original story.

In the first account (Matt. xiv. 13-31) Jesus prudently retires to a desert place—or "up into the mountain" according to John vi. 3—on hearing of the execution of John the Baptist. The multitude follows him. After they have patiently listened to his sermon till the day is far spent (Mark vi. 34, 35) Jesus feels compassion for them, and orders his Apostles to feed the hungry crowd. Instead of obeying the command in a spirit of faith, these forgetful witnesses of Christ's many mighty miracles object that they have but five loaves and two small fishes. Christ then takes the matter in hand himself. He makes the multitude sit down on the grass with which this "desert place" is covered, and blesses the loaves and fishes, "looking up to heaven" the while in a spirit of theatrical reverence intended to impress the thoughtless multitude, who do not

know, as the divine actor does, that God is equally everywhere and that the devout actor is himself God.

Jesus then "brake, and gave the loaves"—or rather the fragments, I suppose—"to his disciples, and his disciples to the multitude," "and the two fishes divided he among them all." "And they did all eat and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full." What a pity the description is not more complete, so that one could understand the method of miracle a little better. When did the actual enlargement of the bread and fishes take place? Did the bread visibly swell while it was in Jesus's hands? Did it go on swelling while in the disciples' hands and while in the mouths of the multitude? Could the yeast or leaven have been so powerful that a loaf would distend itself like a balloon, till it overwhelmed the bearer with its size if not with its weight? Did the humble sprat or herring gradually or suddenly become as large as a salmon, or as huge as a whale? Or was the process so managed as to evade detection? Let us hope that mastication and deglutition finally stopped this process of swelling or growing, as otherwise the consequences to the whole multitude must have been very serious—unless, indeed, their stomachs had also been made miraculously elastic. What an amount of continued superintendence by angels, or spirits, must have been required for the regulation of the growth of each crumb of bread and each little fish-bone or fish-scale. Otherwise, one disciple would have been overburdened with a loaf bigger than himself, while another distributor only carried a little crumb in the palm of his hand. How enormously and dangerously thick the vertebræ and other bones of the fish must have become, too, by such a rapid process of evolution by magic. Perhaps, however, the loaves and fishes multiplied themselves in number instead of size. In this case which would be the original—which the parent, as it were, and which the offspring? Was the process one of gemmation or budding, or was each step of the process of multiplication so instantaneous as to escape all possibility of observation? Did the apostle with one loaf in his hand suddenly find he was dropping eleven of them?

All such embarrassing particulars of the miraculous are of course omitted. Miracle is only credible by keeping it in the vague. It delights in a slight, child-like basis of actuality, such as the water which is to be turned into wine, or the five barley loaves and two small fishes which are to feed five thousand men, because this makes the miracle more feasible and credible to ignorant people. But scientific exactness of description would be fatal both to the spirit and to the letter of the records of the supernatural, and it is accordingly undreamt of by those whom the Holy Ghost inspires as his favorite chroniclers of the stories on which his gospel babes and sucklings are to be nurtured.

On this first occasion, Jesus filled five thousand men and children with five loaves and two small fishes. In the repetition of the miracle, or of the story, four thousand men besides women and children satisfied their hunger with seven loaves and a few little fishes (Matt. xv., 34). On this second occasion Jesus kept his hearers three days with "nothing to eat" before he had compassion on them. Perhaps the remembrance of the former miracles sustained them during this fast. The apostles, however, must have forgotten it, for they ask whence the bread can be obtained for feeding such a multitude. After the miracle is worked seven baskets are filled with the fragments that remain, whereas on the first occasion there were twelve baskets full. The magic power was apparently not exerted to quite so great an extent as previously. But the baskets may have been larger, or the people more hungry after their three days' listening to sermons.

These were the only occasions on which Christ fed the hungry. He enjoined this duty on his followers, but he suffered starvation to go on unchecked and still allows or even causes famines in which millions of men, women and children die lingering deaths. His miracles were suited for a childish stage of the human intellect which was far better satisfied with a petty and limited action than with a comprehensive world-wide work of active benevolence. Christ only fed the few who came under his personal notice by flattering his vanity as eager listeners to his discourses. The rest he abandoned to the merciless laws of Nature.

The story of the feeding of the multitude may have grown from some actual event. People may have carried food with them, and though apparently foodless may have brought forth their stores and left a surprising amount of fragments or refuse. Or on the other hand the story may have been a sheer invention, or a natural product of the wonder-loving faith under whose insidious influence the boundary line between expectation and asserted realisation is easily passed as ideas and statements circulate and take shape among the habitually inaccurate minds of credulous and fanatical people.

W. P. BALL.

THE PILGRIM'S PRAYER.

O Lord, just now to thee we pray
That thou wilt smooth our thorny way
And make our journey nice and sweet,
And ease thy weary pilgrim's feet.

We trudge right on with scrip and staff
Amid the rude world's scorn and chaff;
We are, thou knowest, of thy fold,
So turn, we pray, our brass to gold.

O Lord provide us heaps of food,
In want of which we long have stood;
Lay on the board big joints of meat,
And bid thy pilgrims "come and eat!"

And know, O Lord, we won't repine
If thou shouldst send thy choicest wine,
And if in mire we should be sunk,
Believe, O Lord, that we are drunk.

Forgive in full thy erring saints,
Who in this life get worldly taints.
Cleanse them from sin in the bright flood
That's call'd "the Lamb's most precious blood!"

Lord, Lord thou know how sins will cloy,
But give to us that perfect joy—
The joy that has no mite of leaven,
On earth let's taste the joys of heaven.—Amen.

THE property of the Deans and Chapters of the south and west of England cathedrals is yielding larger returns than usual this year. There are many poor Christians in those districts, and this is a fine opportunity for the clergy to obey Christ's order, "Feed my sheep." As a rule, clergy are more fond of fleecing.

The Signal, a pious Middlesborough monthly, edited by the Rev. G. Coates, in its November number says:—"A minister of the Gospel in Falkland told Mr. John Bowes that his father visited an infidel in his condemned cell at Irvine, who said that he was one of the thirteen infidels who met every Saturday evening to determine how they would spend the following Sunday. 'One,' said he, 'became a Christian, six were transported, four were hanged, in a room above is one under sentence of transportation, and I am to be hanged to-morrow.'" Unless Mr. Coates gives some more definite particulars of the names of these infidels and of the minister of the Gospel in Falkland who told Mr. John Bowes about them, we shall set him down as a circulator of malignant falsehoods.

No. 1 (an anonymous infidel) tells No. 2 (an anonymous minister), who tells No. 3 (the anonymous father of the anonymous minister), who tells No. 4 (Mr. John Bowes), whose alleged statement is supposed to be repeated by No. 5 (the Rev. G. Coates), that a certain cock-and-bull story is true. This is about as good as the Gospels. Why is there no evidence at first-hand, and no particulars of names till we reach the fourth and fifth-hand circulators of the story?

In certain parts of Bengal the cholera demon is expelled by a women's hunt. The women dress in men's attire, go eastward to some neighboring village, and kill the pigs and fowls. The women of this village then make a similar expedition eastward, and so the evil spirit is gradually driven westward till he is safely conducted out of the country. As this is a heathen custom modern Christians will smile at it as a foolish superstition, although they think it blasphemy to smile at the devils being sent into pigs by Jesus, or at the destroying angel who brought the plague into Jerusalem and who was seen sword in hand by David. David's method of propitiating the angel, and Christ's method of treating demons, must not be compared with heathen methods of propitiating and expelling modern spirits.

THE *Inquirer* gives a diagram illustrating the prevalence of Unitarianism in England and Wales. It appears only to prevail in the large centres of population. There is no single chapel in Cornwall or in Oxford or Cambridge. If Unitarianism is to spread, it must adopt a more aggressive attitude against orthodoxy.

ABIMILECH BOOTH; HIS CONVERSION.

I'm a little bi what's learnin' to be good. I'm studyin' the Bible an' the sweet "bime-bye." Pa sez we're to turn a fresh leaf an' be saved 'cause 'e's tired of the hoff chance an' wants a certainty. Pa's jined a church. I'm goin' to Sunday Schule an' search in the Scriptures. Pa sez, Abimilech, 'e sez, go to Sunday Schule, learn yer Bible an' hinarwardly digest it. I'm gone. Pa's got a stores now, an' sells rum, an' candlos, an' wursted, an' cheese, an' Testaments, an' ale. Pa puts tracts in the clove box and stamps the lemons wi' a rubber stamp "God is love" and "Rock of Ages." Pa is tricky an' 'e's doin' well. 'E never misses church on Sundays an' ma goes at nite, an' I ehimes in twice at schule. Pa sez we're "grooved it" at last an' shall go now like a tram car. I'm 'elping fast 'cause I'm learnin' to be preacher. It was 'ard at first 'cause I 'nowed nothin'. Ye see pa used to "speckilate" on 'orsos an' things an' keep a butcher's shop, but 'e 'ad no faith in 'im, as our parson sez, "for the day of figs 'ad not cum."

Furst day I went to Sunday Schule I felt funny, 'cause I'd niver sed prayers, nor niver searched the Scriptures. Teacher spotted me at once, an' axed me lots o' things. He sez, "Little bi," 'e sez, "who died fur you?" I sez, timid like, I sez: "Is that a conundrum?" 'cause if it is I give it hup, an' axe pa," I sez. The bies laffed, an' teacher blushed slate color. 'E was thinkin' 'bout another, 'cause 'e sed, "Who made you, little fellar?" Then I blushed bluish like, an' I sed it wasn't a bad un, but I'd 'ave to give that hup also an' refer to pa agen. So 'e dropped it, an' we had celloct, gospel, an' hepistle. I could read, so I got on smooth. I'm a changed bi now, an' I know mi Bible right along. I knows hall about the Lord Jehovah makin' a world hout of nothin' an' sayin', "Bring me a light"; hall 'bout makin' a man an' a woman, an' givin' 'um tigers an' lions to play with, an' then lettin' 'um 'ave ev'rything they wanted—ony clothes. Then I know about their childer fightin' an' one killin' 'is brother an' then gettin' married. I know 'bout Noah an' 'is family, an' the big rain-storm what drowned ev'rybody ony the Noahs; all about Abraham an' Sarah 'is wife, who 'ad a child when they was hold and feeble—an' Moses, what killed a man an' away 'e ran; an' Joshua, who stopped ev'ryone's clock an' watch till the clouds rolled bye, an' then started 'um agen at the word of command. Then I knows about Saul, who went to get 'is fortune told; an' Samuel, who made Jehovah call 'im three times before 'ed get hup. Then I knows about David an' Solomon. David and the Lord were big friends. David luvud woman—so did Solomon. They were whales at courtin', but they sung dismal.

Then I knows hall about Isaiah, and Ezekiel, who could lie on paper an' lie on 'is belly fur years. I knows hall the Bible from Alpha to Omega. As a young believer what wants to do good for the welfare of the world an' 'elp 'is father's bizness, I'm goin' to preach mi "bi's sermons to bi's," an' I'm goin' from Genesis to Revelation. I could 'rite a Bible miself if they'd on'y let me. I'm 'ritin' hymns now. My fust sermon will be on "Creation." Let us sing:

In Galilee,	(repeat)	Sweet Galilee	(repeat)
Upon the sea,	"	For you an' mo	"
In Galilee,	"	Sweet Galilee	"
E'd shrimps for tea,	"	In Galilee	"

Hah! music is the thing to fetch folks an' the young damsels to the folds. Bi's follow.—Yours,
ABIMILECH BOOTH.

CAIN'S WIFE.

Where did he get her? Who was her brother?
Had she a sister? Had she a mother?
Was she pre-Adamic—born before history—
With her identity shrouded in mystery?
Maid of Phoenicia, Egypt, Arabia,
Africa, India, or sun-kissed Suabia?
Who was her father? Was he a viking,
Cruising about just to his liking;
Out of the Whenceness, over the water,
Into the Where, bringing his daughter?
Native of Norway, Denmark or Sweden?
Lured by the charms of the Garden of Eden?
Blonde or brunette? Rounded or slender?
Fiery or frigid? Haughty or tender?
Why are her graces unknown to fame?
Where did Cain meet her? What was her name?
Whisper it softly—say, can it be
The lady we seek was R. Haggard's "Sho?"

Tell me, ye sages, students of life,
Answer my query,—Who was Cain's wife?

S. T. CLOVER, in *Chicago News*.

The story goes that a young curate has received from a lady an instantaneous photograph which represents the two parties in the act of kissing. The curate, while calling upon the young lady, had in a moment of enthusiasm kissed her, and she, artful belle, by previous arrangement had secured photographs of the scene, one of which she sent to the innocent pastor, as described, with the statement that she had eleven more, which he might have for the modest sum of £5 each.

Two mechanics were working on a building; one a mason, the other a joiner. The mason was a devout Methodist, and tried with might and main to convert the joiner. On Saturday evening both were paid their wages, and the mason told the joiner to go home on the morrow (Sunday) to read his Bible and obey its dictates. The joiner gave him his hand and word that he would do so. On Monday they were again at work. The mason said, "Well, Sam, how did you enjoy the Sabbath?" "Very well," said Sam. "What part of the Scripture did you read?" "Well," said Sam, "I thought I would turn to the counsel of the wise man; thro' I read that it is good for man to eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of his labor, and so I ate and drank all day long!"

THE CHRISTIANS OF PALESTINE.

THE following is an extract from the late Emperor Frederick's diary, in which he is describing his visit to the Holy Land: "Our night quarters were tents by the large mountain ponds of Samaria, which supply Jerusalem by means of waterworks with fresh mountain water. On the 6th of November we visited the unimportant Bethlehem and the birthplace of the Savior. This is shown in a cave in a rock, situated under the church and convent about the possession and usufruct of which the Greeks and Latins are continually having the bitterest quarrels. Darkness, incense, and the greatest dirt spoilt also here the sight of the sacred spot. Last night the Latins had taken gravestones from the Greek churchyard in order to be able to make a convenient way to a special entrance, and this nice affair came before the Pacha before my eyes. Very much ashamed we all felt that Christians should behave in such a manner, especially in such a spot, and that the Turks had to have recourse to the police, so as to be able to prevent their unholy and undignified behavior. I spoke openly about it with the very well educated Pacha, who has only been here about four weeks, and certainly was little edified at such experiences."

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

A SCHOOLBOY habit of placing upon a question some literal meaning other than that intended by the examiner, often leads to answers as curious as unexpected. Thus an inspector, testing a class upon their knowledge of the succession of the kings of Israel, asked the boy to whose turn it had come to be questioned: "And who came after Solomon?" To which the youngster answered: "The Queen of Sheba, sir." Asked what were the chief ends of man another boy replied, "His head and feet;" and a third, questioned as to where Jacob was going when he was ten years old, replied that he was "going on for eleven." One especially practical juvenile, called upon to say for what the Red Sea was famous, answered, "Red herrings!" A little Scotch boy at a Presbytery examination was asked: "What is the meaning of regeneration?" "To be born again," he answered, "Quite right! Would you not like to be born again?" He hesitated, but being pressed, said that he would not, and asked why not replied: "For fear I might be born a lassie." Alike astonishing and amusing was an answer given by an adult examinee, who was "sitting" for a certificate as acting teacher. In the examination to test general knowledge, he was asked, "What is the Age of Reason?" and answered: "As many years as have elapsed since the birth of the person so named."

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOCIALIST TACTICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER"

Sir,—The Socialists are persistent in season and out of season. At Mrs Besant's lecture at Claromont Hall last Sunday, Mr. Herbert Burrows appealed to the Secularists of the audience to canvass for Mrs. Besant in the Tower Hamlets. Considering that Mr. Burrows is Mrs. Besant's electioneering agent, and well knows that every energy is needed in Finsbury, in order to return his friend, Mr. Hubert Bland, his appeal to the workers in our district to go and help place Mrs. Besant at the head of the poll, was in my opinion not only ill-advised but impertinent. Such Socialist tactics may succeed in placing Mrs. Besant at the head of the poll, but it may be at the cost of seeing her on the School Board unsupported by a single member. If our victory is to be won it must be done by the Freethinkers in every division concentrating their entire support on the candidate for that division.

ONE OF MR. BLAND'S COMMITTEE.

REVIEW.

Women and Marriage or Evolution in Sex. By Havelock Ellis. London. William Reeves, 185 Fleet Street. Price 6d.—Mr. Ellis briefly traces the changing development in the status of women from the early times when descent was only traceable through the female, to the present day. He holds that in future women must have the same education as men. The little work is a serious and thoughtful study of a difficult question.

PROFANE JOKES.

"I often wonder," said Chesley, "what my ancestor, Adam, said when he first met Eve." "Was he an ancestor of yours?" "Certainly." "Then he probably asked her to lend him ten shillings."

A little four-year-old, who is very fond of running "barefooty," and who bears heroically the pain of splinters rather than the penalty of boots and shoes, announced the other day that "the reason angels wear wings is so as not to get splinters in their feet." As they don't wear boots there is good reason why they should fly instead of walking.

Not long ago a family who resided in St. Paul removed to North Dakota. Its members include a little boy who can yet count his years on the fingers of both hands. One day, after they had resided in their new home a short time, the little fellow, who had been gazing out on the treeless prairie around, approached his mother very soberly, and asked: "Mamma, do they have trees in heaven?" "Yes, dear," replied the mother; "they have everything in heaven." "Then, mamma," said the little fellow eagerly, "let's sell out here, and move to heaven right away."

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