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EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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INGERSOLL DEMOLISHED.

(Concluded.)

MR. BLACK censures Ingersoll for misrepresenting the character of Jehovah and his worshippers. He assures us that those who were put to death for heresy, Sabbath-breaking, infringing Aaron's patent in "hair oil," and so forth, were not tortured, but executed with considerable regard for their feelings. According to Deutsch, there were two Jewish methods of capital punishment—stoning and burning. The "house of stoning" was two storeys high, and the criminal was precipitated from the top. If he fell on his breast he was turned on his back; if the fall had not killed him, as was highly probable, a stone was flung on his heart; if that did not kill him, all the bystanders pelted him until life was extinct. "Burning" was thus effected. The culprit was immersed to the waist in soft mud; two executioners strangled him with a cord, and a lighted wick was thrown into his mouth when he finally gasped for breath. Such were the humane executions of sceptics, and other offenders against the priestly law, under the divine rule of Jehovah. Everyone will see at a glance that these refined punishments were highly honorable to the priests and their God. Only a born caviller would object to them, and Colonel Ingersoll merits the severest censure for finding fault with such admirable arrangements.

Mr. Black likewise points out that the Jews were not cruel. They occasionally spared the young maidens among their captives, having a strong predilection for Sir Hugh Evans's "pretty virginity," but they massacred all the rest; whereas the Canaanites, whom they supplanted, "mutilated their victims by cutting off their thumbs and big toes." We trust the reader perceives the merciful distinction. Who would not rather be killed outright than lose a couple of joints? Who does not see that mutilation is cruelty while massacre is mercy?

Another fact in favor of Jehovah is that "the Israelites were not commanded to slay a single Canaanite who had fled beyond the bounds of Palestine." They were not required to kill the people who fled from their reach. What humane prudence! What prudent humanity! Were the Germans to conquer France, and exterminate every inhabitant, with the exception of those who escaped over the Pyrenees into Spain, would not the refugees be living witnesses of German mercy?

Extermination is easily justified. People who ought to die have no right to live. The Canaanites were annihilated for the best of reasons. Their survival would have contaminated the Jews. Such is Mr. Black's argument, and such is the argument of the commentators. They do not inform us how such execrable savages could be contaminated; they forget that the "history" was written by the cut-throats, whose victims have never been heard in their own defence.

Mr. Black says a good deal about Jephthah, and carefully misses the only point at issue. Nor only was the "hero" unblamed for sacrificing his daughter, but it is expressly asserted that the spirit of the Lord came upon him before he made his awful vow. What is the use of the spirit of the Lord if, when recently taken on board, it does not save a father from dedicating his child to slaughter? Mr. Black seems to imagine that Jephthah's courage was a gift from heaven, but physical bravery is too common to be miraculous.

Jephthah's courage is less miraculous than Mr. Black's. There is no infamy in the Old Testament which he is not ready to defend. He approves the chopping-up of Agag, calls him the "leader of a gang of robbers," and reviles him for his "merciless brutality" and "cringing cowardice." This is sheer rhodomontade. Agag had committed no

other crime than defending his own territory; his cowardice is only conjectural; if his sword had "made women childless," the same might have been said of every king in that age, and the reproach came with ill grace from the mouth of Samuel, who had just ordered the massacre of a whole nation. Nor is it true that Agag was the leader of a gang of robbers. David maintained that character before his accession to the throne, but Scripture does not record his chopping-up as a punishment, nor did the Mr. Blacks of that age plead for its infliction.

David's reputation is dear to the orthodox. Mr. Black begs us not to "censure him for putting to death, in the way usual at that time, the inhabitants of a hostile city which had obstinately held out against him." What a euphemistic way of saying that David wantonly attacked a foreign city, captured it after a gallant defence, and cut its inhabitants to pieces with axes and saws or burnt them in lime-kilns! Colonel Ingersoll does not denounce David simply for being the greatest ruffian of his time. Every generation, and every part of the world, has had its crowned miscreants. The list of them is too extensive for remembrance, and David might be forgotten with his peers. Who would speak of his cruelty and rapacity if he were not praised as a hero, adored as a saint, and called the man after God's own heart?

The gentle mind of Dean Stanley was shocked at the "savage humor" of Elijah's address to the priests of Baal. Mr. Black is of sterner mould. He is not shocked even at their massacre. He justifies it on the ground that sparing them would have been a national calamity. What! Was not the experiment decisive? Had not Jehovah won in the contest? Was not Baal a discredited god? Where is the divinity of miracles, if their fruits must be preserved in blood? This terrible story was cited to justify the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew; and not logic, but civilisation, prevents Mr. Black from citing it to justify the perennial slaughter of heretics.

Mr. Black's observations on the bastards and the diseased and deformed persons who were cut off from the congregation are of primitive simplicity. He forgets that God made them, and that it was not a paternal act to turn them out of his house. "Political wisdom" is one thing; divine justice is another. Colonel Ingersoll does not propose that disease and deformity should be perpetuated. He objects to insulting people for their infirmities. He denies the justice of God's cursing his own mistakes.

Colonel Ingersoll asked why God, having the Jews under his guidance for so many centuries, did not abolish slavery and polygamy. Mr. Black does not answer the question. He talks about "gradual improvement," as though God, who made all things in six days, could not civilise a fraction of his creation in six hundred years. With him all things are possible, says Scripture. Is not Mr. Black presumptuous, not to say blasphemous, in setting bounds to his power? Does not logic oblige us to say that what God did not do he did not choose to do? And although God did not abolish slavery and polygamy, or even whisper that they were wrong, is it not a fact that civilisation has done both without his assistance?

Mr. Black has peculiar views of salvation. It is not, in his opinion, escape from the pains of hell, but being raised from a low and selfish to a high and unselfish life. He does not square this with the twenty-fifth of Matthew or the Book of Revelation. He does not even attempt to do so. Mr. Black's private interpretation is to be taken as authoritative. It must outweigh the plain meaning of Scripture and all the past and present teaching of his Church. Colonel Ingersoll is not prepared to take Mr. Black at his own estimate. He will go on attacking the doctrines of the Churches, however Mr. Black is ashamed

of them and tries to explain them away. We imagine, also, that he would smile at Mr. Black's statement that his best teaching is only an echo of the Sermon on the Mount; and it requires no very great fancy to hear him remind Mr. Black that although Jesus said that those who took the sword should perish by the sword, he also recommended those who had no sword to sell their clothes and buy one.

Man's natural state, according to Mr. Black, is one of self-seeking. This is an ambiguous phrase. Some kind of self-seeking is indispensable. Egoism is as necessary as altruism. The ideal state is a fine balance of both. Self-seeking is criminal at the expense of others, immoral to the disregard of others. This is usually called selfishness, and all philosophy, all ethics, is a protest against its folly and wickedness. It is absurd to say that man is only to be saved from this vice by "belief on the name of the Son of God." There were good men before Christianity existed; there are good men outside Christianity to-day—and precious rascals within the fold. Men of gigantic moral stature lived in antiquity; men of gigantic moral stature have lived in Christian countries and repudiated Christianity. Never has the modern world produced such intense patriotism as the ancient. Personal salvation is, in one sense, the sublimation of selfishness; and Mr. Save-His-Soul-Alive-O is the most contemptible egoist on the face of this planet.

Colonel Ingersoll asserts that Jesus "offered a reward, not only in this world but in another, to any husband who should desert his wife." Mr. Black says he has omitted the limitation "for my sake." Colonel Ingersoll would reply that it is immoral to desert your wife for anyone's sake. "Leaving a wife," says Mr. Black, "is a different thing from putting her away." Quite so, but the difference is only geographical. In the one case you go from her, in the other you make her go from you. According to the Fathers, Simon Peter, who elicited this offer from Jesus, renounced his wife and regarded her afterwards only as a sister. They do not inform us that he even burdened himself with the cost of her maintenance. Probably Peter left it to the Lord. One or two members of the modern Salvation Army have followed his example, but a "call from the Lord" did not exonerate them before the magistrate.

Mr. Black excels himself in treating the Ananias and Sapphira story. He differs from Ingersoll on the question of who suggested having all things in common. He thinks the idea naturally arose among the wealthy members! We presume the poor required a great deal of persuasion to go shares. Mr. Black's defence of the burking of Ananias and Sapphira is not unworthy of the Jesuit fathers satirised by Pascal. After giving all they had, except the trifle in reserve, they had no right to receive an equal share of the benefits of the common fund "with those who had nothing else in the world to fall back upon!" Surely the people who contributed something were not getting a greater share than those who contributed nothing. The fact is, Ananias and Sapphira lied about the cash. Any other lie would have been venial, but this one was mortal. Peter was not entitled to rail at mere liars, much less to strike them dead. Every cock that crew was a reminder of his own lie, clinched with a solemn affidavit. Mr. Black "easily defends" the death of this couple. He says the life of the infant church was more important than the life of any two individuals. This is an argument used by every Church when bent on murder. The end sanctifies the means.

Colonel Ingersoll says that Christianity has been unfavorable to science and civilisation. Mr. Black replies that if the principles of Christianity had been carried out the masses would have had leisure and freedom from care, a condition "essential to the spread of knowledge by all useful inventions." History belies this statement. The proverb says that necessity is the mother of invention. But, in any case, it does not affect Ingersoll's argument. Revelation is hostile to progress. It stereotypes the errors of the past. Every religion makes belief a virtue and unbelief a crime. Faith is moral, doubt is immoral; and as doubt is the beginning of investigation, the human mind is turned into a stagnant pool.

Mr. Black regards predestination and damnation as "foul ideas." He says they are not supported by "a single text." Has Mr. Black read the eighth and ninth chapters of Romans? Has he read the first chapter of Ephesians? Has he read the Articles of his own Church of England? Has

he ever tried his hand at demolishing the metaphysics of John Calvin? Does he see any escape from predestination if God is omnipotent and omniscient? What is the use of chopping texts in face of the terrible logic of Calvinism? Mr. Black falls back upon the old mattress of half-hearted orthodoxy. What we do not understand now, will be cleared up hereafter. When we are dead we shall be enlightened. God acts very capriciously, and often very cruelly, according to our carnal judgment; but he will explain his ways to us when we meet him in heaven. What is this but the priest's eternal confidence-trick? He creates a mystery, and trades upon it; raises a dust, and takes advantage of our blindness. Fortunately the world is tired of this delusion. Man is throwing off the fetters of creeds, and refusing to smoke the priest's opium. He is turning away from God and looking to Nature. He is learning that his salvation must be upon earth, that Science is power, and Fraternity is inspiration.

G. W. FOOTE.

ACID DROPS.

WHEN Jew meets Jew then comes the tug of war. Rabbi Isaac Meisels's "Sabbath address to Jewish working men and women" in the Great Synagogue, Aldgate, was not relished by the Jewish sweater's victims, who marched off and held a meeting on Mile-end Waste, where they passed a strong resolution against the rich Jews and their Chief Rabbi. Returning to their Club in Berner Street, they were hooted and bisped by their Hebrew opponents. A sanguinary conflict took place, and the Gentile police were obliged to restore order.

RABBI MEISELS made no reference to the sweating business. Being well provided for himself, he merely remarked that if the world was not going as they desired they must not murmur against God. The Almighty Father's serenity must not be disturbed though his children groan in misery and starvation.

ONE point of the Rabbi's sermon is worth notice. He complained that foreign Jews in London were in the habit of going to Christian agents and pretending to be converted—for a consideration. We hope this matter will come up for discussion at the annual meetings of the Jew Conversion Societies. There ought to be a lively debate. Evidently the blood of Jacob runs strong in the veins of his posterity. That "smooth" patriarch had a keen eye for the main chance. God had to undertake to feed, clothe, and keep him safe and sound. "Then," said Jacob, "shall the Lord be my God." Keen old Hebrew! Even in religion he was bent on "shent per shent"—and as much over as possible.

SIR WALTER PHILLIMORE turned up one interesting bit in his long-winded plea for the Bishop of Lincoln. He mentioned that in past times archbishops had issued writs ordering men to be burnt. "What!" exclaimed Archbishop Benson, "you don't mean to say that the archbishop ordered the burning?" "Certainly," replied Sir Walter, "just as a judge orders a man to be hanged." A distressed look came over the archbishop's face. Why? Because he lives in an age of science and humanity. Had he lived in the good old times, when Christianity was supreme, he would not have turned a hair. The burning of a heretic was then a regular part of Church practice, and caused no more astonishment than the rising and setting of the sun.

ANOTHER statement of Sir Walter Phillimore deserving of notice was his argument against the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury on the ground that in the early ages of the English Church bishops were deprived of their sees by Papal legates, and not by their metropolitan. What becomes then of the contention of Anglicans that the Church of England has always been the same, and not under the headship of the Pope. Of course, the Anglican contention is simple bosh, adopted to meet the Dissenters, who assert that the Church and its revenues are entirely dependant upon the State.

JOHN THOMAS NEWLAND advertised in the *Christian World* for a partner in a drapery business he wished to purchase. He wanted a man with some capital and good sound Christian principles. James Aberdein, feeling himself just the man, replied to the advertisement. The result is that he is now £200 poorer, and a warrant is out for the arrest of the pious advertiser who is off with the cash. Moral—Beware of unctuous advertisements in Christian journals.

POLYGAMY gives rise to awkward incidents. A Utah brakeman has eloped with the three wives of a prominent Mormon. He had to take the whole establishment.

MR. FRANK WHEADON has to pay £20, besides costs, for breaking his promise to marry Miss Eliza Margaret Allen. Frank and Eliza are both pious, and there was a good deal of chapel-going in their abortive courtship. But Frank was fickle as well as

pious, and hence these tears. His evidence was so peculiar that Baron Huddleston described him as "one of those shocking instances of persons who profess religion, but had not the slightest regard for truth in their hearts"—a class of persons, your lordship, far too numerous to be regarded as miraculous.

BARON HUDDLESTONE remarked that Frank would have profited by studying the story of Ananias and Sapphira. But surely the worthy judge was a little muddled. Ananias and Sapphira were a married couple. Besides, the Holy Ghost doesn't burke people in that fashion nowadays, and the Generals of Salvation Armies are not allowed to assassinate with impunity.

PIETY, in Frank's case, doesn't appear conducive to business. He describes himself as a journeyman printer earning 25s. a week. This is a phenomenally small screw. Perhaps Frank is engaged on piece work, and spends too much of his time in courting and other pious exercises.

JOSEPH WOOLRIDGE, a letter sorter and local preacher in connection with the Wesleyan body in Staffordshire, has been sentenced to five years' penal servitude for having carried on a wholesale system of robbery of valuables in transit through the Staffordshire post-office.

HENRY HOLMES, a member of the Salvation Army in Sacramento, was arrested February 22, on a charge of rape upon his nine-year old daughter. Holmes's wife is the complainant. Other complications add to the horrible nature of the crime. Holmes admits his guilt.

THE *Nonconformist and Independent* says, in regard to Mr. Caine's letter on Indian missions, in very qualified language, that "We should deceive ourselves did we not admit that in so far as positive acceptance of Christianity is in question, secular education in the hands of missionaries in India, has been, to some extent, a failure."

THE *Echo* gives currency to "a widespread rumor that Mr. Caine's attacks on Baptist missions were made because that gentleman wanted to go out as a deputation to India, and his offer was not entertained." Possibly the rumor is only missionary malice. Anyhow, we cannot see how it affects the facts and figures adduced by Mr. Caine showing that in many places Christianity has absolutely receded in India.

ANOTHER good man gone wrong! William Thomas Twamley, aged thirty, a clergyman of the Church of England, pleaded guilty at the Leeds Assizes on Monday to forging cheques in the names of two brother parsons, Canon Bardsley and the Rev. R. Briggs. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, one half our own sentence for laughing at the Jew Book. Parson Twamley took to thieving and forging through intemperance. He had been taking too much wine for his stomach's sake.

THERE is a pretty row at the Baptist Tabernacle, Old Southgate, over a missing half-sovereign. The pastor of this dipping establishment, sells pills during the week and preaches on Sunday. Pill vending and religion, indeed, go well together in that locality, for another gentleman in the same line of business, after trying all denominations, is now a distinguished patron of the Salvation Army. As for the missing half sovereign, it has been found again without a candle; but the quarrel still continues, and a certain member of the flock has withdrawn in consequence, taking with him several lambs and ewes. Would it not be well, in the circumstances, for the two pill vendors to amalgamate, and strive harmoniously to propagate the faith; for faith is a virtue without which the pill trade is apt to languish?

A. C. ASHMEAD writes again to the *North London Echo*, calling upon the ministers to "notice the efforts the infidels and secularists are making, by means of tracts, papers, and addresses, to spread their pernicious teaching among the masses of Wood Green." We sincerely trust the ministers will notice these efforts here and elsewhere. Publicity and free discussion is all we want to ensure the triumph of our cause.

THIS is how the *New York Evening Telegram* reports the proceedings at Wall Street on Inauguration Day:—"Hosannas, Glory to the Men on High at Washington." After this it comes down to smaller type with "Bulls hail the names of Blaine and Windour."

THE latest on the Stock Exchange. Why is Christianity a Failure? Because it is founded on a miss-conception. Shocking!

THE Rev. Sam Jones says he would rather be the worst criminal in prison than an infidel. He would rather be a Pigott than a Darwin. The statement of his predilections stamps his own standing.

THE *Biblical Illustrator* prints a new story about "Tom Paine," who, it appears (or doesn't appear), was "abashed and confounded" by a Dr. Staughton. The mischievous infidel said it was a pity there was no comprehensive and perfect rule of life; the doctor replied that such a rule existed in the text,

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." The pious journal which retails this silly concoction forgets, or does not know, that Paine was a deist, and could therefore have had no objection to such a text.

"TOM PAINE" stories are constantly springing up in the soil of ignorant imagination; yet the Christians say their Gospel stories couldn't have been invented.

WE have come across a good point in Christian apologetics in a recent Italian work. It is that the devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world on a map, *in una carta geografica*. The Christian Evidence Manufacturing Society should take note of a good idea like this.

ANOTHER point is presented by that persistent writer in the correspondents' column of the *Echo*, "E. L. G." He makes out that Joshua's command to the sun and moon to stand still, was addressed to idols so-called. "So the sun (oracle) became dumb and the moon (oracle) ceased." But if "E. L. G." believes the sound of trumpets could blow down the walls of Jericho, we don't see why his faith is not robust enough to swallow the stoppage of the sun. Once admit the supernatural, and quarrels about the amount of the miraculous are trivial.

MR. MATTHEWS, the Home Secretary, replying to Mr. Bradlaugh, said it was a fact that John Matthews was convicted of manslaughter at the Manchester Assizes. The man kicked his wife in the leg, which had varicose veins; and she bled to death, and the judge sentenced the man to two months' imprisonment for the assault. Mr. Bradlaugh asked whether the jury knew that three of the previous convictions had been for assaulting his wife, and that on one occasion he received the same punishment for kicking her that he now did for killing her. Mr. Matthews repeated his answer that he had not the particulars before him. So it appears that in Christian England one man may get two months' imprisonment for kicking his wife to death, and another twelve months for blasphemy.

WOMAN to Beggar: "Now, I'm giving you this bread for God's sake." Beggar to Woman: "Well, for Christ's sake put a bit of butter on it."

AN extraordinary scene was enacted on Monday, in the Church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, during the capture of a female pilferer by a private detective. The offender, who was an unctuously elderly person, had been surprised in a draper's shop just as she was engaged in annexing various articles of haberdashery. Accordingly, she retreated quickly from the establishment, and, closely followed by the detective, took refuge in the church, where she threw herself on her knees and began to turn her eyes up to the roof in fervent prayer. The detective, however, was sure of his woman, and ordered her to get up and follow him, whereupon she shouted lustily for help, and used some extremely realistic language to the effect that "a wretch wanted to take advantage of her!" The sacred edifice rang with shrieks, and the beadle of the church, armed with his long halberd, the sacristan, the bell-ringer, and various other persons connected with the house of prayer, rushed to the rescue. Some of the congregation who were attending the service also turned upon the detective. He was allowed, however, after due explanation, to take the hypocritical old pilferer away.

THE Rev. Theodore Clap, of New Orleans, in his autobiography, distinctly states that he has witnessed more deaths, perhaps, than any other person in the United States. And he says positively that he never saw an unbeliever, either Infidel or Atheist, die otherwise than pleasantly, and that the only disquietude he ever witnessed on such occasions was in the death of a few Christians who had misgivings in regard to their "acceptance by Christ."

It appears from a letter in the *Daily News* that the catechism of the Rev. F. A. Gace, which the Bishop of St. Albans condemns, is not a recent publication, but has been in circulation for twenty years; and, whatever the Bishop may have said or done twenty years ago, he has never before censured the publication since he became Mr. Gace's Bishop—now nearly twelve years ago. Apparently it is only the damaging use made of the offensive production by Welsh Nonconformists in the recent County Council elections which has elicited the Episcopal protest now. The Bishop's fear that he can do nothing to restrain Mr. Gace is no doubt well-founded; but that only shows the impotence of Bishops, and, indeed, of everybody else in the Church, to prevent clergymen doing what everybody may consider objectionable, albeit that it may not be illegal.

IN the House of Commons Sir W. Hart-Dyke assured Mr. Colman that the practice of teaching the Church of England Catechism in the Board School at Holms, Norfolk, which prevailed for some time without the knowledge of the Board, had been discontinued. It has been discontinued no doubt, like Mr. Gace has been reprimanded, simply because the matter has been called attention to.

THE *Daily News* describes Mr. G. W. Brooke as "an intrepid missionary." He carries no firearms with him, but only a Bible, which is his "great protector" among the African savages. Beautiful! But let us see how he works it. Being captured by the Baloi tribe, and about to be executed, he told them that a powerful neighboring tribe would come and kill them all if they did him any harm; at which they were frightened, and let him go. That's how the "great protector" safeguards the "intrepid missionary."

PREACHERS find the hell-fire business more difficult than it used to be. People will not stand all brimstone and no treacle. Appreciating this truth, Dr. Austin Phelps gives some advice to his brother professionals in the American *Congregationalist*. They should not roar, but speak softly; the gesture should not be with the fist, but with the open palm; and preachers should adopt the doctrine of endless punishment "to the condition of minds under the enervating influence of sin."

JOSEPH COOK, of Boston, has long been trying to meet Colonel Ingersoll. One day he got an hotel manager to introduce him, but Ingersoll turned away, and said he did not desire to know Mr. Cook because he was a liar and a coward. This happened last October. Since then Joseph has adorned the story by an effort of imagination, which is the only faculty he has in a good state of development. He declares that Ingersoll said: "You are a ——— liar and a dirty dog, and I have half a mind to give you a licking now." Joseph adds that he had courage enough to say to Ingersoll, "Put your fingers on me and I will have you arrested in three minutes." His courage is evidently of the litigious order, even if the story be true; but it is not true, and Joseph's courage must therefore yield the first place to his veracity.

SOME of the Christians of New Haven (America) are so perfect that self-improvement is no longer possible, and as they must improve somebody they have resolved to practise upon their neighbors. Headed by a preacher, they have started a Paul Pry Society. They intend, with the aid of a professional detective or two, to find out the moral status of citizens, and make New Haven too hot for those who do not come up to the proper standard. We expect a good many professing Christians are trembling at the news.

THE Marquis of Queensberry corrects a statement in the *New York Herald*. He is not an Atheist, but an Agnostic. He has never "denied the existence of a God"—mark the *a*. Perhaps his lordship will mention an Atheist who has ever done so.

QUERY.—What is an Agnostic? Answer.—An Atheist with a tall hat on.

THE strong denunciation of St. Paul in the *Westminster*, as the greatest enemy of woman's emancipation, has elicited a protest from "A Man" in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. His knowledge and logic may be estimated by the fact that he says "Christianity found woman a chattel, and made her an individual." More nonsense was never crammed into one sentence. Nobody could write thus who had read the fifth chapter of Maine's *Ancient Law*. If this is the best "A Man" can do, the lady who writes in the *Westminster* need not tremble for her case.

THE new Tory Church paper, the *Church Echo* is above all things "sound." Its first article is on the "Incompatibility of Modern Liberalism and Christianity." Cardinal Newman pointed out this incompatibility long ago. The *Church Echo* evidently holds that the Devil was the first Radical and God Almighty the first Tory.

THE Rev. Jacob Primmer, of Dunfermline, is afraid that our royal family are under the seductions of the scarlet woman. He has been recapitulating a long list of sins committed by those on and near the throne. Firstly—the Prince of Wales gave £50 towards the restoration of a Popish Mass House. He also invited a Popish priest to the celebration of his birthday. Worst of all—every member of the royal family, her Majesty included, took part in the idolatrous and blasphemous sacrifice of the Mass "to help the late Crown Prince of Austria out of Rome's pick-purse-imaginary purgatory." Doubtless Dunfermline feels that Protestantism is safe while there is a Jacob Primmer to denounce wickedness in high places.

THERE has been a row at the Gravesend School Board over the question whether a boy named Connor should be educated as a Protestant or a Catholic. It seems the boy had been surreptitiously baptised. Our readers may think the matter a trivial one, but possibly the relatives, if not the priests and parsons, consider it a question of a soul being saved or damned.

DR. RUSSELL, Medical Officer of Health for Glasgow, has published some rather alarming statistics tending to show that an outbreak of measles in his district was due to infection during attendance in church. During the month of January forty-two persons belonging to the congregation of a Gaelic church were taken ill with measles. Dr. Russell was able to trace several of the cases to attendance at the church in ques-

tion. God's house as a centre of mental disorder is a very old phenomenon, but it is not generally suspected to be a centre of bodily disease.

SOME of the wealthy New York churches having excluded strangers and poor people from the sanctuary, the Rev. Wong Jock San, priest of a Chinese joss house on Mott Street, throws open the doors of his temple and invites all wayfarers to enter. He has given the following to the press: "You can just say that if the Christian churches don't allow them to pray or praise the Lord in their sanctuaries they can come right into this temple of 'Joss' here. It is built with much wealth and is kept as neat as we know how. They can come here and worship as long as they please and at any time they choose, and pray as loud they want to to any God they may have a fancy for, all free of cost. We have no castes here nor any religious differences. Every one, so long as he or she is a human being, regardless of their condition of life, is welcome. Religion is about the cheapest thing we have among us. Why should we deny it to anybody?"

THE Wesleyan Scientific Society is not prospering. Its aim is to show that science and religion are not inconsistent. Dr. Dallinger is its president, and it has a special organ, the *Wesleyan Naturalist*. But the Methodist ministers have been altogether indifferent about the movement, and there are serious apprehensions as to its future. This, indeed, was to be expected. The ministers have the true instinct of self-preservation; they feel, if they do not see, that all this "reconciliation" of religion and science only serves to show the impassable gulf between them. They prefer the old wine in the old bottles, and they are right.

THE Wesleyans of Ceylon have expressed their disapprobation of "the patronage and favor shown of late to the Buddhist religion by officials." While Christianity is favored and patronised it is all right, but the recognition of another religion, and that an atheistic one, is intolerable and not to be endured.

PRINCIPAL FAIRBAIRN has been pretending to reply to Mr. J. Cotter Morrison's *Service of Man*. "Was it not a miracle that men had come from the fishing boat, the weaver's loom, and the tentmaker's stool, and had given us the finest literature in the world?" To set the New Testament above Homer, Æschylus, Virgil, Dante, and Shakespeare is, of course, pure nonsense; but Principal Fairbairn might reflect that as the world is ceasing to believe in miracles, the higher he puts that literature the less likely is he to be believed in assigning it to fisher folk and the rest.

PROPHET BAXTER, editor of the *Christian Herald*, whose bills about the coming end of the world continue to adorn the London hoardings, is great on the number of the Beast. As author of *Louis Napoleon the Destined Monarch of the World*, he found the mysterious 666 in the word Napoleon thus:

$$N \alpha \pi o \lambda \epsilon o \nu \tau \iota \} = 666$$

$$50, 1, 80, 70, 30, 5, 70, 50, 300, 10 \}$$

He now, however, changes it to Boulanger, eking the number out with the E., which is only one of the initials of the first names of *le brave general*, thus:

$$E. B o u l a n g e r \} = 666$$

$$5, 2, 70, 400, 30, 1, 50, 3, 5, 100 \}$$

Others have discovered the magical number in Mahomet, Luther and Gladstone.

OF course the fashion of taking the letters to signify numbers is Hebrew rather than Greek, and the best explanation of cranky John's beast is most probably that it refers to the Emperor Nero—Neron Kaiser, in Hebrew, thus: נ = 50, ר = 200, ו = 6, נ = 50, כ = 100, מ = 60, ק = 200 = 666. The most curious of all is the retort which the Jews of the Middle Ages made on the Christians by showing that ישו נצרי, Jeshu Notzri, the common name of Jesus of Nazareth, made up the number of the beast. Thus: י = 10, ש = 300, ו = 6, נ = 50, צ = 90, ר = 200, ו = 10 = 666. This retort is made in the *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu Ha Notzri*, the second version, that of Huldreich, not the earlier one we publish with the title *The Jewish Life of Christ*.

PROPHET BAXTER must look to his laurels. He has a rival in John Hampden, who was once flat enough to bet £500 that the earth is flat. He declares that the world is coming to an end in 1897. He has foretold this flare-up for some time, and he will not "allow Mr. Baxter to have all the glory of the warning." We should like to see this queer couple together for half-an-hour. Of course, someone would have to sit between them in the interest of peace. We would rather act as buffer than miss the sport.

THE religious teetotal party, who have hitherto gone in for Sunday closing as an aid to temperance, have had a rebuff from the recent inquiry into the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. Lord Aberdare, who fathered the Bill in the House of Lords, has declared himself unable to come to any other view than that the Act had failed in its object, and had done and was doing more harm than good.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, March 24, Secular Hall, 61 New Church Road, Camberwell Road, at 7.30, "Come to Jesus."

Wednesday, March 27, Minor Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., at 8.30, "Theism." Admission free.

March 31, South Shields.

April 7, Birmingham; 14, Hall of Science; 21, Hall of Science; 28, Camberwell.

May 5, Manchester; 12, Milton Hall; 19, Milton Hall; 26, Camberwell.

June, 8, N.S.S. Conference; 23, Hall of Science, London; 30, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d. Australia, China, and Africa:—One Year, 8s. 8d.; Half Year, 4s. 4d.; Three Months 2s. 2d. India:—One Year, 10s. 10d.; Half Year, 5s. 5d.; Three Months, 2s. 8½d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. Displayed Advertisements:—One inch, 3s; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

S. STANBRING.—Always glad to receive your dispatches.

F. D.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

W. CARRUTHERS.—Tylor's *Anthropology* is far and away the best. It is a wonderful piece of work, done with the consummate ease of a perfect master.

T. FIELD.—Cheques or P.O.O's. sent in response to our appeal should be made payable to G. W. Foote, and crossed for safety.

W. ROGERS.—(1) Your Christian friends have rounded the story off to suit themselves. It is perfectly true that the long-disused gallows machinery would not act when the man Lee was to be executed; it is perfectly true that he was reprieved; but it is not perfectly true that he was afterwards proved innocent, for he is still in prison, and likely to remain there. (2) Read Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature*, Clodd's *Story of Creation*, Haackel's *History of Creation*, and Aveling's *Darwin Made Easy*. The last can be obtained at our publishing office, price 1s.

E. BILLSON writes, "I have taken six copies of the *Freethinker* per week for some time, and dropped them where I had a chance." This correspondent takes 500 of Mr. Ball's "The Bible Tells Me So."

INCOG.—Thanks. One or two items will serve. Others are far-fetched.

W. S.—Kindly order the tracts of Mr. Forder and enclose remittance. We note that it was the illustration which attracted you in the *Freethinker*.

J. E. D.—Glad to hear that Mr. Wakefield held his own so well against the Christian champion. Thanks for the cuttings.

ON THE WAR PATH.—We are quite content to leave Agnosticism alone if it will drop its superfine airs and cease professing to be so very much loftier than "vulgar Atheism." By the way, you express your own views with vigor and rigor. Why, then, so squeamish? The *Radical* is published monthly.

DAYLIGHT.—See "Acid Drops."

WILL the papers to which specimen copies of the *Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers* have been sent, kindly forward marked copies of the notice thereof.

LANCASHIRE LAD.—You will see that Mr. Foote is in Manchester on May 5. He is going to spend a week or ten days in South Lancashire by request of the N. S. S. Executive, which will bear the expenses. His mission is to energeise old Branches and form new ones. Friends in places that require his services during the visit should communicate early to Mr. Forder, the general Secretary, or to Mr. Foote.

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.

NEXT week's *Freethinker* will probably be the last eight-page number. We intend to enlarge it to twelve pages, introducing some new features and giving greater variety. Some good illustrations are in preparation. Meanwhile we are giving the non-illustrated numbers a trial.

WE did not intend to recur to our appeal for capital to aid us in extending our publishing business, but a few friends have written "for particulars" before remitting, and this leads us to think there may be doubt or misconception in the minds of others. Any sums will be welcome, from a pound upwards; and a legal voucher, properly stamped, is sent to every remitter, entitling him to receive five per cent. interest, and to recall the advance by giving six months' notice in writing. We trust that this is perfectly clear.

MRS. BESANT's resolution on Mr. Moss's case was not carried nominally, but it was actually, for the amendment was sub-

stantially the same as the resolution, only it enabled the bigots to climb down a little less ignominiously. Mr. Moss will now be able to use his tongue and pen for Freethought, and the advertisements the bigots have given him should increase his audience.

MRS. BESANT deserves the highest praise for the courage and tact with which she has fought out Mr. Moss's case on the School Board. At one time the *Freethinker* stood alone in its championship of Mr. Moss's rights, but happily things have altered since then, and all's well that ends well.

MR. FOOTE leaves London next Friday for a week's organising work in the North of England, at the unanimous request of the N. S. S. Executive. On Saturday he attends a Conference at Newcastle, where Branches of the N. S. S. will send delegates to form a real, working Northern Secular Federation. On Sunday, March 31, Mr. Foote lectures three times at South Shields. Wednesday is taken by Chester-le-Street, and Thursday by Hull. Monday, Tuesday, and Friday are still open. Those who desire Mr. Foote's services should communicate with him or Mr. Forder immediately. Darlington ought to wake up. A strong Branch could be formed there. The N. S. S. Executive is ready to bear the expenses of starting new Branches and giving an impetus to languid ones.

THE discussion on the *Limits of Toleration* between Colonel Ingersoll, the Hon. Frederick H. Coudert, a Roman Catholic, and Governor Steward L. Woodford, a Presbyterian, is we believe the only debate ever engaged in by the Colonel.

COLONEL INGERSOLL, in sending a cheque for one hundred dollars to the Bruno Statue fund, says "I shall never be quite satisfied until there is a monument to Bruno higher than the dome of St. Peter's."

MR. BALL's verse, "Because the Bible Tells me So," is now reprinted as a Tract. It is larger than the usual size, but we issue it at the usual price, 6d. per 100. post free 7d. The cost of 1000 is 4s. 6d., or post free 5s. We should like to see this Tract extensively circulated. Several thousand copies are already ordered.

Our "sub.," Mr. J. M. Wheeler, has undertaken to fill a gap in the Claremont Hall programme. He lectures this evening (March 24) at 7.30 on Christian Missions. Mr. Wheeler has not the physique for much platform work, and is therefore not a practised speaker; but our readers do not need to be informed that what he says will be worth hearing.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER has returned to town from Dorking. Though still weak, he looks much better than the most sanguine of his friends could have hoped. He complains jocosely of the solicitude of his many friends, whose enquiries after his health are as multitudinous as they are sincere.

LOOK out for the first annual dinner of the London Secular Federation. It will take place on Monday, April 15, at the Bridge House Hotel, London Bridge. Mr. G. W. Foote will preside. A full list of "distinguished" guests and visitors will be issued anon. There will be a few toasts, and good vocal and instrumental music after dinner. Tickets, 2s. 6d. each, can be obtained of any Branch secretary, or at 28 Stonecutter Street.

IN Bjornstjerne Bjornson's excellent papers on Norway and its People, now appearing in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, he says: "This rise of enlightenment, which more and more brings the peasantry to take part in the discussion of social and political questions, gives a good counter-balance to the religious speculations which still linger among them from the time when they had nothing else to ponder upon besides their ordinary work. Superstition gave imperious explanation of everything which general ignorance could not solve, while religion was also at hand with its explanation. As education in time gave another and a natural explanation, the mind of the people showed itself to be of a strong realistic character. A religious revival does not last longer than one generation. The Norwegian peasant's conception of God is generally a feeling of moral responsibility, while dogmas are unessential. Attempts to fanaticise the people against the modern liberal movement in Europe as 'Freethinking' or even 'godless,' have been unsuccessful."

DR. P. A. RUDT, of Heidelberg, writes asking us to a Free-thought Conference in his native town of Mannheim in May next. We regret that our many engagements render our attendance extremely improbable, especially as we are looking forward to the Paris Conference in September. We understand that Dr. Büchner and Prof. Dodel-Port will attend the Mannheim gathering, which we trust will be a successful one.

IT is well known that the early Catholic missionaries to China and Thibet finding there the Buddhist monasteries, nunneries, bells, priestly garments, the cross, the mitre, censers, relics, worship of saints, fasts, processions, holy water, etc., came to the conclusion that Buddhism was the work of the Devil. We have recently read of one, Lorenzo Herbas, a Spanish Jesuit,

who in recent times went as missionary to India, and discovered that Christianity pre-existed there long anterior to Jesus, and returned rather a sceptic than a believer in the divinity of Christianity. If any reader has heard further of Lorenzo Herbas, we should like to know what record, if any, he made of his discoveries.

B. F. UNDERWOOD has spent the month of January lecturing in Utah. He concluded his engagements in the territory with a lecture on "Radicalism and Conservatism" in the Opera House. As a clear, calm, logical, candid, broad-minded reasoner, Mr. Underwood has made a marked impression upon his hearers in Salt Lake, and when he comes this way again he will doubtless receive a hearty welcome. His lecture of Sunday evening was highly enjoyed by a large and enthusiastic audience.—Salt Lake Tribune.

AN article on Francis William Newman in the *Echo* for March 19 says "The *Phases of Faith* is a protest against that most cowardly and most mischievous of superstitions—that there are questions which it were impious to test with that same regard for truth, as such, which inspires the inquirer in physical science. The *Phases of Faith* is one of the most thorough, most splendidly candid books ever written." "Max," who writes this, does not let his readers know that the *Phases of Faith* challenges the moral perfection of Jesus.

TWO MORALITIES OR ONE?

A SHOEY while ago a woman was severely rebuked by a magistrate for taking her dying child through the cold to a priest in order to have it baptised, whereby it expired. The mother considered it her duty to consider the child's soul in preference to its body. The case forcibly illustrates, the double, and often incompatible notions of morality to which we wish to draw attention. Although the contrast between religious and secular duty is not always so pointed as in this instance, it none the less exists and will exist as long as people are divided in opinion as to whether morality depends upon the will of God or upon the welfare of mankind. The claims of religion and the claims of secular duty are constantly in conflict. St. Ligouri, the great Catholic casuist, lays it down that a girl who has a mother dangerously ill must confess to a sin if she does not leave her mother in order to attend mass. She must also confess to a sin if she does leave her mother to attend mass. The opposition of the morality of the church to natural morality must leave sensitive consciences a prey to trouble and contradiction. The great Pascal revolted against the immoral morality of the Jesuits, yet the worst subtleties of Sanchez and Escobar only arose from this conflict of double claims, God on the one side and human necessities on the other.

Byron says, with truth :

Christians have burnt each other quite persuaded
All the apostles would have done as they did,"

It would be a great mistake to suppose that Torquemada and other persecutors of heretics were especially wicked men. They were men who allowed the duties of religion to override natural morality. But if the postulates of religion are true this is the only consistent course. If we are to obey God rather than man, any considerations of human feeling are out of place. If the religious theory is correct all virtue resolves itself into obedience. Intolerance and persecution flow naturally from the Christian conception of its claims. If there is no salvation out of the church, those who seek to turn persons away from Christianity are soul-destroyers who deserve to be put out of existence. The Christian who has any fellowship with unbelievers allows his natural morality to outweigh the divine commands, and is thereby virtually an infidel. If the Jews when the Deity commands them to kill and slay, had from humane considerations refrained they might have claimed worldly wisdom, but they would not have been guided by the wisdom which is from above.

Of course human morality in the long run always takes precedence of the divine for the simple reason that those who do not conform are eliminated. Christianity is at bottom a monastic institution, and those who have really obeyed its injunctions, and abandoned father, mother, wife, child, and house in order to obtain eternal life, have also left the world and its work to be carried on by those more secularly disposed. According to the Scriptures, the Deity requires that we should not set our affections on the things of this world, we should take no thought for the morrow, prefer poverty to wealth, give to every one that asks, and sell all our possessions and give to the poor. The teaching

is as mischievous as it is nonsensical. True the desire of riches as an end in itself is unfavorable to elevation and refinement of character. Yet were the Christian precepts followed there would be no industry and thrift, and the whole fabric of society, so far as built on these virtues, would collapse. The Christian teachings, though absolute and unqualified, are universally set at naught. And it is well for society that it should be so. Yet the pretence of acting with a view of pleasing the Deity, when all the while other considerations are the real springs of conduct, results in an hypocrisy and degradation of character which we constantly find exemplified in our police reports.

Religious morality is founded on the notion of sacrifice. It is to do what you would not otherwise do with a view of pleasing the Deity, and of obtaining his favor and avoiding his wrath to come. It demands the suppression of much of human nature and the subordinate of all. Natural morality demands, on the contrary, the exercise of all the faculties of human nature. The idea that pleasure as pleasure is a desirable thing is repugnant to the true religionist. He prides himself in being "in the world, yet not of the world." He lives in an atmosphere of other-worldliness. What to others are the pleasures of social existence to him are snares. He views the social party, the dance, the theatre, the rational enjoyment of the seventh day with pious horror. The world is under a curse, a place for mortification, and human life but a poor thing only dignified by its being the probation ground to some few of eternal glory, but to the many of everlasting woe.

But the genuine religionist is fast dying out. He now has to live in two ages at once, and to reconcile two different moralities, the human and divine. Christians now almost invariably select the phrases and incidents of the Bible which please themselves, and which they feel to be least in discord with the age and ignore the rest. But in this they set themselves above their God. The result is, and will be, contradiction, confusion, and hypocrisy until the service of humanity is totally substituted for the vain worship of a God who is never anything better than a word dissimulating our own ignorance.

J. M. WHEELER.

A SAINT'S MORAL ASPIRATIONS.

MAY we be good, like God who made
A world of death and pain,
A world of massacre and wrong,
Of slayers and of slain!

May we be kind as he is kind,
Who made a dreadful hell
To roast his wretched children in—
He loves them all so well.

Help us, good Lord, to make on earth
Grim hells like thine below,
To plunge our own dear children in
And watch their awful woe.

Oh! make us just, as thou art just,
Who held men guilty all
For one man's sin, and curs'd the world
For Father Adam's fall.

May we hold all men guilty, too,
If one man does a wrong,
And punish myriads of our race
With torments fierce and long.

But oh! let us for mercy's sake
Soon kill a darling son,
To save the few who, hearing this,
Believe what we have done—

A few select ones, chosen long
Before the offence could be,
Whom we most graciously forgive,
O Lord, like unto Thee.

May we be truthful, Lord, as thou,
And break our solemn word,
As thou hast done in matters grave,
Where thou hast greatly err'd.

May we send lying spirits forth
And so achieve our end;
And may we walk in all Thy ways,
And all Thy ways defend!

W. P. BALL.

FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN.

MR. PITMAN, of shorthand fame, is a Swedenborgian, but he prefers being called a New Church Christian. He tells a *Pall Mall Gazette* interviewer that he "reads the writings of Swedenborg as explanatory of the Word of God." For our part, having read a good deal of both, we find Swedenborg the less intelligible. The Swedish mystic explains the Bible, but it requires someone else to explain the explanation.

THOMAS PAINE was once tackled by a Swedenborgian, who told him that they had found the true key of interpretation, which had been hidden for two thousand years. "Dear me," said Paine, "it must be very rusty."

THE *Illustrated Carpenter and Builder*, which in its own way seems a very decent paper, goes out of its way to insert a lot of nonsense about "The Great Pyramid," which it ascribes to that mythological old monstrosity Melchisedek, who, according to the writer, was Shem, the son of Noah, but who according to the Epistle to the Hebrews was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." It might as well go the whole hog and ascribe the Great Pyramid to God Almighty himself.

FRENCH papers frequently make a mess of English names. But it is not often that we come across a more amusing muddle than that made by an article in *Le Radical* on French education. The writer says, truly enough, that the French system of education was the admiration of the English inspector, who it describes as the "Rev. Matthews Arnold." It goes on to say that he once asked a boy in a French school to whom he owed the advantage of the fine education he was receiving. The boy, it is said, answered *la patrie*—the country; whereupon *Le Radical* suspects "that the rev. gentleman was looking for another answer, 'God.'" If the late Matthew Arnold were alive, how richly he would have enjoyed the joke.

ACCORDING to the *Daily News*, the daughter-in-law and the grandchildren of Archdeacon Paley received £200 from the Pension List, "in grateful remembrance of the argument of the watch." We should say it was a good deal more than the argument was worth. Paley is credited with saying that he could not afford to keep a conscience. He ought to have netted enough from his popular special pleadings on behalf of Natural Theology and Christian Evidences not to have left his relations dependant on the bounty of his country.

Here is a cutting from the *Philadelphia Record*:—
Modern Minister's wife: "You looked worried, dear. Can't you find subjects that will interest the congregation?"
Modern Minister (gloomily): "Its easy enough to find subjects that will interest the congregation; the trouble is to find subjects that will interest the newspapers."

A WRITER in the *Christian World* cites the following passage from a speech by the Bishop of Peterborough, exposing the sort of thing which results from the present system of Church patronage. His lordship says: "Since I have been a bishop I have been called upon to institute four clergymen, of whom one was paralytic; another so aged and infirm that, on the ground of his age and infirmity, he asked me for leaf of perpetual absence from the important parish to which I had just instituted him; a third was a reclaimed drunkard, who was presented to a benefice situated only a few miles from the scene of his former intemperance and where the scandal of it was unhappily notorious; the fourth (I can hardly bring myself to say it) had resigned a public office he had formerly held sooner than face an investigation into a charge of the most horrible immorality, the truth of which he did not dare to deny to me. In each of these cases the facts were perfectly well known to the respective patrons."

THE Rev. David Thomas is tired of the term, "Christian," and he announces that he intends to consecrate the rest of his life to the "Christly Ethical Church of Mankind." "Christly," he says, "because the word Christian is now become a term of reproach and a cover for all manner of bigotry, intolerance and greed." The Christly Ethicals, or the Ethical Christlys, will eschew all theological dogmas and controversies. Their "grand cause and purpose will be to teach one to be and to do the right." Dr. Thomas, of course, looks forward to all existing sects speedily losing themselves in the Christly Ethical.

THE new National Academy of Theology, in New York, is designed "to advance the study of theology as a science." We cannot have too much light: let some good soul set up a National Academy of Natural History to advance the study of the sheep as a fish.—AMBROSE BIERCE.

ACCORDING to the *New York Press* they conduct the church of St. Thomas in that city on strictly business principles. A lady who took a seat was told "This is not your pew, and don't you come in again until you are invited. Now get out!" The superintendent being interviewed said, "We haven't any room

in our church for people who haven't paid for their seats. It's plain business. Do you suppose you could go into the theatre and take any seat you like? No, of course not, and the same rule is followed in St. Thomas's Church." Pay first and then pray is the golden rule of this business-like Christian.

BLESSED BE YE POOR.

DR. HATCHEE, an American theologian, gives the following account of Spurgeon's poor Christ-like home at Beulah Hill. We quote from the *Baptist*:—"As we passed the porter's lodge, entered the grounds, and caught sight of the home of the metropolitan preacher, we were filled with astonishment to find that he lived in such magnificence and elegance. His grounds, which include ten or twelve acres, are in the highest state of cultivation; his park abounds in choicest trees and flowers, and is adorned with statuary; his lawns are the perfection of neatness and beauty, on his lakes and streams were swimming geese, ducks, and swans; and his home, crowning one of the loftiest hills of London, is capacious, and furnished with almost everything that can please the eye or administer to the comfort of its inmates. His conservatory is a thing of beauty, and contains an exceedingly rare and rich collection of plants, many of which, as he took occasion to tell us, were sent to him by friends and brethren from various quarters of the globe. He has also an extensive vegetable garden, in which were growing cabbage, beets, beans, cauliflower, and I know not what else; and that, too, in utmost luxuriance. The house of his chief steward, situated at the rear of this garden, was a cosy cottage, in excellent order, and very neat and pretty. There were also rich and verdant meadows, in which could be seen several fat milch cows, evidently of superior stock. His stables—well, my party had just a few days before gone through the Royal stables at Windsor Castle, and we agreed that, in point of neatness and beauty of arrangement, they were not one whit ahead of the stable at Beulah Hill. Mr. Spurgeon has not so many horses and carriages as Her Majesty has, for he has no need of so many, but he has enough for his purpose, and that, too, of the best sort. His private carriage is very superior, his horses are finely kept, light-footed, and beautiful, and his driver, dressed in livery, looks like a gentleman of rank. Mr. Spurgeon has also a fondness for fowl-raising, and there must have been several hundred chickens in his poultry yard the day I peeped into it. Indeed, I fancied that he has a little of everything in his richly-endowed home at Beulah Hill."

LIFE A GARDEN.

THE world's a garden sweet in which there grows
Flowers of bright hues, the daisy and the rose;
But weeds sometimes the fairest flowers will spoil,
Unsightly herbs encumber useful soil.
So life's a garden with its flowers and thorns,
And useless weeds disfiguring its lawns;
Destroy the weeds that choke the flowers, and soon
Life's garden shall present its sweetest bloom.

W. W. COLLINS.

PROFANE JOKES.

SAM JONES recently offended a lady wearing a silk dress, by telling her that she was on the high road to the devil's headquarters, and she retorted sharply, "Then we shall probably meet again!"

Rev. Mr. P— was once called upon to marry a man to his fourth wife. As he approached the couple he said, "Please rise." The man wriggled about in his chair a moment, and finally spoke, "We've usually sot."

"George," asked the teacher of a Sunday-school class, "who, above all others, shall you first wish to see when you get to heaven?" With a face brightening up with anticipation, the little fellow shouted, "Gerliah."

"I don't say marriage is a failure," said Adam candidly, as he sat down on a log just outside the Garden of Eden and looked hungrily at the fruit on the other side of the wall, "but if I had remained single, this wouldn't have happened."—*Chicago Tribune*.

We believe Adam was the first man to start this extraordinary theory that marriage is a failure. But we must bear in mind that Adam's opportunities for observation outside of his own family were very limited.—*Philadelphia Press*.

A certain little damsel, being aggravated beyond endurance by her big brother, fell down on her knees, and cried: "O Lord, bless my brother Tom. He lies, he steals, he swears. All boys do; us girls don't. Amen."

There was a feud between the four-year-old young lady and her aunt which came at last to declared hostilities. But the little lady knelt down at night and said her prayers—"Bless papa and bless mamma, and"—there came a long ominous pause—"bless auntie; but if you can't bless her it doesn't matter."

A certain Canon, whose name, of course, we suppress, preached the other Sunday in an East End church, and took for his text "I am, that I am," from a chapter of Exodus. It appears "I am" ends one page, and he had to turn over to continue, "that I am." Instead, however, of turning over one page, he turned several, and, being an absent-minded man, he continued reading, "an ass, and the foal of an ass." There was a little titter amongst the congregation, and he grasped the situation; but, turning back and finding the right page, he capped all by finishing the original text with a most convincing "That I am!" It played Hades with the subsequent collection.

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"A gigantic task undertaken by our *confrère*, the sub-editor of the *London Freethinker*. To put on record the thousands of men who have been devoted to science and Freethought and have contributed to their development—such is the object of this work, which, we hope, will be translated into every language. It will be an indispensable book to all who are engaged in propagating and promoting the ideas of progress and liberty."—*Le Danton* (Paris).

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