

# THE FREETHINKER.

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EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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## "COMIC BIBLE" SKETCHES.—XVI.



JEHOVAH THROWING STONES.

"The Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died."—Joshua x., 11.

## THE BIBLE AND TEMPERANCE.

THE Bible, that great fetish, has such a nose of wax that it can be twisted and turned in any direction whatever. All the diverse and contending sects find warrant in its pages for their several peculiarities. By adroit manipulation and interpretation of texts it can almost be reconciled with the discoveries of science. When the intellect of nations outgrew the belief in witchcraft, that belief was declared to have no warrant in Scripture, despite Jehovah having declared, amid the thunders of Sinai, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exod. xxii., 18). When the human conscience, incited by the "infidel" party, revolted against slavery, slavery was declared unbiblical, although God in his law had permitted a master to maltreat his slave to any extent, so that he did not die under his hands, without incurring the slightest punishment, on the express ground that "he is his money" (Exodus xxi., 21).

And so with temperance. Now that drunkenness has become odious to all self-respecting men, stress is laid upon texts which are supposed to inculcate temperance, and with many total abstinence is considered a *sine qua non* of Christianity. Now, I cordially admit that good work may be done even by the churches in promoting temperance and lessening the evils of "the drink traffic;" indeed, I consider that work of superior importance to all the other doings of the churches put together; but when it is said that this and this alone is Biblical doctrine, I take leave to question the truth of the assertion. To the law and the testimony.

Much nonsense has been written and spouted about the nature of Jewish wines. Some Jew-book believers of the teetotal persuasion would have us believe that the wine which is a mocker, and the strong drink which is raging (Proverbs xx. 1) were non-intoxicating beverages; and this in the face of the texts which say they make drunken and to stagger (see 1 Samuel xxv., 36, 37; Isaiah xxviii., 7; xxix., 9). Wine is known by its effects, and its force in overcoming all restraints of decency could not be more plainly shown than in the cases of the blackguard old patriarchs, Noah and Lot. It must have been pretty strong "syrup" that led to such shocking scenes as Noah exposing himself and Lot lying with his own daughters. It is not true that there is any recorded reproof of the drunkenness of these holy men of God.

So far from the Jewish wine being the unfermented juice of the grape, the very root of the word *Yayin*, the Hebrew word commonly employed for wine, is given by Gesenius as "to boil up, to ferment." King Lemuel, whoever he may have been, or his mother, whoever she may have been, expressly says, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more" (Proverbs xxxi., 6, 7). I don't suppose the wise Lemuel expected men to forget their poverty on small beer. Jeremiah says, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you" (Jeremiah xxv., 27). (I beg my reader's pardon for using the very words of the foul-mouthed prophet. It is occasionally necessary to emphasise the fact that the Holy Ghost employs language which would not be tolerated in decent society.)

The Old Testament absolutely reeks of wine. It is almost invariably spoken of with praise, from the time of the nebulous old king of Salem Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God, without father or mother, who appeared to Abraham, bottle in hand—to the prediction of the later prophets that every man should have his own grape-tree and a copious supply of liquor when the mountains run with wine. In Deuteronomy xiv., 26, the faithful are expressly allowed to use their tithe money "for whatsoever thy soul lustest after, for oxen and for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth." What do our orthodox teetotalers make of this?

Not only does the Psalmist tell us (Psalm civ., 15) that wine "maketh glad the heart of man;" but we read (Judges ix., 13) it "cheereth God and man." Though this phrase occurs in a parable, I see no reason why the author did not believe it literally. We are told (Exodus xxxi., 17) that God rested and was refreshed, and if in need of refreshment and fond of sweet savors (see Genesis viii., 21), what more sweet and refreshing than a drop of old wine? Indeed, he demanded a tidy dose. The drink-offering to the Lord was the fourth part of a hin of wine with a lamb twice a day, the third part of a hin with a ram, and half a hin with a bullock (see Exodus xxix., 40; Numbers xv., 5—11; xxviii., 7). This, as we gather from the last passage referred to, was strong drink, *shekkar*, which every Hebrew scholar knows to have been a most intoxicating fluid. According to Bishop Cumberland, a fourth part of a hin—the Lord's smallest quantum—represents a quart and above half-a-pint ("Of Scripture Weights and Measures," chap. iii., p. 58). No wonder "the old 'un" raged and ranted so fearfully at times. He or his priests must have often been groggy or blind fou'.

The Son of God also, as we know, had the reputation of being a wine-bibber. Nor did he deny the soft impeachment. He himself contrasted his conduct with that of the totally





abstaining John of the locusts and wild honey. By instituting the Lord's Supper he, in the eye of the true believer, gave divine sanction to wine-bibbing—indeed, made it a Christian institution. The absurd notion, that instead of using wine he simply pressed some grapes into a wine-cup in the spring-time, is only worthy of an intellect half-seas over. Were anything wanted to settle the attitude of Jesus in this matter, it would be supplied by the deliberate turning of from twelve to eighteen firkins of water into good wine after the guests were *well drunk* (John ii., 6—10). Note, that the word so translated is rendered as implying drunkenness in every other case where it is used, viz., Matthew xxiv., 49; Acts ii., 15; 1 Corinthians xi., 21; 1 Thess. v., 7; Revelation xvii., 2 and 6. He was apparently well-seasoned, "No man," said he, "having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better." (Luke v., 39.) This is one of those beautiful passages which, as our orthodox friends say, carry truth written on their very face. Another passage which seems to bear the graphic impress of personal experience is that where the much married Solomon describes the effects of wine, "Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or he that lieth upon the top of a mast" (Proverbs xxiii., 34). A man who could hit on this last fine simile must have been three sheets in the wind, or inspired by something stronger than the Holy Ghost at some period of his life.

I am quite aware that many passages can be quoted of a hydropathic tendency. I know of one worthy temperance advocate who declares that Paul's advice to Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, meant merely rubbing it outside, for external application only. He forgot the phrase "*Drink no longer water.*" Teetotallers, like many others who found their doctrines on Scripture, usually forget the parts opposed to their own views. What they have to do is to deal with such passages as those I have cited. To quote others of a different tendency is only to confirm my own proposition that the most diverse views can be plausibly defended from the pages of that curious collection of undateable documents, which goes among the ignorant by the name of the Word of God.

J. M. WHEELER.

#### WAS JESUS INSANE?—IV.

(Concluded from p. 31.)

THERE is no room for doubt that at the time of his last visit to the capital Jesus was fully possessed by the idea of his Messiahship. He thought himself the long-promised deliverer of the Jews, and the wildest flattery now passed without rebuke. God was with him, and he openly declared that he could summon more than twelve legions of angels to fight his enemies. The Jewish fanatics, who were ready to acclaim any pretender, gave him their adherence; and he appears to have imagined that the divine aid would enable him to expel the Romans and set up a new kingdom of Israel. These ludicrous notions evidence the insanity of his mind. His sense of personal identity was weakened, if not altogether lost in the Messianic delusion; and this is a sure symptom of the brain disease from which he probably suffered.

Jesus was indeed so "far gone," that he was incapable of the extremely slight exercise of prudence which would have sufficed to save him from death. Pilate wished to shelter him from his priestly accusers. As a Roman governor he made light of the charge of blasphemy, considering it only a case of dispute between rival sects, just as Festus regarded the accusation by the chief priests and elders against Paul. But when a charge of sedition was preferred, he was compelled to assume the severity of a judge, although he certainly tempered it with kindness. "Art thou the King of the Jews?" asked Pilate, hoping that he would take the opportunity to disavow any seditious purpose. But the poor crazy enthusiast, blind to the outer world and living only within, answered, "Thou hast said it," or in other words, "I am." That sealed his doom. Pilate made another vain effort to save him, and then sentenced him to be crucified; the very form of the punishment conclusively showing that he was executed for sedition against Rome, and not for blasphemy against the Jewish God. If further proof were required, it might be found in the mocking superscription on the cross—"The King of the Jews."

There was no heroism in the case; it was simply a mad-man courting death. The clothing him with purple, the

placing of a crown of thorns on his head, and the mocking salutation, "Hail, King of the Jews!" all indicate that his executioners regarded him as a maniac, over whose sufferings and degradation they made merry, according to the barbarous taste of the age. Philo gives a similar account of the treatment of "a certain poor wretch named Carabbas," who was chased by the multitude into the public gymnasium, and there crowned with a papyrus leaf, clothed with a mat for a royal robe, and furnished with a reed for sceptre, while young men, bearing sticks, stood round him as guards, and others came up, pretending to plead their causes before him. If Jesus had not been crucified he might have become the "sport of idle children and wanton youths," like this unfortunate Carabbas.

Polyparesia, from which, according to M. Soury, Jesus must have suffered, ends in moral and physical prostration. This throws a flood of light on the "agony and bloody sweat" in Gethsemane, and on the piteous cry "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." It explains also the extreme bodily weakness of Jesus during the procession to Calvary. He was unable to carry "the cross," which was laid on one Simon. Now it was not the cross that the criminal had to carry to the place of execution, but only the cross-piece, called patibulum; and the obligation was imposed, not as a physical labour, but as a moral indignity. By failing under such a slight burden, Jesus exhibited a debility which must have been the result of nervous derangement.

The death of Jesus, too, was peculiar. According to Mark, he lingered on the cross only for the short space of six hours, so that Pilate " marvelled if he were already dead." He apparently awoke from a profound stupor, cried with a loud voice and gave up the ghost. We cannot but agree with the remark of M. Soury's translator, that "this was not the sudden breaking down of a man—much less a God—in a sound state of mind, but the moral and physical prostration of polyparesia."

The cry of Jesus on "giving up the ghost" is extremely pathetic, and being given in the vernacular is probably his most authentic utterance—"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani!"—or, literally, "God, God, why hast thou forsaken me?" These are the very words which open the twenty-first Psalm. Jesus doubtless knew them well from frequent reading; they had perhaps floated through his mind more than once during the semi-trance of his last hours, and they involuntarily broke from his lips in that moment of lucidity which, in cases of mental disease, so often precedes the release of death.

That Jesus was insane is a theory which is entertained in England as well as in France. Coincidentally with the translation of M. Soury's work, there appeared a pamphlet by Professor F. W. Newman, on "What is Christianity without Christ?" After deprecating the false hero-worship of many Christians, who construct a Christ out of materials supplied by their own imaginations, he says:—

"But I have something more to add—a single fact, yet a very suggestive one. Some years ago I was in a rather large company of strangers, when a gentleman came up to me and gave his name, Dr. —, a physician; then proceeded to speak as follows: 'Since I read something which you have written, I have wished for an opportunity to tell you in private what I have long believed. I take up the Gospels from a medical point of view. I do not think we have the means of knowing the causes which perverted the mind of Jesus, but I am convinced that he was (at least in the later stage) *insane*; whether from vigils and fastings, or from agitation of mind and elation concerning the Messiahship, I do not pretend to know. But unless I believed him to have been strictly insane, I should have to pass the gravest judgment on his conduct.'

This thoughtful physician hits on the right point in his concluding sentence. We can, indeed, only excuse the wanton actions of Jesus, and sympathise with him in his bitter fate, by reflecting that he was incurably insane.

The insanity of Jesus does not, of course, detract from any merit his teaching may possess, but it does affect our view of his character, and compels us to dismiss at once the pretensions advanced on his behalf. An insane man can scarcely be considered a god, nor can his doctrines rightly demand any special claim on our attention or belief.

M. Soury, in his Introduction, seeks to lessen the force of the theory developed in his Essay. Men of perfect soundness of mind and body are, he says, "incapable of comprehending what genius really is." All genius is *neurosis*, and is "never manifested without more or less disturbance of equilibrium." The names cited in support of this notion



are, to say the least, incongruous. It is a strange category which includes "Jesus, Socrates, Pascal, Newton, and Spinoza." The tough old sage of Athens was pretty well balanced, and we can scarcely conceive of his ever going mad. What, too, would M. Soury say of Shakespeare and Goethe? They certainly do not fit into his theory; neither of them had the faintest touch of insanity even in their moments of supreme exaltation. It may be true, as Dryden says, that

"Great wits to madness sure are near allied  
And thin partitions do their bounds divide."

But the partitions, however thin, are real, and the great wits are on one side and madness on the other. Jesus, and men of his type, have genius out of equilibrium, a dominant faculty which overrides and perverts all others, and is often accompanied by insanity or else leads to it. But in the greatest genius common-sense is always regnant, the sense of proportion is ever active, and the relationship of the individual to the race and to the universe is never lost or obscured. The distinctive element of genius is imagination. When it is ballasted by enough intellect it rides safely on the waters of thought; when not so ballasted it drives on to shipwreck and death.

G. W. FOOTE.

## ACID DROPS.

A TENANT evicted from the estates of the Duke of Argyle says he believes it is easier for a rich man to go through the eye of a needle than for a Campbell to enter the kingdom of heaven. Our compositor says there is something wrong about this quotation. He thinks it should be: "It is easier for a Campbell to enter a rich man's eye than for a needle to go through the kingdom of heaven."

AN enterprising Canadian publishing firm send a circular to all clergymen, advertising their Bibles. They say, "Many ministers, without neglecting their proper work, are making more in circulating our Bible than from their Churches. One agent sold ten large Bibles a day for days in succession. If you will agree to try, we will send you our terms, which are excellent. Our suggestion will be an incentive to more faithful pastoral work, will spread God's word, and put at least 50 dollars a month in your pocket." Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," but this is only another proof that they didn't know everything down in Judee.

WE are assured that it is Randy Pandey who does the vile abuse of Mr. Gladstone which constantly appears in *Vanity Fair*, under the signature of Rasper, M.P.

England, in a wild article on the Bradlaugh case, entitled "Blasphemy, Outrage, and Cowardice," attacks the Premier for not vindicating "the insulted Majesty of the Divine Being." England, as may be imagined from its being established to put down sedition and Atheism, and promote Conservatism among working men, is full of this sort of rollicking fun. Its gospel for the people has been well expressed by Thackeray, in the beautiful verse:

"O let us love our occupations,  
Bless the squire and his relations,  
Live upon our daily rations,  
And always keep our proper stations."  
For Christ sake, Amen.

RANDY PANDY and Sir Richard Temple have both promised to contribute papers to *England*. The title of the ex-Governor of Bombay's paper will be "The Value of India to England." By England he means the official class. We are sure that the Ex-Governor of Bombay brought away a lot of solid cash, and we know he left with the execration of all the natives.

WE would suggest that Randy Pandey should give the Conservative working man "A Defence of the Pension List" or "The Principles and Interests of the Fourth Party."

It's a far cry to India, and the national conscience is easily drugged into the belief that our rule is perfectly acceptable there. We lay the flattering unction to our souls that we seek to govern India for its own benefit. But facts speak louder than pretences. Every one of the Episcopalian clergy in Calcutta is paid out of taxes raised chiefly from semi-starved Hindus and Mohammedans. Mr. Baxter, M.P., has threatened to bring this matter before Parliament, but he will be a hopeful man who expects a House that refuses justice to one of its own members to remedy an injustice so far from home.

In his Pastoral Letter for Lent, Cardinal Manning says: "Society is putting off its Christianity. There may be, and no doubt there is, Christian faith and religious hope in individuals,

but the public life of nations and the social life of the world is fast becoming faithless and even hostile to the faith. We date indeed from the Incarnation, but the world has thrown off the laws and the traditions, the customs and the instincts, the feasts and the solemnities, the fasts and the discipline of penance." He recommends a more austere keeping of "forty days of fasting and self-chastisement." We hope Manning won't macerate himself too mercilessly. They say he takes nothing but a biscuit and water even when it is not Lent, and he looks as if it were true. There was a report that one of the young Roman Catholic neophytes burst his eminences red stockings by putting in a full-sized holy candle as a Santa Claus present at Christmas.

DR. BAGSHAW, the R. C. Bishop of Nottingham, has also indulged in a Lenten pastoral, which he winds up in these terms:—"May the grace and blessing of Almighty God be with you all! Copies of this pastoral, price 1d., may be had of Mr. Clayton, Clumber Street, Nottingham. Given at Nottingham, this 11th day of February, 1882, and appointed to be read in all churches and chapels of the diocese.—+ EDWARD, Bishop of Nottingham." From God to the halfpence is always a speedy jump with the clergy.

IN the pastoral itself he warns his flock against the danger of public libraries, and goes on to say: "In these days it is our unhappy lot to see education, higher, intermediate, and primary, being more and more delivered over to lecturers and teachers, whose boast it is that they are not controlled in their teaching by any dogma of revealed religion, and who therefore practically cast off and deny the authority of revelation. They claim a right to wander at their own will through errors of all kinds, historical, philosophical, and religious, errors which are often more absurd than those of the Pagans themselves, or which have sprung solely from that fountain of malignant falsehood, the great Protestant tradition of this country. They not only go astray themselves, but they lead astray also their unfortunate pupils, to end their wanderings perhaps in the abyss of infidelity or agnosticism." For all this there is the remedy of obeying the Church and keeping Lent.

FULL instruction for the due observance of Lent are given, from which we gather that "*Dripping and lard* (but not *suet*) are allowed, at the chief meal and at other times, on all days except Good Friday." This prohibition has evoked some clever rhymes from the *Nottingham Journal*, beginning—

"Come listen all good Christian folk  
To a pastoral from a bishop,  
It's far too serious for a joke  
The food that you may dish up;  
This thing is lawful — that is not—  
Therefore you'd best eschew it,  
When other food is to be got  
Just mind you don't eat suet.

"On every day you may have meat  
Except Wednesday and Fridays,  
But still be cautious what you eat  
On holidays and high days,  
Dripping and lard may grease your chins,  
But surely you will rue it,  
If you go adding to your sins  
The crime of eating suet."

THE Bishop's phrase "Protestant tradition," reminds us of the *Church Review*. That sweet Church of England journal says: "That Protestant tradition is utterly collapsed and public opinion has ceased to represent any faith that goes to make up the sum of public forces." Bully for you.

The *Church Times* says, "When Canon Ryle was elected to the Episcopate none but the most sanguine expected that he would make much of a bishop. But his circular with respect to confirmation justifies the worst fears that could have been entertained of his inefficiency."

LIVERPOOL is doubly blessed with Bishop Ryle and Bishop O'Reilly. Some mistakes have arisen from both having *The Palace*, Liverpool, as their address. Bishop Ryle, who abhors Ritualism, gets lace worked for Romish vestments sent to him, and O'Reilly receives the publications of the Protestant League.

FOOL Talmage thinks it sufficient evidence of Joshua having stopped the sun to ask, "Is the universe mightier than its God?" He thinks that if a Deist grants the possibility of a thing that is sufficient evidence that it actually took place.

FOOL Talmage sees no objection to a whale swallowing Jonah. "If Mr. Ingersoll would go to the museum at Nantucket he would find the skull of a whale large enough to swallow a man." Ergo, Jonah's whale swallowed him and vomited him out safely again.

FOOL Talmage says, "There is a Byronic description of sin which allures and destroys, but there is a Bible description of sin which warns and saves." We wonder if he is alluding to drunken old Lot and his daughters.



THE Rev. W. R. Shanks, of King's Lynn, tried his hand last Sunday at a sermon on "Freethinkers and Freethought." Knowing very little of the subject, he went in for lavish abuse, which is extremely cheap, since every dog can bark. He described the editor of this journal as "ungentlemanly and impudent in the extreme," and he remarked that Freethinkers spent most of their time in the billiard rooms of public-houses. It is not surprising that the Rev. W. R. Shanks preaches in an empty chapel.

"A FIRM believer in prayer," writing to the Taunton *Courier*, attributes Mr. Allsopp's successful candidature to the numerous signed petitions sent up to the Almighty in favor of excluding Atheists and Jesuits from Parliament. This opinion does not coincide with that of a certain minister in the town who, on the Sunday before the election, announced that "The usual Wednesday evening service would not be held that week as the congregation might be otherwise engaged."

THE pious correspondent ends his letter with the advice—"Pray without ceasing." We expect to hear that praying gangs have been organised to carry on the work in relays just as they manage the all-night sittings in the House of Commons.

AN old marine in Taunton, after reading "Firm Believer's" letter, summed up thus:—"Well, after that I shouldn't be surprised to see the Almighty a partner in the brewery."

THE *Western Figaro's* London correspondent says that he saw Mr. Bradlaugh rush into the Religious Tract Society's establishment, in Paternoster Row, to get the New Testament with which he afterwards swore himself in. This gentleman is very ill-informed on this subject at least. Mr. Bradlaugh used a copy of the Revised Version, which is not published by the Religious Tract Society, but by the University of Oxford. And as copies can be purchased at every bookshop in London, it is rather absurd to imagine a busy man like Mr. Bradlaugh going miles out of his way to buy one. Besides, Freethought lecturers generally have a copy of the Kissing Book handy. Some of them could swear in a whole jury on separate copies.

THE Rev. F. G. Lee, of All Saints, Lambeth, addresses a long letter to the *Standard* on the Parliamentary oath. He urges that "to abolish the Parliamentary Oath is eventually to abolish all oaths." This fossilised parson, this clerical Rip Van Winkle, is years behind the time. Other oaths are abolished, except in the case of juries, and any witness can affirm instead of swearing. The Vicar of All Saints pleads for the retention of an oath because, "as Diodorus Siculus remarked," it is "the strongest bond of confidence between man and man." Who the dickens is Diodorus Siculus, that he should settle the oath question in the nineteenth century? Shakespeare, a much greater person than D. S., takes a different view. When the conspirators propose an oath for the slaying of Cæsar, Brutus, "the noblest Roman of them all," says "No, not on oath." And he contemptuously adds—

"Swear priests and cowards and men cantelous,  
Old feeble carrions and such suffering souls  
That welcome wrongs."

We do not know to which class the Rev. F. G. Lee belongs. He is a priest; is he also a coward and an old feeble carrion? He knows himself best, and must decide.

PERHAPS he will repudiate Shakespeare. Well, he can't repudiate Jesus Christ; and the Prophet of Nazareth said, "Swear not at all." How now, infidel? we have thee on the hip!

MR. G. R. Sims is subject to occasional fits of piety, which disorder his wits, and make him write the greatest nonsense. For the fiftieth time in "Mustard and Cress" in the *Referee*, he disavows all sympathy with Mr. Bradlaugh's Atheism. Why this "damnable iteration?" Mr. Sims should remember the French proverb, *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*. If he continues this little game his readers will all believe him to be a member of the National Secular Society.

HERE is a sample of Mr. Sims's gush when the fit's on:—"I have no sympathy with those who disseminate atheistical teachings. A man has a right to his own religious opinions; he has no right to force them on others. I resent a man trying to make me an Atheist, just as I resent a man trying to make me a Roman Catholic or a Mahometan. I consider the theological mission of Mr. Bradlaugh as mischievous as the mission of those who attempt to convert the Jews or to persuade the heathen that their religion is a pack of lies." In other words, it does not matter whether a religion is true or false, and every man should stick to the creed he sucked in with his mother's milk. What a beautiful doctrine for an ardent Radical! According to this, the Jews were perfectly right in nailing up Jesus as a nuisance, and the Church did a sensible thing in cursing Luther. If all mankind had acted on Mr. Sims's doctrine, there would have been no progress, and we should still be roaming the woods naked, and worshipping sticks and stones. Why doesn't "Dagonet" take a purgative when he feels in this vein? Or if purging won't do, he might try bleeding.

SAMUEL MORLEY's shameful advice was placarded on the walls of Northampton. He recommends the electors to vote for the Tory candidate. That is what the Radicals of Bristol should do at the next election, unless they can get a better Liberal than pious Sam.

VARLEY has wandered, bodily and mentally, about Northampton, circulating his letter to the House of Commons, libelling both Mr. Bradlaugh and the editor of the *Freethinker*. Like a true skunk, he leaves a smell behind him. The Northampton people don't like it. For the rest they treat him as a joke.

THE *Edinburgh Evening Express* devotes a leader to Mr. Foote's "Atheism and Suicide." The writer occupies one half his space in stating that Mr. Foote's pamphlet is beneath criticism, and the other in showing his own inability to criticise it. He also denies that a Christian can commit suicide. We refer him to statistical tables, where he will find the relative proportion of suicides among the various Christian sects. As to the remark that Mr. Tennyson's "Despair" proves the tendency of Atheists to self-destruction, we beg to say that poems do not prove anything, and nobody but a blockhead would ever suppose that they do.

THE *Evening Express* opines that "Atheism and Suicide" probably "knocked at many doors before it found access to the light of day." This is the spite of a disappointed author. Mr. Foote has a ready market for his writings, unlike the poor scribes on the *Evening Express*, which is subsidised by the Conservative party and runs at a dead loss. Papers of that kind give employment to journalists who couldn't otherwise earn their salt.

JUST here the news reaches us that another parson has committed suicide, the Rev. L. D. Brown, vicar of Welland, near Great Malvern; the cause being "low spirits through financial difficulties."

#### A NEW CEMENT.

A DIVERTING piece of bamboozlement was served up to the readers of a provincial paper the other day, due, in all probability, to some wag of a sub-editor. The previous evening the reporter for the paper had to attend a meeting at a Wesleyan Chapel, for the conversion of the Jews to Christianity; after which he reported an address given to a local society on the conversion of sewage into lime and cement. In the compositor's hands the manuscript got mixed up, and the printed report read as follows:—"The chairman, after the meeting had been opened with prayer, explained that the conversion of the Jews was one of the greatest works that could engage the attention of our sanitary authorities. Filtration was the most perfect method that could be adopted for purification; but a filter had its limits. There was a popular notion that the sewage contained a vast amount of wealth; but the sludge must be taken out of it for purposes of irrigation, as it otherwise choked the pores of the land; and they were a wandering race, spread over the whole face of the habitable globe. They were denied the inestimable blessings of Christianity, which might be counted by thousands of tons per year being allowed to run to waste, when, by a judicious admixture of lime and clay, the benighted Hebrews who sat in darkness might easily be converted into lime and cement for building purposes; and if thus deodorised, after being first dried and burned in a kiln, this ancient race would once more take its proud position among the nations of the world. Subscriptions were earnestly solicited for the purpose, though he—the speaker—disclaimed any idea of making a profit out of the process; and in conclusion he urged increasing efforts in the good work, showing that thus deodorised, by a very novel process of evangelisation, in large tanks constructed for the purpose, the grateful Hebrews might flow over the land without injury to vegetation; while the expense of conversion, which was progressing as rapidly as the best friends of Christianity could wish, would be more than repaid by the sale of the phosphate of lime and valuable cement for building purposes.

"WELL, Parson, why did you leave Kentucky?" asked some Texas men of a sanctimonious-looking new arrival dressed in a suit of seedy black and with the professional white choker.—"I don't care to say anything about it; you wouldn't believe me. Besides it was only a trifle."—"Out with it. Did you shoot anybody?"—"No, gentlemen; I did not. Since you want to know so bad, I'll tell you. I left Kentucky because I did not build a church?"—"Such an excuse for emigration was new to the men of Texas. The parson was called upon to furnish more light.—"Well, gentlemen, you see a congregation raised five thousand dollars and turned it over to me to build a church, and I didn't build the church. That's all."

Two old women were eagerly discussing the respective merits of the British and French armies. One averred that the reason why the Scotch soldiers always prevailed in battle was because they prayed to God before going into the fight. "True," remonstrated the other, "but can the French no pray too?" "Toots, jabbering bodies, wha kens what they say?"



SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures twice to-day (Sunday, March 5th) at Claremont Hall, Penton Street, Pentonville, London, N. Morning at 11, "Saint John's Nightmare;" evening at 7, "Poverty, Priestcraft and Privilege."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

March 12th, Edinburgh; 15th and 16th, Dundee; 19th, Glasgow; 21st, Walworth; 22nd, New Commonwealth Club, London; 26th, Nottingham.

April 2nd, Manchester; 9th, Middleton's Hall, Birmingham; 19th, Hackney Workmen's Club.

May 14th, Plymouth; 28th, N. S. S. Conference.

June 11th and 18th, Claremont Hall, London; 25th, Liverpool.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ALL business communications to be addressed to Mr. W. J. RAMSEY, 28, Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

LITERARY communications to the Editor, Mr. G. W. FOOTE, No. 9, South Crescent, Bedford Square, London, W.C.

SOCIALIST.—Ferdinand Lasalle was born April 11th, 1825. He was shot in a duel August, 1864.

J. O'FAGAN.—Two hundred and four Catholics suffered death for religion in the reign of Elizabeth.

R. PONDS informs us that he is making a scrap book of our "Freethought Gleanings" which he finds very useful in his controversies with Christians. We hope it is a large one as we have plenty to follow.

SUBSCRIBER.—The Millcrites are so called after William Miller, a prophet, who in 1839 began to announce in America the speedy end of all things, when the true believers would be caught up into the air. He didn't wait to see it.

G. H. ALLAN.—We cannot afford space. Order from any newsagent, and insist on being supplied.

P. M.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

TAUNTON RADICAL.—Newspaper cuttings are always welcome.

W. JUPP.—Shelley was predominantly a lyrical poet, but the "Cenci" shows that he had great dramatic power. Robert Browning calls it a "superb achievement," and there is no better judge.

AN IRISHMAN writes that "the time has come for Freethinkers to abandon the kid-glove style of advocacy." That's exactly what we thought when this journal was started, and we haven't changed our mind yet.

THE Freethinker is sold in Dublin, at Cleary's, Great Brunswick Street.

"BOTH SIDES" finds our weekly "Gleanings" of "incalculable value." We thank our correspondent for the extract enclosed.

ELOHIM.—Prof. Fiske translates Genesis i, 6: "And said the gods, let there be a hammered plate in the midst of the waters, and let it be dividing waters and waters."

J. THACKERAY sends up a copy of a pungent letter sent to Samuel Morley. J. T. asks S. M. if he considers the Bible should be put into the hands of young girls.

EL. DISCIPULO.—We are pleased to hear of your conversion by reading the Freethinker and of your boldness in reading it aloud. Materialists is the usual term applied to those who do not believe in the immortality of the soul; but it is obvious that this doctrine may be denied even by those who do not believe in the existence of matter.

J. BROTHERTON.—Thanks for the cuttings. Pamphlet sent.

INQUIRER.—Mr. Foote's "Was Jesus Insane?" is now ready, price One Penny.

APISTOS.—There are 2,036 Roman Catholic clergy in England.

W. KILBRIDE.—Dr. Samuel Davidson occupied the position of Professor of Biblical Literature and Ecclesiastical History in the Lancashire Independent College. His works are undoubtedly of the highest authority.

BRADLAUGH AND LIBERTY.

On Monday I paid a flying visit to Northampton, where I found "the Atheists'" supporters hard at work and confident of success. Mr. Bradlaugh himself was flushed with his splendid reception at Manchester the day before, and felt sure of a victory on the coming Thursday. Mr. Labouchere, faithful as ever, was occupying quarters at "The George," where he intended to remain until the struggle was over. The walls were being covered with posters, conspicuous among which was Samuel Morley's letter advising Liberals to vote for the Tory, and to show their "attachment to Liberal principles" by sending up to the House of Commons another member to vote against Mr. Gladstone.

The Freethinker goes to press before the result can be known. Whatever happens a great constitutional question will remain to be settled. If the Tories and bigots snatch a temporary victory, the next General Election will reverse

it. If Mr. Bradlaugh is again elected, he will go to the House of Commons fortified by the fresh mandate of his constituents. In that case it is to be hoped that Mr. Gladstone will summon up his courage and put a little pressure on his followers. If he makes them feel the whip, they will vote for the due observance of the law at Westminster as well as in Ireland, and coerce law-breakers in Parliament as well as outside it.

It is highly probable, however, that the struggle is far from its end. The combat will perhaps deepen instead of abating. But the friends of freedom must not despair. Last century a great constitutional victory was won to the cry of "Wilkes and Liberty!" Our cry must be "Bradlaugh and Liberty!" and let us hope for "a happy issue out of all these afflictions" for all succeeding time.

G. W. FOOTE.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE Rev. W. F. Dawson writes to the *Christian World*: "For some time past I have been deeply impressed with the fact that scepticism is very prevalent, and is apparently on the increase." "Christianus Sum," who says he has met in debate and conversation many of General Bradlaugh's captains, including one of his lady helpers, also urged "that ministers and churches do not sufficiently realise the gravity of this question." He denies Dr. McCann's statement that "absolutely nothing" has been done, by referring to a work which we shall not advertise gratis, as we suspect "Christianus Sum" himself to be connected with the author.

EVEN the Wesleyans are shirking the Scripture doctrine of eternal torments. In a new edition of their "Catechism for Children of Tender Years," they have omitted the following sweet morsel, which found a place in all previous editions:—"1. What sort of a place is hell? Hell is a dark and bottomless pit, full of fire and brimstone.—2. How will the wicked be punished there? The wicked will be punished in hell by having their bodies tormented by fire, and their souls by a sense of the wrath of God." What would John Wesley have said if he knew that his followers would not only give up the belief in witchcraft, but strike out of their catechism the comforting doctrine of hell torments?

The National Conference of Unitarian, Free Christian, and other non-subscribing congregations will be held in Liverpool on the 18th, 19th, and 20th of April.

THE *Montreal Witness* says, "The Rev. C. Milne, pastor of Unity Church, Chicago, at which the Rev. Robert Collyer formerly officiated, in his sermon on Sunday morning abandoned his belief in a personal deity and the immortality of man. There is intense commotion among the congregation regarding the matter."

D. M. BENNETT, of the *Truthseeker*, has been visiting the Sea of Galilee; he says, "It was the will of the pilgrims to take a ride upon the Sea of Galilee, but the wind had blown from the east so briskly that the owner of the single old boat on the lake deemed it unsafe to venture out, especially as there is no one here now who can quiet the tempest and still the waves. So the boat ride had to be abandoned, and the pilgrims mourned greatly."

THE Buddhist dignitaries of Japan have despatched Virtabaki to Germany and England to study what influence the religion of these countries have upon the government and civilisation of the people. We have no doubt the Buddhist emissary will be able to judge this matter for himself. He will find a great difference between Christianity as seen at home and as represented by the missionaries. We hope to present him with a copy of our forthcoming work on missions.

THE *Contemporary Review* for March contains a reply to Goldwin Smith, from Herbert Spencer; also Professor Rainy, on Disestablishment in Scotland; A. R. Wallace, on Monkeys; and Cannon Farrar, on the Revised Version.

CANON TREVOR strongly condemns "this revised thing" as having led to "discussion and disaster to the English Bible." He is quite right, disaster and discredit are sure to follow its discussion.

DR. E. B. TYLOR, author of those capital works, "Primitive Culture," "Early History of Man," and "Anthropology," is collecting material for a book on the history of social customs.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER proposes visiting the American Republic during the ensuing summer.

PROF. HENRY DRAPER, who is said to inherit much of the talent of his father, Prof. J. W. Draper, author of "The History



of the Conflict of Science and Religion," has succeeded to the chair of chemistry in the University of the City of New York.

THE recent Church statistics show that even in godly kirk-going Scotland the proportion of those who in the towns with a population above 50,000, attend religious worship is only slightly over 20 per cent. of the population.

GENERAL BOOTH says, "It is notorious that the large majority of those who go to religious services do so from regard for custom, etiquette, or public opinion, or from a wish to hear some speaker, rather than from any interest in Divine things." We've said so often.

A BILL to fully liberate juries and witnesses from the invocation of the name of God has been brought forward in France by M. Jules Roche.

A Montreal correspondent congratulates us on the fact that "the *Freethinker* is keeping up its reputation for blasphemy." He states that the paper is much appreciated out there, and that its circulation is extending.

We have readers in every corner of the globe. When we despatch our parcels east, west, north and south, we give them our blessing in these words—"Go ye into all the world and drive the Gospel out of every creature."

THE *Western Figaro* pitches into the Society for Converting the Jews. It doubts whether an honest Jew was ever converted, and hints that only shady Hebrews get bagged. "These," it adds, "are preached at and talked over, and in the language of the Society 'converted' at a sum not much under £2,000 a piece; but when they have served the turn of the Society by figuring among the converts, and when they have served their own turn, they take another turn back to Judaism, and we hear no more of them."

THE Bishop of Manchester still continues to advertise the *Freethinker*. In the course of a recent sermon at Balderstone, he "referred to brutal caricatures of serious subjects, intended to shock and to horrify believers in Christ." Of course the believers in Christ are very careful not to offend sceptics; witness their press and pulpit references to Mr. Bradlaugh. Dear, kind souls—how dreadfully misused they are, to be sure!

THE Tunbridge Wells *Advertiser* prints a long article, entitled, "Among the Secularists," giving an account of the opening of the new Hall of the local branch of the N. S. S., by Mr. Foote, on February 22nd. The lecture, it says, "was well attended, not only by some of the lower class, as might be thought, but by many respectable artisans and others." While declining to report the matter of the lecture, the writer "feels bound to admit that the lecturer is a very powerful and able speaker, and that, from his standpoint, his arguments were sustained with great force and ability." After censuring the unruly Christians who persisted in interrupting the lecture, the reporter adds that "Mr. Foote answered his assailants with great readiness, his quick and facetious retorts exciting throughout the evening considerable amusement."

WE congratulate the Tunbridge Wells Branch on this excellent advertisement of its proceedings, and we trust that now it has a nice little local habitation it will, as Lincoln said, "peg away at the orthodoxy of the town."

## THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.—SERMON XXIV.

### GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES.

"He shall guide you into all the truth" (John xvi., 13).

I FIND that it will, as I ought to have known before, take too long to exhaust this great subject. The Holy Ghost has guided his *protéges* into so many and such devious and contradictory and bewildering ways, that all mazes and labyrinths are mere trifles compared with the puzzles of theology. Still, I must do what I can.

(41) Jacob *Behmen*, or *Bahmen*, and his followers were a set of mystics. Jacob was once "surrounded with divine light for seven days," and frequently afterward. He had revelations, too, neither better nor worse, truer nor falsier than those of the Bible. All his doctrines he declared were taught him by revelation, just as Paul pretended his were. His last words were, "Now I go hence into Paradise." Nothing has been heard of his arrival, I believe.

(42) *Bigots* are not confined to any Christian sect. They believe all they are taught in early life; and never receive anything contrary thereto. They resolutely hold fast their own religion, being the more zealous in proportion to the absurdity of their tenets. A bigot would wreck a nation,

or even destroy the world, to save his creed; and would damn all mankind, except his own small sect, to prove how good and useful a thing his religion is. A bigot is the most stupid and malacious being existing, and his god is but his *alter ego*. The House of Commons consists of more bigots than honest men.

(43) *Bishop*. This word means an overseer; and an overseer has been defined as, "a man who looks over other people's business, and overlooks his own." Our bishops—we keep them, and so they are ours—don't overlook their own business, which consists chiefly in drawing their salary. The bishops are wise; their supporters fools. They dispose of £150,000 a year; all the good they all do would be well paid for with 150 pence. The mischief they do is incalculable.

(44) *Blasphemers* are the worst class of sinners, not fit to live or die. There are many sorts; some blaspheme man—these are the worst. They say he has original sin and will be damned. They also blaspheme god—that is not much. They say he is almighty and knows everything; and yet sends famines, fires, earthquakes, floods, epidemics. They say his providence raises up kings and rulers to rule men; permits murders and all other crimes; that he has been the friend of the worst scoundrels and enemy of the best of men; that he answers the prayers of respectable people in fine churches, and leaves poor pent-up pitmen and ocean-castaways to die of hunger, thirst, and despair! The Theists seem to have created their gods only to blaspheme them. I heartily wish they would manufacture a good, and honest, and sensible god. What do I say? They must be good, honest, and sensible themselves first. By the way, Atheists and other unbelievers are not blasphemers.

(44) The *Borrelists*, the disciples of Adam Borrel, a Dutchman of the seventeenth century, held that all other Christians have degenerated by using catechisms, liturgies, and sermons; that they ought to read the Bible without note or comment. Just so. If the Bible be God's word, how is it creeds and confessions, etc., are needed? Borrel was right, if the Bible be God's word.

(45) *Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit*, a sect of the thirteenth century, were much abused and slandered, probably. They were persecuted by the Papists, of course; and Zisca, the Hussite general, treated those who fell into his hands no better than the Inquisition. Protestants are the worst of hypocrites. Papists, till lately, never pretended to claim or grant the right of private judgment. The Protestants demand, but never grant it.

(46) The *Brotherhood of God* was a sect of the twelfth century, founded by a carpenter, who pretended to have communication with Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. I suppose we must believe him—or be damned.

(47) *Brugglerians*, a sect deriving its name from Brugglen, a village of Berne, Switzerland. There, in 1746, Christian Robler and his brother Jerome, gave it out that they were the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation. They gained many followers, as a matter of course, and Christian promised to raise himself up to heaven and take his disciples with him. They were to hang on to his clothes. There were so many of them that he declined to attempt the flight. Both brothers were executed in 1753, a common fate of religious fanatics from Jesus downward.

(48) A hundred years ago, Mrs. *Buchan*, of Glasgow, gave notice that she was the woman mentioned in Revelation (xii.); that the end of the world was at hand, and that she would take her followers to heaven without dying. Unfortunately, she herself died, and thus provokingly broke her promise. Her sect exploded; that of Jesus, who promised to save his disciples from death, still continues! (John vi., 50, 51; xi., 25, 26).

(49) *Calvinists* are followers of John Calvin, whose God was very much like himself—a bilious, bitter, stupid, cunning, relentless, unjust thing, who made everything for his own glory! This is selfishness and ambition run mad. This God, though infinite, gets glory out of poor Pharaoh and out of every child "a span long" that he damns. If his deity had not been guilty of all this, John Calvin and his worst followers would themselves have done all they ascribed to their God, if they could only have obtained the power. Creed-mongers show their dispositions by what they publish. John Calvin's is nothing but double-distilled horror, and he himself was the embodiment of his creed. He did his best to make Geneva a hell. His burning of Servetus is too well-known to need retailing here.

(50) The *Canisars*, or *Canisards*, were French Prophets.



In 1688, 500 to 600 Protestants, of both sexes, announced that they were inspired by the Holy Ghost; soon the number swelled to several thousands. They had so much of the Holy Ghost that they were seized with strange fits, tremblings, faintings, swoons; they stretched out their arms and legs, then staggered and fell. They struck themselves with their hands, fell on their backs, closed their eyes, while their breasts heaved convulsively. They remained in trances (I do not know what a trance is) for long periods; then came out and related visions of angels, paradise, and hell; their usual cry was *Mercy!* with which they made the hills resound, mingled with imprecations against the Pope and the priests. In 1706, three or four of the prophets came to England, bringing the prophetic spirit with them, and in less than a year there were 200 to 300 prophets and prophetesses in London and neighbourhood.

They predicted the millennium; signs and wonders from heaven were to be seen, and famines, pestilences, earthquakes, wars, exterminating angels, etc., would destroy the wicked all over the world. They undertook to raise the dead; but the dead were too stupid to hear them. London, they said, would be burnt on the 25th March, (1706), and Queen Anne would prophesy in Barbican.

I might add more, but this is enough to show that the Holy Ghost had a hand in the matter. He who inspired the Bible evidently inspired those later prophets; and like the predictions of the Bible and of Mother Shipton, those of the Camisards also turned out to be insane blunders.

(51) The *Cap-men*, of the 12th Century, wore white caps decorated with leaden images of the Virgin Mary. Mary, in point of fact, ordered them thus to appear. They preached the equality of mankind, and declared it to be their intention to establish universal peace by *force*.

So far "the fruits of the Spirit" are not truth, nor yet common-sense.

J. SYMES.

(To be continued.)

## COL. INGERSOLL AND THE CLERGY.

THE American clergy have made such a bad mess of trying to answer Ingersoll that they have taken to their usual tactics and try to blacken and besmirch his private character. A Mr. Mitchell, who sent him some cuttings containing these reflections, received the following reply:—

"MY DEAR MR. MITCHELL,—Much obliged to you for your letter of the 29th. I had a correspondence with one of the ministers upon the subject, and convicted him of having told a falsehood. These ministers are really not worth noticing. I can always tell when my arrows have reached the heart of superstition. If the points I have made cannot be answered, then my character gets bad, as my arguments get good. I presume if I were to make a weak speech, my reputation would be excellent.

"Of course my reputation has nothing to do with the question, one way or the other. Admitting that I am the worst man in the world, still there is some doubt about the general deluge. If it should be proved that I am the unfortunate possessor of all the vices, still some people might have their doubts about the whale's having swallowed Jonah. And should I be so unfortunate as to die in the penitentiary, even after that some folks might say that the doctrine of the trinity was mathematically absurd.

"I have no time to answer all the attacks made upon me; and if I had, I might be engaged in better business. There is an old saying that he who takes medicine every time he feels unwell will soon ruin his constitution, and that he who defends his character from every attack will soon lose it. I have been charged with everything; but what has that to do with the existence of the supernatural? Suppose all these charges to be true, is the Bible then inspired? and is an eternity of pain the lot of nearly all the sons of men?

"A very good story is told of Sidney Smith. He was conversing with a young man, who it seems used a great deal of profane language. After a while, Mr. Smith said to him, 'Let us admit, for the purpose of this conversation, that everything in the universe has been thoroughly damned, and go on with the discussion.' So I say to the ministers, 'Let us go on with the discussion. No matter what I may have done, and no matter what I may do, gentlemen, be kind enough to answer what I say.'

"Most of these gentlemen claim that they love even their enemies. In order to get a little practice, so that to love enemies will at least be comparatively easy, would it not be well enough to commence by treating those decently who are not their enemies? I do not ask their friendship. I do not want their praise. I have only one request to make of the clergy of the whole world, and that is that they will not tell falsehoods about me. There are two things I would like to have them stick to.—one is the subject under discussion, and the other is the truth. Until I read some of the attacks that have been made upon me,

I had no conception of the malignity of the modern churches. They do not seem to care for the consequence of their acts. They are willing to malign men, women, and children. They have no respect for the feelings of others. They are perfectly willing to wreck the life of any man who has the courage to express his honest thoughts. They would be delighted to see his wife in want, and his children clad in rags. They would repeat with infinite unction the prayer recorded in 109th Psalm. With folded hands and upturned eyes they would say to God: 'Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. Let his children be continuously vagabonds, and beg. Let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let there be none to extend mercy unto them, neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children.'

"Of course, there are many exceptions. There are good, honest, self-sacrificing men in the pulpits and pews; but, judging from my experience, I would almost hate to say how few.—Yours truly,

"R. G. INGERSOLL."

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

THE CLERGY AND SUPERNATURALISM.—Less than a century ago the clergy of Spain wished to have the opera prohibited, because that ungodly entertainment had given rise to a want of rain.—*Prof. Draper*, "Intellectual Development of Europe," chap. xviii.

CHRISTIAN MIRACLES.—Christianity floated into the Roman empire on the wave of credulity that brought with it this long train of oriental superstitions and legends. In its moral aspects it was broadly distinguished from the systems around it; but its miracles were accepted by both friend and foe as the ordinary accompaniments of religious teaching.—*W. E. H. Lecky*, "History of European Morals," vol. i., p. 397.

TESTIMONY OF AN EARLY FATHER.—And when we say that the Word who is the first birth of God, was produced without sexual union, and that He, Jesus Christ, our teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again and ascended into heaven, we propound nothing different from what you believe regarding those whom you esteem sons of Jupiter.—*Justin Martyr*, "First Apology," chap. xxi, translated by the Rev. M. Dods, M.A., p. 25, Edinburgh, 1877.

FEMALE FREETHINKERS.—There is already a considerable band of female agnostics in this country. They have no mind to whine over the inevitable, or to be obstructive in the universal onward march; still less are they aggressive. They neither push nor draw into their supposed fit of despondency fellow-creatures who are unwilling; but whenever occasion offers they express their opinions freely and fearlessly.—*Miss J. H. Clapperton*, "Agnosticism and Women," in *Nineteenth Century*, May, 1880.

## PROFANE JOKES.

A PARSON who had been in India had acquired a partiality for excessively hot pickles. He had a brand of his own, composed of capsicum, cayenne and the most pungent condiments, which he took about with him. One day an American, sitting at the same *table d'hôte*, asked for the pickles. "These are my own, which I always keep with me," said the clergyman. "May I try them?" "Certainly," said the parson with a grin. The American tried them, and it was his turn to screw his face. As soon as he recovered breath, after the biting torment of the pickles, he said "Wal, I reckon you're a parson." "I am in holy orders, sir." "Wal, I guess you preach hell and damnation, parson?" "It is my duty to teach those doctrines, sir." "Wal, you're the first of your cloth who I've known to carry samples."

A WOULD-BE prophet declared that "he was sent to redeem the world and all things." Whereupon one of his audience sent up his little bill with the remark, "Perhaps you'll kindly redeem that."

"What did the Puritans come to this country for?" asked a Massachusetts teacher of his class. "To worship in their own way, and make other people do the same," was the reply.

A MINISTER once took for his morning text: "Ye are of your father, the devil;" and in the afternoon: "Children, obey your parents."

## MR. SYMES'S ENGAGEMENTS.

March 5, Edinburgh; 12th, Manchester; 19th, Baskerville Hall; 26th, Oldham.

April 2nd, Claremont Hall; 9th, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 16th, Middleton's Hall, Birmingham; 23rd, Burnley; 30th, Baskerville Hall.

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