

# THE FREETHINKER.

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EDITED BY G. W. FOOTER.

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## "COMIC BIBLE" SKETCHES.—XXI.



THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

"And when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon . . . she came to prove him with hard questions."—1 Kings x., 1.

## GENERAL JOSHUA.

MOUNTBANK TALMAGE has just preached a funeral sermon on General Joshua. It is rather behind date, as the old warrior has been dead above three thousand years. But better late than never. Talmage tells us many things about Joshua which are not in the Bible, and some sceptics will say that his panegyric is a sheer invention. They may, however, be mistaken. The oracle of the Brooklyn Jabber-nacle is known to be inspired. God holds converse with him, and he is thus enabled to supply us with fresh facts about Jehovah's fighting-cock from the lost books of Jasher and the Wars of the Lord.

Joshua, says Talmage, was a magnificent fighter. We say, he was a magnificent butcher. Jehovah did the fighting. He was the virtual commander of the Jewish hosts; he won all their victories; and Joshua only did the slaughter. He excelled in that line of business. He delighted in the dying groans of women and children, and loved to dabble his feet and hands in the warm blood of the slain. No "Chamber of Horrors" contains the effigy of any wretch half so bloodthirsty and cruel.

According to Talmage, Joshua "always fought on the right side." Wars of conquest are never right. Thieving other people's lands is an abominable crime. The Jews had absolutely no claim to the territory they took possession of, and which they manured with the blood of its rightful owners. We know they said that God told them to requisition that fine little landed estate of Canaan. Half the thieves in history have said the same thing. We don't believe them.

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God never told any man to rob his neighbor, and whoever says so lies. The thief's statement does not suffice. Let him produce better evidence. A rascal who steals and murders cannot be believed on his oath, and 'tis more likely that he is a liar than that God is a scoundrel.

Talmage celebrates "five great victories" of Joshua. He omits two mighty achievements. General Joshua circumcised a million and a half Jews in a single day. His greatest battle never equalled that wonderful feat. The amputations were done at the rate of over a thousand a minute. Samson's jaw-bone was nothing to Joshua's knife. This surprising old Jew was as great in oratory as in surgery. On one occasion he addressed an audience of three millions, and everyone heard him. His voice must have reached two or three miles. No wonder the walls of Jericho fell down when Joshua joined in the shout. We dare say the Jews wore ear-preservers to guard their tympanums against the dreadful artillery of his speech.

Joshua's first victory, says Talmage, was conquering the spring freshet of Jordan. As a matter of fact, Jehovah transacted that little affair. See, says Talmage, "one mile ahead go two priests carrying a glittering box four feet long and two feet wide. It is the Ark of the Covenant." He forgets to add that the Jew God was supposed to be inside it. Jack in the box is nothing to God in a box. What would have happened if the Ark had been buried with Jehovah safely fastened in? Would his godship have mouldered to dust? In that case he would never have seduced a carpenter's wife, and there would have been no God the Son as the fruit of his adultery.

Talmage credits General Joshua with the capture of Jericho. The Bible says that Jehovah overcame it. Seven priests went blowing rams' horns round the city for seven days. On the seventh day they went round it seven times. It must have been tiresome work, for Jericho was a large city several miles in circumference. But priests are always good "Walkers." After the last blowing of horns all the Jews shouted "Down Jericho, down Jericho!" This is Talmage's inspired account. The Bible states nothing of the kind. Just as the Islamites cry "Allah, Il Allah," it is probable that the Jews cried "Jahveh, Jahveh." But Talmage and the Bible both agree that when their shout rent the air the walls of Jericho fell flat—as flat as the fools who believe it.

Then, says Talmage, "the huzza of the victorious Israelites and the groan of the conquered Canaanites commingle!" Ah, that groan! Its sound still curses the Bible God. Men, women and children, were murdered. The very cattle, sheep and asses, were killed with the sword. Only one woman's house was spared, and she was a harlot. It is as if the German army took Paris, and killed every inhabitant except Cora Pearl. This is inspired war, and Talmage glories in it. He would consider it an honor to be bottle-washer to such a pious hero as General Joshua. When Ai was taken, all its people were slaughtered, without any regard to age or sex. Talmage grins with delight, and cries "Bravo, Joshua!" The King of Ai was reserved for sport. They hung him on a tree and enjoyed the fun. Talmage approves this too. Everything Joshua did was right. Talmage is ready to stake his own poor little soul on that.

Joshua's victory over the five kings calls forth a burst of supernatural eloquence. Talmage pictures the "catapults of the sky pouring a volley of hailstones" on the flying Amorites, and words almost fail him to describe the glorious miracle of the lengthening of the day in order that Jehovah's prize-fighters might go on killing. One passage is almost sublime. It is only one step off. "What," asks Talmage, "is the matter with Joshua? Has he fallen in an apopleptic fit? No. He is in prayer." Our profanity would





not have gone to that length. But we take Talmage's word for it that prayer and apoplexy are very much alike.

The five kings were decapitated. "Ah," says Talmage, "I want five more kings beheaded to-day, King Alcohol, King Fraud, King Lust, King Superstition, and King Infidelity." Soft, you priestly calumniator! What right have you to associate Infidelity with fraud and lust? That Freethought, which you call "infidelity," is more faithful to truth and justice than your creed has ever been. And it will not be disposed of so easily as you think. You will never behead us, but we shall strangle you. We are crushing the life out of your wretched faith, and your spasmodic sermons are only the groans of its despair.

Talmage's boldest step on the line which separates the ludicrous from the sublime occurs in his peroration. He makes General Joshua conquer Death by lying down and giving up the ghost, and then asks for a headstone and a footstone for the holy corpse. "I imagine," he says, "that for the head it shall be the sun that stood still upon Gibeon, and for the foot the moon that stood still in the valley of Ajalon." This is about the finest piece of Yankee buncombe extant. If the sun and moon keep watch over General Joshua's grave, what are we to do? When we get to the New Jerusalem we shall want neither of these luminaries, for the glory of the Lord will shine upon us. But until then we cannot dispense with them, and we decidedly object to their being retained as perpetual mourners over Joshua's grave. If, however, one of them must do service, we humbly beg that it may be the moon. Let the sun illumine us by day, so that we may see to transact our affairs. And if ever we should long to behold "pale Dian's beams" again, we might take Talmage as our guide to the unknown grave of General Joshua, and while they played softly over the miraculous two yards of turf we should see his fitting epitaph—Moonshine.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### CANON FARRAR ON ATHEISM.

WHEN, in the early days of Christianity, the pagan priests found men who refused to bow the knee to idols; who declared that Hercules and Juno and Zeus himself were either demons or names representing abstractions, and not realities—names impotent to answer prayer or to aid mankind; they denounced such impious unbelievers as Atheists. The favorite charge against the early Christians was their Atheism. Many, doubtless, were the fulminations against their blasphemy. Often was heard the statement that the whole order of society was bound up with Paganism, and with it must stand or fall. When sacerdotal systems are assailed and priestly dogmas denied, the cry is ever the same: "Atheism! Society is in danger! Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Will you rob us of our idol?"

Dr. Farrar, Queen's Chaplain and Canon of Westminster, has been fulminating to this effect with unusual vehemence. "France has deliberately for the first time erased the name of God from its instructions for public education." The Canon is horrified. Will England ever follow so dreadful an example? The Queen's Chaplain finds cause for dismay:

"Many of our literary and scientific men avow their unbelief, others are ostentatious in their reticence. Scoffing allusions to truths the most sacred abound in our popular literature. Young men think it a sign of emancipation, of intellectual superiority, to throw off the trammels of the creed of their fathers. Thousands who still call themselves Christians seem to have so relegated their Christianity to the remotest regions of their being, that it exercises no visible influence upon their lives and motives. Large English constituencies, with their eyes open, fully aware of all the facts of the case, return as their representatives to Parliament, and deliberately entrust with a share in framing the laws of a Christian nation, men who are believed to deny the existence of a God. We pause and ask ourselves what is coming?"

Those who know Dr. Farrar's writings know what is coming. A great deal of gush is coming, the infliction of which we shall spare our readers. Sufficient to know that if this sort of thing continued "the stream of morals would dry up," "men would become sensual egoists," and we may expect "the lustful, sanguinary, orgies which made its toy of the guillotine in 1793." "When once Christianity is dead the world will be twice dead, a wandering star, for which is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

"These be big words, my masters." But we doubt if

there is anything more in them than in the outcries of the Pagan priests. France has erased the name of God from its education instructions, but we are not aware that Nature has in consequence given notice of immediate dissolution. It is possible, too, that the morality which rests upon Nature might manage to survive even though there should no longer be Queen's Chaplains—or Queens either, for that matter. Society is tough, and, as it grows, looks after itself more and more; so, even should it lose its celestial police auxiliary, it might perhaps contrive to pull through, and even be better off than Dr. Farrar thinks.

The slight ground of argument which underlies the windy Canon's rhetoric is this. The belief in God and Christianity is a useful one to society. Instead of offering facts in favor of this contention, we are treated to a string of assertions. Thus, he says: "This it was which made the Church the defender of the poor, and turned poverty into a beauty"—by saying, "Blessed be ye poor," and then "Be ye poor," we suppose; "and broke the tyrant and emancipated the slave." Why, the Canon's god-given code says, "Obey the powers that be," and slavery endured for ages throughout Christendom, entrenched behind a rampart of holy scripture texts, while its opponents could not find a single one to inscribe upon the flag of freedom. To parody the Doctor's own style:—It is theology which has thwarted morality, by founding it upon the arbitrary will of an irresponsible being, whose commands made it right for his favorites to keep slaves and concubines, to offer up an innocent son as a sacrifice, to kill witches, to stone Sabbath-breakers, to rob Egyptians, and to slay and dispossess Canaanites. It is theology which makes morality followed, not because seen to be necessary for the healthy life of society, but to obtain the favor of this despicable deity, and "escape the wrath to come." It is theology which promises immunity to all criminals if they cast their burden on an innocent person. It is theology which has taught men to hate father and mother, and that duty is irrespective of considerations of human welfare. It is theology which has encouraged "selfish egoism" by its contemptible terrors of burning brimstone and tormenting devils, and by its still more contemptible bribes of thrones and golden harps, and the recompense of a hundred fold for all that is resigned now. Those who brave the wrath of God and Mrs. Grundy, by rejecting that theology, do so because *it is not good enough*. Their hearts, as well as their heads, have outgrown it. But, says their benevolent antagonist:—

"Believe me, I am not speaking, I am not thinking, of individuals; to them, as a Christian, I would show all possible courtesy, all possible consideration, all possible justice, all possible kindness. I am speaking of Atheist ages, and of Atheist nations, not of Atheist individuals. The number of avowed Atheists who have risen to notoriety in this world has been but small, and they are not, for the most part, inscribed on the roll of the world's benefactors; and, even out of that small number, not a few, it is certain, have led lives which, if imitated, would, in a single generation, be fatal to the world. But God forbid that every individual Atheist should be immoral. It is not so; I say emphatically it is not so. There are some who have called or thought themselves Atheists who have served God, though they have not known Him."

The possible courtesy or justice of Christians to Atheists we have usually found to be a very limited quantity. But what were the Atheist ages and nations? Is the Doctor aware of Max Müller's testimony to Buddhism, that "the highest morality that was ever taught, before the rise of Christianity, was taught by men with whom the gods had become mere phantoms, and who had no altars, not even an altar to the unknown God?" He pretends that the worst epochs of history were times of Atheism. We deny it. The worst criminals, the vilest offenders against humanity, from Nero to Napoleon the little, have been slaves of superstition. He makes the most of "the sanguinary orgies" of the French Revolution without proving them the deeds of Atheists. What shall we make of the ten millions of lives that have been computed as lost by the religious wars of Christians? In admitting that some can live moral lives without his creed the Canon, in fact, gives up his case. "Seekers after God," he may cantingly call them, even as he calls such Pagans as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, who knew and de-pised his religion. But, says the Canon, only let Atheism penetrate to the masses, and he "would not give ten years' purchase for England's fame." The cultured classes may contrive to do without Christianity, but the mob would soon established the Commune and give themselves up to all crime. So God and his Church must be kept as an adjunct



to Scotland Yard. This is what it comes to, for the Canon does not even seek to establish the *truth* of his faith. He only holds up the *spectre rouge*. Moreover, he knows that the only deity that would influence the criminal classes he refers to, is a deity he himself would be ashamed to believe in. For, be it borne in mind, that Canon Farrar is an Atheist to every other God but his own; just as those he denounces are Atheists to his God. The teaching which might have most power as a deterrent of crime, is that very doctrine of eternal punishment which he has so mildly and gracefully described as "the hideous incubus of atrocious conceptions."\*

We are not quite sure of the immeasurable superiority of the faith of those who have got rid of this "hideous incubus." A god of gore is about as credible as a god of gush. Those who verily believed in the incubus were at least in earnest. They said, believe it, it is *true*; deny it at your peril of death here and damnation hereafter. Our modern theological trimmers of the Broad Church virtually say, "Pretend to believe with us, for even though theology is all kybosh, it won't do to let the criminal classes into the secret."

If there is any danger to society from the break up of supernaturalism, the responsibility rests with those who have taught morality upon a supernatural basis. It is doubtless true that the populace, as he calls us, have to find their way gradually to the higher level above the self-salvation seekers; and some may have been so used to the lower atmosphere that a sudden change might prove as overpowering as a blast of fresh air to the dweller in a fever den. There may be some to whom the gospel of gush and gammon is better suited than that of sense and science, just as there are those who prefer the florid description and turgid rhetoric of Farrar's "Life of Christ," to the sober investigation and calm reasoning of Straus's "Leben Jesu."

But this is the worst condemnation of those apostles of obscurantism, the clergy. Claiming to be possessed of all truth, they have, as far as in them lay, kept out the sunshine to give more effect to their own rushlights.

The aspiring soul is fettered by a word;  
To Love's reality  
Within the human heart we have preferred  
God's personality.  
And lost, in fighting for the Trinity,  
The true Divinity  
Of growing nearer to the Ideal Man.

J. M. WHEELER.

## HETERODOX NUTS FOR ORTHODOX TEETH.

### THE GOSPELS.

1. If it were absolutely necessary that Christ should have come in person to work our salvation, was it not equally necessary that he should himself have written an undeniably authoritative account of what he taught?
2. How was it that Christ himself did not write our Gospels, and thus have precluded the possibility of the great obscurity which now hangs over their origin?
3. In lieu of doing so himself, how was it he never publicly authorised others to write them?
4. How was it the Gospel writers never claim divine command or sanction for their works?
5. Instead of having been written by express command of God, does not Church history declare them to have been written rather at the *accidental* request of a few early Christians who required a record of Christ's life?
6. Is it necessary to salvation to believe in the genuineness of the Gospels? If so, how is it they originally had neither name nor title?
7. And how is it that only *one* out of the four gives any indication of the name of its compiler?
8. Why were the Gospels not written at the time when the wonders they relate occurred?
9. Why were *three* out of the four published in places hundreds of miles away from the scenes of the alleged miracles?
10. Why were they not all published among the people who saw the wonders, and who could have corrected any errors, and refuted untruths?
11. How has it happened that two out of the four Gospel writers were not eye-witnesses of what they relate?

\* "Eternal Hope," Sermon III, p. 83, 1878.

12. Having thus only two eye-witnesses in support of the wonders related in the Gospels, how is it that the Gospel of one of these has been allowed to completely disappear?

13. And why did the only remaining eye-witness so long delay writing his account, and why did he publish it in a place so many hundreds of miles from the locality in which the miracles were performed? How could people then check the truth of the statements made?

14. How is it that all MSS. written by the Evangelists have so thoroughly disappeared, and why is it no writer in the Church ever says he saw them?

15. How comes it that the Deity, after having inspired the four Gospels, did not think them worth taking care of? Why did he allow them to disappear, apparently, before the end of the first century?

16. When the original documents were lost, did not their inspiration go with them? How, then, can our four Gospels be inspired?

17. If uninspired copies answer the same purpose as inspired ones, why were the originals ever inspired at all?

18. If the early church had believed them to have been inspired, would they ever have lost sight of such precious treasures?

19. If the early Christians did not value them, why should we?

20. Did the four other writers of the New Testament know of these books? If so why did they so completely ignore them as never to have mentioned or referred to them?

21. If the Gospels were so well-known and esteemed as canonical, as is pretended, why did not Paul and the other New Testament writers appeal to their statements and insist on their teachings, as they did with the Old Testament?

22. If the early Christians knew and received these Gospels, why were so many apocryphal books penned in the first and second centuries?

23. Why did not some of the apostles tell us which were false and which true?

24. Who separated the true from the false Gospels, and when and where was this done?

25. And, finally, how can we tell whether we have the right Gospels at the present day?

J. E. G.

## ACID DROPS.

MR. G. J. HOLYOAKE says that "from time immemorial the judges in our courts have refused to administer the oath to persons who did not believe in its terms." Will Mr. Holyoake give a single instance of such refusal? We ask for no more; one will do.

THE *Christian World* is good enough to say that "the suspended M.P. for Northampton has forfeited all sympathy." Mr. Bradlaugh never had the sympathy of Christian editors, and therefore he could not forfeit it; and in face of the tremendous and enthusiastic meetings he is able to gather in all our large towns, it is mere idle impudence to say that he has forfeited the sympathy of those on whose support he has always counted.

A GREAT increase of piety is expected in the rising generation. All the babes and sucklings who have signed the petition against Bradlaugh will naturally do the Church great service when they grow up. It will be difficult for an infidel to eat his bread and cheese in peace when these precocious warriors attain to their full strength and begin the fight in grim earnest.

OF the little petition game the Tories and Bigots have played, it might be said that they have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.

WHY doesn't Sir Stafford Northcote apologise for his gross misstatement about the Northampton petition? Because a lie told to injure an infidel isn't a lie at all. It wasn't true, but then it was a pious opinion.

THE Salvation Army has spent two thousand pounds in Paris. Number of *bona fide* converts ten. Cost, two hundred pounds each. To convert the world at that rate will cost three hundred thousand millions of hard cash. The National Secular Society makes about a thousand new members every year, with an expenditure of something like a hundred pounds.

WHAT an awful expense Christianity entails! The Gospel is without money and without price, but the agents charge a very heavy fee for delivery.



THE Rev. Professor Mahaffy is a little confused in his politics. He deprecates the old Hebrew conception of an absolute despot, and recommends the modern idea of "a constitutional king who establishes wise and beneficent laws and binds himself to act in conformity with them, even though he have the power to reverse or violate them." We never knew that constitutional monarchs were able to reverse or violate the law. But it is astonishing how much we learn from these wonderful theologians. They are constantly giving us brand-new truths.

LET us pursue Mr. Mahaffy's metaphor. In barbarous times God, like the King, is an absolute despot. In more civilised times God and the King become constitutional—they reign but do not govern, taking plenty of cash and praise, but wielding no power. In the end, cash and praise are cut off too; people do without a monarch altogether, and set up a Republic; and dispensing with a deity, they keep their minds as well as their bodies free. Kings will all be improved off the face of the earth, and so will gods.

How the pious journals have lauded Longfellow's "Psalm of Life"! We take it to be one of his weakest and washiest productions. Its piety sometimes drivels, and its imagery is as consistent as sludge. We are to leave footprints on the sands of time—and for what purpose? Why, in order that some shipwrecked brother may see them and take heart again. But what consolation is it to a castaway to know that other poor devils have been in the same wretched plight before him? If the footprints led to a warm inn, a good meal, and a snug bed, they might be as "grateful and soothing" as Epps's Cocoa. Then again, Longfellow tells us that "things are not what they seem." Perhaps not; but how the deuce did he find it out? The "Psalm of Life" is bad enough, but "Excelsior" is worse. The idiotic youth whose silly achievements are described in that poem, was just fit for an asylum; and his friends should have put him in one, and thus prevented his dying in the attempt to plant that ludicrous banner on those impossible heights.

YET Longfellow was a true poet, although not a great one. A few of his minor pieces will perhaps live, but certainly none of those over which the pious journals have shed their maudlin tears. As a man Longfellow was undoubtedly pure and sweet; not strong but loveable, and gracious although not great.

THE *Yorkshireman* states that the cost of a fourteen days' mission of the Blue Ribbon Army in Manchester recently was £529. Of that sum, Mr. Francis Murphy received £63, and Mr. and Mrs. Clarke Wilson, the American singers, £41 10s., in addition to their hotel bill of £37 16s. 5d. The best way to save money is to go in for "saving" your fellow-men; and judging by the success of all these Yankee adventurers who trade on John Bull's piety and sentimentalism, we should say that the best way to make "brass" is to carry plenty of it in your face.

MOODY AND SANKEY have been invited by 273 clergymen and ministers to visit London for at least twelve months. Something must be done. Trade is dull; the people won't come to see the show; and so Moody and Sankey are wanted to do the "walk up, walk up!" business outside.

ALL those Christians who for the past forty days have been living on meagre diet and going about in suits of sackcloth, embellished with the frippery of ashes, are on and after Sunday empowered to go about as they please, and fill themselves with the Holy Spirit, in honor of their God having kicked off his graveclothes, and taken broiled fish and honeycomb, without revisiting his tailor.

REMNANTS of the belief in witchcraft crop up even in this last quarter of the nineteenth century. A case has just happened in Somersetshire, where a laborer's wife having gone daft has been set down as a witch. A paper in proof that this superstition is built upon the Bible, will appear in next week's issue of the *Freethinker*.

THE Christian Colportage Association apparently wish to take up other functions besides that of itinerating trashy tracts, and the somewhat obscene old collection of books they called the "Word of God." In their recently published report they say, "The attention of the committee (Whitechokerlea is one of them) had been drawn to the issue of certain Infidel publications, and the matter had been brought before the Solicitor-General—but it did not appear that anything could be done to stop the evil." We daresay this pious association would go a little further even than seeking to suppress us if they only dared. Like the Ephesian silversmiths, they feel their craft is in danger. Their financial statement shows a deficit of £191 for the past year; so it is not likely that they will venture to try the law on us after this opinion of the Solicitor-General. But why should not some of the wealthy Christians try?

THE Rev. Dr. Cunningham says it is not enough for Christians to give what they can conveniently spare, but to give and keep giving until they feel it to be a burden and a sacrifice. These brethren, are the inspired words of one who has a deep and abiding pecuniary interest in what he is talking about. Such a

man cannot err, except by asking too little, and there is no record of a man of God having committed this error.

THE *Jewish World* points out that the Christian world subscribes annually upwards of £60,000 to convert the souls of the Jews, while the combined total sum raised at public meetings in Newcastle, Dewsbury, Huddersfield, and Harrogate for the bodies of nearly four millions of distressed Jews is £8 3s. 4d. Ah, well, the days will come when the Gentiles of "all languages of the nations shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew and ask to go with him;" or else old Zechariah is a false prophet.

MR. S. C. HALL writes to *Light* that "Katie Fox," the introducer of modern Spiritualism is, with her two children, in circumstances of great need. The spiritualists apparently take no more heed of the person who started their "phenomena" than the Christians would take of Jesus.

AT the last general election Mr. de Havilar was expelled from the Reform Club for the heinous offence of driving into Taunton with the Conservative colors on his horses. The Club, however, declines to take any notice of Pious Sam's inciting the Northampton electors to vote for a Conservative.

FATHER CLARKE, a Jesuit, writes in the *Month* that "the existence of Hell is a full proof of God's love," and "those who deny eternity of torture are guilty of robbing Hell of its chief terrors and thus adding to the number of its victims." How shameful to seek to rob the children of God of this proof of their Father's ardent love! The dear innocents of the society of Jesus are the last persons in the world we would think of depriving of the blessing.

A PIOUS contemporary, in giving an account of Dick Weaver's mission in Paisley, says that "Many profess to have found Christ. He is now in Edinburgh." Will some of our Edinburgh friends make inquiries? If they find the said Christ anywhere in the city we hope they will send him on by the next train. We'll pay carriage.

ONE of Moody's converts says that he "heard Mr. White say in Hutcheson Town Free Church, that the best thing one could do when he takes Christ is to break a window." We hope the people who take Christ won't practise on our windows. Let them experiment on their own. But why break a window? We suppose for the reason that while the window is sound they see through a glass darkly, but when 'tis broken they see face to face. Glaziers ought to do well where Moody goes.

A CHRISTIAN poet circulates a tract with the following:—

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord  
Or to defend his cause,  
Maintain the honor of his word,  
The glory of his cross."

And so on with "trust," and "lost," "secure," and "hour," in conjunction. Of such rhymes, one might say with Mr. Browning himself:—

"Myself could find a better rhyme than that!  
That bard's a Browning, he neglects the form,  
But, Ah! the sense, ye god's, the weighty sense."

IN a small town, a few miles from Salisbury, a young man lately died who had not been by any means noted for his piety. His friends were severe Calvinists, and a worthy disciple of the murderer of Servetus was appointed to preach a sermon over the young man's grave. While the parents and friends were stricken with grief for the lost one, the minister assured them there was no hope for their wicked brother, that he was undoubtedly a child of the devil, and that at that very moment the flames of hell were consuming his unworthy soul. The man of meekness and mercy was stopped in a minute description of the torments Satan had long been preparing for their erring brother, by a bystander, who suggested that he should be pushed neck and crop out of the cemetery.

WORSHIPPING by telephone is becoming quite common in some parts of America. By and bye this sort of thing will all be done by contract, and telephone companies will supply sermons at so much a yard.

UTILITY AND RELIGION.—Whatever ease may be given to an individual or a generation by social or religious error, such error, at any rate, can conduce nothing to further advancement. That is not one of its possible utilities. But the negative truth, that nothing can be known, is, in fact, a truth that guides us. It leads us away from sterile and irreclaimable tracts of thought and emotion, and so inevitably compels the energies which would otherwise have been wasted, to feel after a more profitable direction. By leaving the old guide-marks undisturbed, you may give ease to an existing generation, but the present ease is purchased at the cost of future growth. To have been deprived of the faith of the old dispensation, is the first condition of strenuous endeavor after the new.—*John Morley* on "Compromise," p. 60.



## SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures three times to-day (Sunday, April 9th) in Middleton's Hall, Birmingham. Morning, at 11, "The Land and the Lords;" Afternoon, at 3, "The Religion of the Future;" Evening, at 7, "Science and the Creeds." On Tuesday Evening, April 11th, Mr. Foote will speak at the "Bradlaugh Meeting," in Claremont Hall, London.

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

April 16th, Hall of Science, London; 18th, Walworth; 19th, Hackney Workmen's Club; 23rd, Liverpool; 25th, Tower Hamlets Radical Club; 30th, Hall of Science, London.

May 7th, Portsmouth; 14th, Plymouth; 21st, Leigh; 28th, N. S. S. Conference.

June 4th, Glasgow; 11th and 18th, Claremont Hall, London.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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

NO JINGO.—Are you not aware that St. Jingo, the patron of aggressive Christians, is sometimes styled "The Living Jingo" from the extreme tenaciousness of vitality displayed by his severed members?

O. BROWNE.—Instead of criticising your "poem" we give you Coleridge's criticism on his own "Ancient Mariner."

"Your poem must eternal be,  
Dear sir, it cannot fail;  
For tis incomprehensible,  
Without a head or tail."

ATHEOS.—It is not true that "the Assyrian records entirely confirm Jewish history." *e.g.*, According to Isaiah xxxvi, 1, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, came up against Judah in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah; *i.e.* b.c. 713. But according to the Assyrian tablets Sennacherib was not even associated on the throne until b.c. 705. It is not even true that the Jewish histories agree with each other.

R.B.—Confucius was born b.c. 550 and died b.c. 471. Dr. James Legge, Prof. Douglas and M. Pauthier are authorities upon the subject.

SAGITTARIUS.—Your request shall be attended to.

A. W., Lambeth.—Thanks for your suggestion and jokes.

ENQUIRER.—The strange appearance of fires at the rebuilding of Jerusalem was probably occasioned by inflammable gases in the old subterranean ways. Mr. Wheeler will contribute a paper on Julian.

C. JONES thinks Eve must have been Cain's wife. He had better consult the minister of his parish. Perhaps he may learn that Cain had sisters or a gorillaess, or that he had a rib taken out, or that there were other families created which the writer forgot to mention, or, as we suspect, that the writer never thought of the difficulty the question of Cain's wife might give Mr. Jones.

J. G. BROTHERTON wishes to know where the *Freethinker* can be procured in Walsall. We are not aware. Can any of our readers inform him?

J. S.—We have not even space for your list of well-chosen Bible contradictions.

W. C. SCRIVENER.—Kindly let us know if a row actually occurred in the chapel.

R. HOLDEN.—There is no mention of David's mother. Varley tracts are done. We regret having mislaid your previous communication.

H. REEVE.—We are pleased to hear of the commencement of the Mile End and Victoria Park open-air lectures.

H. BARRATT.—We regret we cannot find room for your clever verses on the fight in the chapel.

W. COLE, JUN.—Thanks for cuttings and warm words of approbation.

S. BAILDON.—Irenæus was Bishop of Lyons in the end of the 2nd century. He is said to have been born between 120 and 140, and probably died about 202. Neither Tertullian, Augustine, Eusebius, nor Theodoret knew anything of his alleged martyrdom. All the stories of the early Christian Fathers must be taken *cum grano salis*.

J. P.—Individual conversions do not prove much either way. Consider the many recent conversions from Protestantism to Roman Catholicism.

S. RICHARDSON.—The refusal of affirmation was, we believe, illegal.

I AM THAT I AM.—See the Introduction to the New Edition of Hume's "Essay on Miracles."

H. L. DARTON.—Thanks for your good wishes and assistance. The *Freethinker* is improving in circulation every week, and we are glad to know that many Christians buy it. They hate it, but they must read it. Mr. Foote hopes to see you in May.

W. B.—We are always glad to receive newspaper cuttings. Our readers do us a great service by posting any scraps of interest on which we can do an "Acid Drop" or a "Sugar Plum."

## SUGAR PLUMS.

THE subject of "The Agnostic at Church" is continued in this month's *Nineteenth Century*. Mr. J. H. Shorthouse, ex-editor of the *Sporting Times*, thinks an Agnostic should even become a communicant because "he knows that there is a power within

ourselves which makes for righteousness, and which may be cultivated;" and which may, of course, best be cultivated by this "simple and touching rite," this "supreme act of worship." It may be objected this is superstition. "But, in truth, he cannot avoid superstition unless he severs himself entirely from his fellow-men. It is deeply engraven in the race." So when God is presented to the Agnostic in the palpable shape of bread and wine, he cannot do better than swallow Him.

AFTER this it is refreshing to hear Miss J. H. Clapperton's clear and manly voice—excuse the Irishism. She declares that for Agnostics to become regular church attendants would be retrograde and hypocritical, and, therefore, immoral. "The Agnostic recognises that science is slowly but surely undermining the theological explanation of the universe, and step by step verifying the evolution theory." To turn to the Church for enlightenment is vain; its general influence is vacillating and unsteady, and, from the intellectual point of view harmful, because it brings confusion in the public mind. "In these transition times, what we want is the example of steadfast, noble, upright, self-regulated lives, standing independently of the support of superstition. Agnostics outside the Church, who are truthful, courageous, just, tolerant, and filled with the enthusiasm of humanity, will accomplish an admirable work in advancing human progress." Therefore, let all Agnostics be true men outside the Church, and not sham Christians within it.

THE South London Branch of the N. S. S. has only been started a few weeks, but it has about sixty members already, and will do much good work as soon as it has convenient premises. Our earnest advice to our friends everywhere is to get good halls. The outside world is ready to take us at the value we put upon ourselves.

EVER since the too long unfulfilled prophecy of the end of the world, and the coming of the angels with their brass trumpets, Christians have been getting up some funk about the doom of the little planet upon which they are such insignificant items, and expecting some cosmic freak to throw infidels on their marrow-bones, and hurl the wicked world to blazes. Science of late has been invoked in a thousand pulpits to show that the radiation of the sun's heat was bound to exhaust it in a measurable period. Why, then, should men care for morality in a world that was bound to become an icicle? Unfortunately "A New Theory of the Sun" is put forward by Dr. C. W. Siemens in this month's *Nineteenth Century*, which threatens to spoil the clerical gush. Dr. Siemens contends, and gives much chemical and mathematical evidence to prove, that solar heat is arrested and returned over and over again to the sun. So, perhaps, we may be permitted to take some slight interest in things pertaining to this earth, after all.

A STRONG effort will be made to organise an Electoral Rights Defence Association in South Lancashire, with its headquarters in Manchester. The object will be to maintain the right of duly-elected members to take their seat in Parliament. There is a powerful and growing feeling on this question throughout the district.

MR. Edwin Clodd has begun a series of papers which will appear in *Knowledge*, on "The Antiquity of Man in Western Europe." He opines that the remnants of Palæolithic man "demand a far higher antiquity for man than many anthropologists, by no means the slaves of Archbishop Usher's chronology, are as yet willing to allow."

STATUES are the order of the day in France. One to Rousseau is being subscribed for. It is to be placed in the Rue Rousseau, Paris. It is also proposed to erect a statue to Danton, in his native town of Arcis sur Rhone. Prof. Beesley will be happy to forward any funds from English sympathisers.

WE understand that Mr. Bradlaugh has received very many offers of substantial assistance. The enemy will not bankrupt him, after all. And if Informer Newdegate should fail to get costs, as is very likely, the Bigots will be made to feel in their only sensitive part, the pocket.

E. DE PRESSENSE writes in the April number of the *British Quarterly Review*, on Democracy in France in 1882. He says: "the lower classes in our great cities have been largely influenced by a growing spirit of irreligion, which originating in hatred to clericalism, finds its sustenance in the so-called popular science of the day, which treats, not only the Christian revelation, but all that relates to the spiritual and moral life as a mere chimera and antiquated superstition." Protestant priests, like de Pressensé, are just as unscrupulous as the Catholics in declaring that all who attack their superstitions are attacking morality. The names of MM. Gambetta and Bert alone suffice to show that French "irreligion" is not confined to "the lower classes."

ARISTOCRATIC opera-goers have been stupefied by the announcement that Massenet's "Herodiade" will be produced for the first time in England. John the Baptist is the hero of the opera, and he indulges in some amorous ditties addressed to



Salome. This is too shocking for Bible readers of the Song of Solomon, so Mr. Gye has promised a new libretto.

At the Southern Conference of General Baptist Churches, meeting in the Baptist Chapel, Bethnal Green Road, the following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That this conference, believing that any candidate legally elected by a constituency should be permitted to take his seat in the House of Commons without hindrance, hopes that the time is not far distant when no religious disability will exist in connection with our national Parliament."

### THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.—SERMON XXVIII.

#### GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES.

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

(Concluded from p. 107.)

This is the last of my sermons on ecclesiastical history. Not that the subject is exhausted, but I have given enough specimens of divergent and contradictory beliefs amongst Christians, from Jesus down to Messrs. Churchill and Newdegate, to make it plain to the most bigoted who care to see that the Holy Ghost never did lead Christians into truth. A few specimens more must wind up the series.

(98) The *Patripussians* of the early Church held that God the Father must have suffered with Jesus, since Jesus and his father were one. I agree with them; and, more, if God put his only-begotten son to death for no crime at all, he ought to have suffered, and he alone. Dear me! As the son and the father were one, when the son was begotten the father was begotten too; when the son became incarnate, so did the father; when the son fasted and saw the devil, the father did ditto; when the son died, so did his dad!

(99) The *Rogereans*, followers of John Rogers, in New England, about the year 1677, rejected the use of medicine as the New Testament almost enjoins. Christians in general don't do so. They have faith in medical skill, but none in miracles and prayer. When God sends a disease to remove them to his own home, they try to kill his messenger and refuse to go as long as they can help it. They go to heaven as if they were going to prison, to the treadmill, or to the workhouse—it is their last resort.

(100) The *Rosenfeldians* took their name from Hans Rosenfeld, a German gamekeeper and a Messiah. This Messiah declared Jesus and his apostles to be impostors; and that the King of Prussia was the devil. It is dangerous to contradict or doubt what any Messiah says.

(101) *Johanna Southcott*, thinking Jesus had not been sufficiently born, resolved to become one of his mothers. The good woman died, and the doctors dissected her. What would have come to light if medical men had had charge of the founders of Christianity?

(102) *Tankelin*, of the 12th century, was one of God's many only-begotten sons. A priest murdered him.

(103) *Toleration* is the last resort of insolent bigots and religious snobs, who, when they can no longer persecute, permit you to do in some small measure what they have never had the least right or reason to object to. Here I am glad to be able to quote from Williams's "Dictionary of All Religions" a few sentences respecting the subject of toleration:—"Far as the term (toleration) falls below the just claims of religious liberty, it was not, however, admitted, and indeed hardly known, even in this country, before the memorable revolution of 1688. Certainly we need not look for it before the Reformation. 'The Reformers, indeed, claimed it for themselves, but it was on the ground that their opinions were scriptural and true; and they denied it to the Socinians and Anabaptists, because their dogmas were false and full of blasphemy; not considering that under the same charges they themselves were persecuted by the Papists.

"There is no doubt but it was the universal opinion among divines of the 16th century, that heresy, especially when it arose to blasphemy and impiety, ought not only to be restrained, but punished by the civil magistrate." Thus, says the writer, Cranmer urged Edward VI. to sign the death-warrant of the Maid of Kent, and Calvin promoted "as well as sanctioned the death of Servetus;" and even the mild Melancthon, he says "was astonished" that anyone could be found to disapprove of this foul murder.

"The Nonconformists suffered so much under the Stuarts, that one would have supposed they must have learned the propriety of toleration; but it was no such thing. When

they fled from persecution into the woods of America, they begun to persecute each other; even the Independents, who pleaded so ably for toleration in this country, forgot their own arguments in crossing the Atlantic." Neither Milton nor Cromwell, says my author, defended toleration to Papists.

No! Catholics and Anglicans always and openly persecuted to the full extent of their opportunities, and never professed any favor for toleration; but the Nonconformists clamored for it—and now many of them show what hypocrites they are by persecuting Bradlaugh.

Toleration ought not to be granted if Christianity is true, and you know it is true. Convince me of its truth, and I'll do anything in my power to prevent people going to hell. Toleration declares that you have lost faith in your creed, or else have not the power to persecute. But to-day so universal is scepticism that nobody feels sure that his creed is right. Hence men of different creeds unite now, though their fathers would not. The creeds are at a discount. In fact, nobody will accept them unless trained to do so from childhood; and most even of those are drifting away to Freethought. The Freethinker is the only one who knows what liberty is, who can realise it and enjoy it, or who can accord to others what he claims for himself. The Christian may possibly, in some rare cases, do to another as he would another should do to him—I say it is just possible; but it is only the Freethinker who can do to another what *ought to be done* to him, viz., grant him liberty.

Toleration, though it may serve as a stepping-stone to liberty, is not liberty; it is but an insult to its recipient. We want, not to be tolerated, but the rights of civilised men—the right to do as we think best, to think as we are able, to utter our thoughts freely and openly—all provided we do not trespass upon the just rights of others. We want that. We intend to have it; we will not accept any compromise. Spite of hypocritical majorities in Parliament and out, spite of Newdegate informers, we shall win. We have won much, we are winning more, we shall win it all. And by the time we have won, Christianity will be at his last gasp, for our victory means the world's emancipation from superstition. To expect justice from men who are religious is to expect long days at mid-winter.

(104) The *Ubiquitarians* believe that Jesus is bodily everywhere. Well, don't be sceptical, my good reader! An infinite God became so small that he got his whole bulk into the body of Jesus when he was only a baby. What, therefore, can hinder that body from becoming infinite in turn? If I were a shoemaker, I should like his foot to be measured very particularly before proceeding to make him a pair. It would take all the leather in the world to cover his little toe-nail. I wonder what Barnum would give for a pair of his pantaloons!

(105) *Unitarians* are people who reject two-thirds of the Christian God, and yet call themselves Christians! It surprises me that they should keep and hold the Fatherhood of God and yet reject his child! I think their position most illogical. And yet they have done good, and they are gradually smoothing our way for us, and preparing the Churches gently for the renunciation of all religion. Success to them, and—more logic.

Having got through my rapid, rough, rather rasping comments on Christians of more than a hundred Churches, I may ask, What does Europe, what does so-called Christendom, owe to theology? Lies and confusion; bitterness, mutual slander, the highest intensity of hate and malice; insanity, madness, hypocrisy; blind belief and blind fury, panic fears and epidemic delusions; prisons, dungeons, racks, thumbscrews, gibbets, stocks, stakes, book-burnings, witch burnings, heretic burnings; wholesale slaughter of millions upon millions; waste of money, time, talent; bitter opposition to truth and liberty. Persons within Bedlam never had more absurd visions than those of theology; the worst of intoxicating spirits is the Holy Ghost; the most tremendous *delirium tremens* is that produced by theology. A tiger gone mad is nothing to a theologian under no restraint. Fortunately, they are all now under a thousand restraints thrown round them by law and civilisation. Still they are dangerous and need looking after. Not that we fear their intellect; the only thing we need fear is their slander and their brute force—and even these we have defied, and do defy, and shall defy. We shall wage exterminating war upon theology, as Good Templars do upon alcohol. It is not men we fight against, but the maddening, all-corrupting, all-inebriating poison of theology.



All that is true, and good, and lovely in the world's civilisation is of purely indigenous growth, earthly, *secular*. Let any one contradict me who can. Let him mention one good principle or thought we derive from any other source. Much that is secular is also evil, especially where theology has influenced it. Secularism is *all* that is good and useful and beautiful in civilisation; is capable of indefinite expansion and improvement. And this, brethren, is the gospel we preach unto you.

J. SYMES.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A FEW PUFFS FROM PLYMOUTH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR.—You will be gratified to learn that the *Freethinker* is becoming more and more popular in this town. Two or three times lately I have gone to my newsagent's to get my copy, and have been met with, "All gone, sir!" and this only on Saturday evening. "I ordered double the quantity I have been having, too, this week," added he; "and yet they are all sold. I think I must have an extra quire in future." This was on the occasion of my last disappointment; with which, however, you can hardly be expected to sympathise under the circumstances.

I wonder whether my endeavours to promote your circulation by posting each weekly copy, after reading it, to some person of importance in the town, has anything to do with the increased demand? Anyhow, my newsagent tells me that he gets all sorts and conditions of men, strangers to him, in to purchase the *Freethinker*.

The society here is in a flourishing condition, and the frequent accession of new members is most gratifying. Considerable disappointment was felt at the inability of Dr. Aveling to visit us recently through illness. We are glad to know he is recovering, and most heartily wish him a rapid and complete restoration to health.

The Three Towns Radical Association continue to exercise a watchful care over the interests of liberty and progress, and to be the object of envy and hatred to the "stupid party."

"How these Christians love one another," has been prominently exemplified of late by the remarkable correspondence which has taken place in the columns of the *Western Daily Mercury*, respecting the relations between the Lord Bishop of Truro, and the Rev. H. Anthony Noel, "the Radical Parson." We have the latter gentleman writing indignantly of his treatment by the bishop, and being in his turn attacked and denounced most vehemently by "a Rural Dean," and the Rev. T. Hullah. The terms employed in the controversy are often most unparliamentary, and the feeling displayed by the "Radical Parson's" opponents simply venomous. Radicalism is evidently unpopular in one of the Church.

Then, again, we have the quarrel between the Catholics and Protestants, on account of the lectures delivered weekly by the Rev. W. Elliott in support of Protestant Evangelicalism. The rev. gentleman has been vigorously denounced by his brother in Christ, the Rev. Arnold Jerome Matthews (R.C.), as being a "scandalous calumniator, who dared utter such perfidious and monstrous charges against his fellow-men."

There are many in this neighbourhood who would like to know if you can throw any light, sir, upon the mysterious disappearance of the Rev. James Ashworth, late of the Baptist Chapel, George Street, Plymouth. He has gone from our midst, and no one appears to know why or wherefore. There are some people (ill-natured, of course), who say that the holy man had so far forgotten himself as to try too close an imitation of the Patriarchs. But he was *such* a righteous man, who can believe it? If he were an infidel we should soon know all about him.—Yours truly,

SOU'-WESTER.

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

THE ELDER MILL.—Mr. Bain maintains a certain discreet reserve on Mill's rejection of all religion. But the son's "Autobiography" tells us enough (p. 38). By his own reading and reflection, James Mill had been early led to throw over Natural Religion as well as Revealed. Butler's Analogy for a long time kept him a believer in the divine authority of Christianity. If a wise and benevolent Being can have made the universe, why should he not have acted as the New Testament records? "Those who admit an omnipotent as well as perfectly just and benevolent Maker and Ruler of such a world as this can say little against Christianity, but what can, with at least equal force, be retorted against themselves." It was the moral difficulty which overthrew, in Mill's mind, the faith in which he had been educated. He found it impossible to believe that a world so full of cruelty and wrong could be the work of a Creator uniting infinite power and wisdom to perfect goodness. And so at last

he came to the conviction that concerning the origin of things nothing whatever can be known. Questions how the world came into existence and who made us, he henceforth definitely regarded as impenetrable problems, because we have no experience and no authentic knowledge from which to solve them.—*John Morley, Fortnightly Review, April, 1882, p. 485.*

THEOLOGY v. FREETHOUGHT.—Theology of the old stamp, so far from encouraging us to love nature, teaches us that it is under a curse. It teaches us to look upon the animal creation with shuddering disgust; upon the whole race of man outside our narrow sect as delivered over to the devil; and upon the laws of nature at large as a temporary mechanism, in which we have been caught, but from which we are to expect a joyful deliverance. It is science, not theology, which has changed all this; it is the Atheists, Infidels, and Rationalists, as they are kindly called, who have taught us to take fresh interest in our poor fellow denizens of the world, and not to despise them because Almighty benevolence could not be expected to admit them to heaven.—*Leslie Stephen, "Essays on Freethinking and Plainspeaking," p. 354.*

THE EVANGELICAL PULPIT.—In the face of physical science, of modern Biblical criticism, and of all the light which history and comparative mythology have of late years thrown on the genesis of religions, the old theory of verbal inspiration, the old methods of Biblical interpretation, and the old pre-scientific conception of a world governed by perpetual acts of supernatural interference, still hold their ground in the Evangelical pulpit. The incursions of erudite science have been met by the barrier of an invincible prejudice—by the belief, sedulously inculcated from childhood, that what are termed orthodox opinions are essential to salvation, and that doubt, and every course of inquiry that leads to doubt, should be avoided as a crime. It is a belief which is not only fatal to habits of intellectual honesty and independence in those who accept it, but is also a serious obstacle in the path of those who do not. The knowledge that many about him will regard any deviation from the traditional cast of opinions as the greatest of calamities and crimes, seldom fails, according to the disposition of the inquirer, to drive him into hypocritical concealments, or into extreme and exaggerated bitterness.—*W. E. H. Lecky, "History of the Eighteenth Century," vol. ii., pp. 640, 641.*

How easier far devout enthusiasm is  
Than a good action! and how willingly  
Our indolence takes up with pious rapture,  
Though at the time unconscious of its end,  
Only to save the toil of useful deeds!

Lessing's, "Nathan the Wise."

PRIESTS.—It has been said that the more a person inquires the less he generally believes. This is true; and arises from the fact that he soon discovers that great numbers of the priests in every age and of every religion have been guilty of frauds to support their systems to an extent of which he could have had no idea until he made the inquiry.—*Godfrey Higgins, Preface to "Anacalypsis," p. 13.*

## PROFANE JOKES.

MORE BIBLIANA.—How did Jehovah show his loving kindness to his people? By drowning them all in a flood save Noah and his family, afflicting them in Egypt, and sending serpents among them in the wilderness; by giving them bad kings and having them carried captives into Babylon, giving them strong delusions that they should believe a lie and be damned, and making them a byword and a hissing among nations. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that all these things came to pass that the Scriptures should be fulfilled, saying, "I gave them also statutes which were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live."

A WEST-COUNTRY clergyman, recently travelling in the Highlands, resolved to see how Christian work was progressing, and accordingly sought out Mr. M'Gregor (one of the elders of the church), and asked: "How is Christian work going on?" "'Deed an' it's noo gane on a bit too weel, for there's only twa Christians in the hull parish, and that's Sandy McPherson and mysel', and, 'deed, I'm naw sure about Sauny."

A SKY-PILOT and a gentleman once went to one of the churches where the "Gregorian" chants are sung. The parson indulging in the exaggeration which comes so natural to his profession, observed, "These are the very chants used in the time of David." "Ah!" said the gentleman with a sigh of relief, "that accounts for it. I have often wondered why Saul threw his javelin at David."

"YOUR FRIEND'S IN HELL," was the title of a tract which was put into the hands of a poor broken-down individual who had seen better days. After looking at it a moment, he said with a sigh, "Well, it's good to have a friend somewhere, anyhow!"

A WEST-COUNTRY parson who, while he served his Master, kept a sharp eye on Mammon as well, one day had two funerals to



perform. Having concluded one, he commenced the service of the second, when observing the first party moving out of the churchyard, he turned to the clerk who read the responses, and the bereaved friends round the second grave were shocked at hearing the Burial Service rendered thus: "I heard a voice from Heaven, saying—Buggins, have you got the money?"

"The sacred heavens around him shine," wrote the poet. The compositor put it: The sacred hyenas around him whine."

#### MR. SYMES'S ENGAGEMENTS.

April 8, Bedlington; 9 and 10, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 16, Middleton's Hall, Birmingham; 23, Burnley; 30, Baskerville Hall, Birmingham. May 7, morning, Mile End Waste; afternoon, Victoria Park; evening, Hall of Science; 20, Middlesbrough; 21, Stockton-on-Tees; 28, Baskerville Hall, Birmingham. June 4, Liverpool.—All applications to be sent to Mr. JOSEPH SYMES, 142, Hagley Road, Birmingham.

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