

# THE FREETHINKER.

REGISTERED FOR]

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

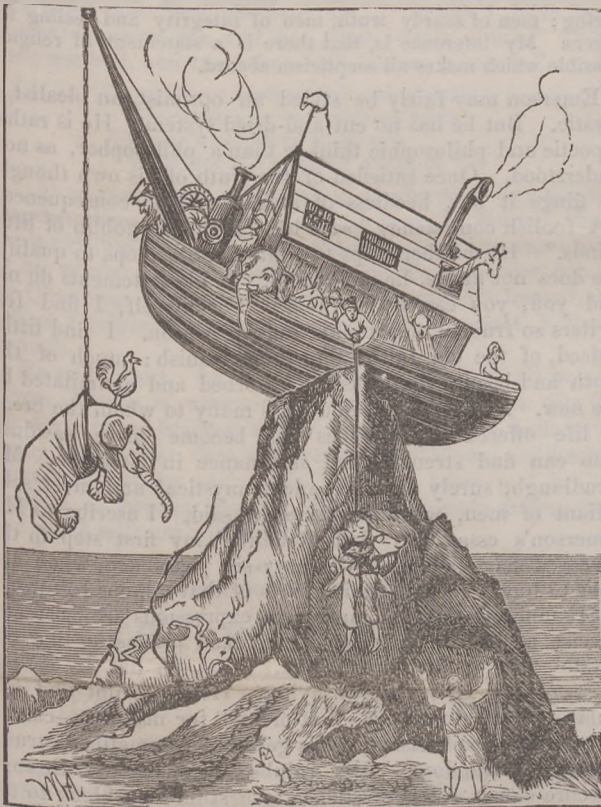
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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## "COMIC BIBLE" SKETCHES.—XXV.



EMPTYING THE MENAGERIE.

"And the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. . . . And Noah went forth, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds went forth out of the ark."  
—Genesis viii.

## FREETHOUGHT IN THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

THURSDAY, April the 27th, was a high festival in the French Academy. A brilliant company of men of science, literature, art, and politics, assembled to witness the reception of Pasteur, the great microscopist, who had been elected to fill the seat vacated by the death of Littré. Among the statesmen present were Gambetta and Paul Bert; the latter, as most of our readers know, a pronounced Atheist; and the former a Positivist, who deems Auguste Comte "the greatest thinker of this century." Pasteur's denunciation of Comte's "neglect of the infinite" before such men, if it had no other merit, was at least courageous.

The task of welcoming Pasteur devolved on Rénan, whose discourse is one of the finest things he has ever written. The great scientist went straight to his point, as though he were dissecting a frog or making a chemical experiment. His style was, for the most part, extremely blunt; but it sometimes grew rhetorical, and once or twice it resembled nothing so much as a sermon. The great litterateur, on the other hand, was agile, adroit, and full of finesse. His language was exquisite, and equal to every purpose, whether of grave eulogium, subtle criticism, or playful irony. Around the dim summits of the scientist's "infinite" he flashed the nimble lightning of his scepticism, revealing its altitude, and suggesting the vague region beyond, where knowledge does not penetrate, and all is silence and mystery.

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Both paid a high tribute to Littré. What a change since the great Positivist was elected to the Academy, and Bishop Dupanloup quitted his seat in consequence, saying that he "would not sit in the same room with an Atheist!" Pasteur's laudation was worthy of the occasion, but Rénan's was so memorable that we venture to translate it, although our rough English can convey nothing of the delicate grace of his French.

"Thanks to him and to others like him, the free philosophy of our age has been endowed with virtues that may be compared with those of which religions are most proud. By nature essentially religious, all his scepticism sprang from profound faith and respect for truth. Littré was truly a glory of our country and our race. In him is shown in the highest degree what 'le peuple gallican,' as they said in the Middle Ages, possesses of rectitude, of sincerity, of honesty, and, under a revolutionary appearance, of wise caution and prudent thought. His faith in goodness was absolute; the lower agitations of life, interest, enjoyment, and pleasure, were with him entirely subordinated to the pursuit which conviction marked out as his duty."

Littré was a thorough sceptic in theology; yet his life was so pure that he was styled "a saint without a God," and now the French Academy rings with his praises from two men so different as Rénan and Pasteur.

Dealing with Littré's homage to Comte, Pasteur observed that he had no veneration and little respect for his idol. The scientific method of experiment was the only fruitful one, and that Comte never employed. Invention and progress were the same thing, but Positivism was without invention, and so, said the great scientist, "having no new idea to offer, it leaves me aloof and hostile." Rénan also avowed his lack of belief in Comte, and admitted that he frequently repeated in a bad style what had been much better expressed before him by Descartes, D'Alembert, Condorcet, and La Place. But he confessed to some doubt as to his own verdict when he saw the name of Comte accepted as a flag by so many eminent men in France, England, and America. He also reminded Pasteur that the methods of observation and criticism are the only ones available in such studies as Comte's, it being clearly impossible to make experiments on the past.

The greatest defect of Positivism, according to Pasteur, was its neglect of the "infinite," which will not be ignored. Although it is incomprehensible, and contains more of the supernatural than all the miracles of the creeds, it must be revered. "When that idea seizes the mind," he said, "we can only fall on our knees. And in that moment of poignant anguish, we must ask mercy of our reason; all the springs of intellectual life threaten to break; and we are almost possessed by the sublime madness of Pascal."

Rénan's reply was a masterpiece of mephistophelean wit. Spiritualism and materialism were terms he never used, and he did not know to which category he belonged. The idea was the object of the world's existence, but he knew nothing of an idea produced without matter, nor of pure spirit or its works. "For my part," he said, "when those fundamental dogmas are denied, I wish to believe them; when they are affirmed elsewhere than in poetry, I am seized by an invincible doubt." It was wise not to associate the fate of moral beliefs with any system. People may be a great deal too sure about their theology, and when he saw virtue speculating too much on its investments in the life to come, he was tempted to suggest the possibility of a miscalculation. Humanity had a claim to be heard with respect to her instincts; humanity, at bottom, was right; but in the matter of form and detail, how the piety of the dear dreamer can lead her astray!

Rénan went on to praise "the spirit, the gaiety, the intellectual health of a Lucian, a Montaigne, and a Voltaire," which were supremely useful in the art of criticism. Then he suddenly turned on Pasteur and thrust straight at his





weak point. "Monsieur," he said, "historical criticism has its good sides. Without it the human mind would not be what it is; and I venture to say that your sciences, whose results I so highly admire, would not exist if there were not beside them a vigilant guardian, to prevent the world from being devoured by superstition, and given over without defence to all the assertions of credulity."

The world, he prophesied, would be for the tolerant; not those who claimed what they were ready to deny to others, but those who believed in real liberty, equal for all, founded on the idea of the neutrality of the state in matters of opinion. Liberalism, which has no fear of the liberty of others, is the sign of truth.

In conclusion, he formally bade Pasteur welcome in a passage of subtle sarcasm. The great scientist would find in the Academy refreshment for his mind, always preoccupied with new discoveries. Comedy, romance, poetry, history, and criticism, would mingle their charms for him. "All this," he added, "will not shake your faith in your experiments; the right acid will remain the right acid, the left acid will remain the left. But you will find that the prudent hesitation of M. Littré has its merits." M. Pasteur would communicate to them his assurance, and they would communicate to him their doubts.

Rénan's reply was like a lesson from a cultivated man of the world to a learned bumpkin just entering society. Pasteur is a great scientist, but he has still much to learn. Many questions are soluble neither by the telescope nor the microscope. Physical science can tell us nothing about the origin or growth, the nature or the value of religious belief. Pasteur has been solely occupied with scientific experiments. His creed is simply what he inherited, and he expresses it in the conventional language of faith. Rénan knows what the creed is really worth, being one of those who, to use his own words, have "a varied culture and knowledge of humanity, of its different conditions, its frailties, its illusions, its prejudices, and its respectable absurdities." Pasteur himself may become a little less sure about his "infinite" and his "god" when he has acquired a knowledge of these things, and taken a few more lessons in the wise modesty of doubt.

G. W. FOOTE.

#### IN MEMORIAM.

#### RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

DEATH has been reaping a rare harvest among writers of high intellect. One wonders where is the crop to succeed—I will not say equal—George Eliot, Thomas Carlyle, and Charles Darwin. Close following the loss of America's most popular poet comes that of his friend, her greatest writer in prose. To many in this country, as to the present writer, the news will have brought a sense of personal bereavement. For Emerson is pre-eminently a loveable writer, and his words are, as those of a true friend, a constant source of animation and aspiration, refining, elevating, and enriching the life.

Emerson was born May 25th, 1803. His father, the Rev. William Emerson, a Unitarian minister, is said to have been one of the best writers and most brilliant orators of his time. He was himself brought up in the Unitarian church. He graduated B.A. at Harvard in 1821, taught in a school several years, studied divinity, and was ordained a minister in 1829. He was the eighth of a consecutive line of ministers in the Emerson family, each of whom held the most advanced views in the religious thought of their day. But the broadest of the churches soon proved too narrow for him. He resigned in 1832. The immediate occasion was his looking on the communion service as a mere mummery. He then visited Europe, his divining-rod leading him to seek Carlyle in the wilds of Craigenputtock. The twenty-four hours there spent resulted in a life-long friendship, enduring through the severest strains of differences of opinion. In 1836 he edited *Sartor Resartus*, which first made its appearance in book form in America. In 1838 he was invited to deliver the customary address before the graduating class in Divinity College. In that address he proclaimed his spiritual faith, but repudiated the historical Christianity which "dwells with noxious exaggeration about the person of Jesus." The word "miracle," he said, "as pronounced by Christian churches gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain." This address provoked an immense out-

cry, and broke for ever Emerson's ties to the church in which he had been reared.\* Henceforth his work was that of the lecturer and writer.

Of Emerson's religious views it is not easy to speak. Such a man, says Carlyle, does not readily range himself under *isms*. He has, with some show of reason, been claimed by both Theists and Pantheists. He himself writes of the One as "neither Personal or Impersonal;" yet he believed in a moral purpose running through all worlds and ages. He is on a level above all the creeds. The religions of the world he calls the "ejaculations of a few imaginative men," and says, "God builds his temple in the heart, on the ruin of churches and religions." In his last published discourse, he says:

"I see that sensible men and conscientious men all over the world were of one religion—the religion of well-doing and daring; men of sturdy truth, men of integrity and feeling for others. My inference is, that there is a statement of religion possible which makes all scepticism absurd."

Emerson may fairly be styled an optimist, an idealist, a mystic. But he has no cut-and-dried system. He is rather a poetic and philosophic thinker than a philosopher, as now understood. Once satisfied of the truth of his own thought he flings it out, heedless of antecedents or consequences. "A foolish consistency," says he, "is the hobgoblin of little minds." He neither stops to contend nor stoops to qualify. He does not argue, he announces. If his statements do not find you, you can leave them. For myself, I find few writers so fruitful of stimulus and suggestion. I find little, indeed, of the old faiths that must vanish; much of the truth and beauty that must be absorbed and assimilated by the new. And there are doubtless many to whom the bread of life offered in churches has become mere sawdust, who can find strength and sustenance in Emerson. Mr. Bradlaugh, surely among the least mystical and most self-reliant of men, when in America said, "I ascribe to Mr. Emerson's essay on 'Self Reliance' my first step in the career I have adopted. Twenty-six years ago, when too poor to buy a book, I copied parts of that famous lecture."

His unhesitating and audacious expressions are crisp and precise as proverbs: clear, sharp, and prismatic, like cut crystal, flashing iris hues around. That he has *les défauts de ses qualités* goes without saying. He is abrupt and angular. Many questions—that of evil, for instance—cannot be settled by aphorisms. His gems seem sometimes strung almost at random. His rainbow-beams burst through obscure clouds. His mysticism is a stumbling-block to the matter-of-fact man, and foolishness to the Philistine. Yet many a seeming mist, when well looked into, would appear, as our Milky Way, a mass of distant star-suns. To a lofty reverence of the ideal he unites a lowly regard for the real, and can meet the matter-of-fact man on his own ground. He sees the Infinite and Eternal, here, now; and says, "No man has doomed anything rightly until he knows that every day is doomsday." Lowell has fairly hit off his combination of shrewdness and elevated philosophy, in the lines—

"A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range  
Has Olympus for one pole, for th'other the Exchange"

Always open to ideas, he has laid modern science and ancient philosophy equally under contribution. He distilled his penetrating attar from all blossoms. He is indebted to Plato, the Sanscrit writers, especially the Bhagvat-Gita, Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists, and the Persian Sufis, as well as to the moderns. He was an evolutionist before Darwin. In his oration on "The Method of Nature," in 1841, he said: "We can point nowhere to anything final. The embryo does not more strive to be a man than yonder burr of light we call a nebula tends to be a ring, a comet, a globe, and parent of new stars." He was a Republican, declaring,

"I will have never a noble—no lineage counted great,  
Fishers and choppers and ploughmen shall constitute a State."

\* The Rev. Jos. Cook, probably that the glory of God might the more abound, circulated a report that owing to his preaching, Emerson had renounced his early religious views, accepted Jesus as his Savior, the Bible as divine, and joined the orthodox church. Edward Waldo Emerson, writing on his father's behalf in 1880, said: "The statement is in every respect incorrect. Mr. Emerson is acquainted with Rev. Mr. Cook, who has called upon him when he has exchanged with the orthodox clergyman of Concord; and by invitation of the latter gentleman, Mr. Emerson went on one or two occasions, several years since, to hear Mr. Cook preach in this town. Except on these occasions, Mr. Emerson never had any relations with Mr. Cook. He never read his lectures. He has not joined any church, nor has he retracted any views expressed in his writings since he withdrew from the ministry."



He looked forward to another age which "may divide the manual labor of the world more equally on all the members of society, and so make the labors of a few hours avail to the wants and add to the vigor of the man." "Every man is a consumer, and ought to be a producer." He dared to say that the ideal of government is none at all. With eyes to the future, however, he saw the weight of the past, and recognised the solid basis of Conservatism. In politics, as in religion, he kept clear of gutter squabbles, yet spoke out upon occasion. He characterised the execution of John Brown as "a consecration of the gallows." When Abraham Lincoln issued his memorable Proclamation of Emancipation, he wrote, "This act makes that the lives of our heroes have not been sacrificed in vain. It makes a victory of our defeats."

The Moral Sentiment was his worship. His precepts are of a more than Stoic magnanimity. "What I have to do is what concerns me, and not what people think." "Shy thou not hell, and trust thou well heaven is secure."

"Though love repine, and reason chafe,  
There came a voice without reply;  
'Tis man's perdition to be safe  
When for the truth he ought to die."

"It makes a great difference in the force of any sentence whether there be a man behind it or no." Behind Emerson's writings there is always the man. His life was worthy of his words. His friendships speak. To have been beloved by Channing, Thoreau, Ripley, Hawthorne, Holmes, Longfellow, Carlyle, Theodore Parker, and Margaret Fuller is enough.

He said, Truth; he said, Courage; and above all he said, Love. There is ascension in all he wrote. A dip into Emerson is as bracing and invigorating as a bath in the briny deep. Man does not live by bread alone, and because Emerson provides sustenance both for heart and brain, I venture to predict that his name will remain among those the world will not willingly let die.

JOSEPH MAZZINI WHEELER.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE GOD CHRISTIANS SWEAR BY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In your article "The God Christians swear by," in No. 20 of the *Freethinker*, there occurs this passage: "The Deity of the New Testament is really more cruel to sceptics than the Deity of the Old Testament. God the Father had them killed in this world and there was an end to their punishment; but God the Son prolongs their misery after death, and burns them for ever and ever in hell." May I ask where you find this teaching in the Bible, that God the Son "prolongs the misery of men after death and burns them for ever and ever in hell?" I trust that I am a sincere believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, but I doubt if I could love and reverence him if I really thought that yours was a correct description of his conduct.

The destiny of the human race is certainly a profound and mysterious problem, and Christian men, being finite and fallible, may err and hold erroneous views concerning the same. The doctrine of eternal torments, no doubt, has been preached from many a pulpit; but, Sir, I am sure that, from your general knowledge of men and things, you must be aware that a large and ever-increasing number of our most devout and intelligent ministers neither hold nor teach the vulgar theory of endless physical torments. A little further on in your article, in speaking of the Jews, you say, "God promised, and in some cases gave them, many advantages at the expense of their neighbors. He told them to 'borrow' of the Egyptians without the remotest intention of ever paying them back." The point of this slur lies in the idea that the Hebrews professed to be asking on loan what they had no intention to repay, and that this was done by the express command of God. I presume, Sir, that you cannot be aware of the fact that the Hebrew verb "shaal," in this case, by no means primarily or usually signifies to "borrow;" the word "shaal" is very frequently used in the Old Testament, and almost always in the sense of ask, demand, desire, require, etc, without implying any idea of a loan; see, for example, 1 Kings iii., 11; Psalm ii., 8; Isaiah vii., 11, etc., where the same Hebrew word stands. Moreover, in the passage under notice (Exodus xi., 2), according to Horne, the rendering "borrow" is peculiar to our English version; every other version, ancient or modern, rendering it by a word meaning to ask or demand. The fact seems to be that the Hebrews were instructed to demand compensation for having been so long obliged to labor without wages for their service, the Egyptians acceding to the demand, as they were anxious to have the Israelites gone.

A little further on in your article you say "God's savagery is a fruitful theme . . . He places a damnation trap in Paradise,

and then curses the first couple for falling into it." May I ask again: Where in the Bible do you find it stated that God *cursed* Adam and Eve? Further on you say, "God was so angered by their offence that he not only cursed them, but *all their posterity*." May I ask also for your proof of this extraordinary statement?"

If you are really a sincere inquirer after truth there will hardly be need for me to say that I trust to your sense of honor and fair play to insert this letter in your paper. I would have sent a line before, but knew nothing about the *Freethinker* until I happened to come across this old copy in a friend's house,—Yours truly,  
H. B. MURRAY.

[(1) The doctrine of eternal punishment is plainly taught in the twenty-fifth of Matthew. Revelation puts unbelievers in Hell with liars and adulterers. For the rest, we are quite aware that many ministers want to give up "the vulgar theory" of everlasting torture. They want to give up a good many other things in the Bible, but selecting from God's Word is a very risky process. (2) The text does not say that the Egyptians gave valuables to the Jews to get rid of them. God told his chosen people, before the last plague came, to "borrow every man of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold." They did so, and we are informed not only that they "borrowed of the Egyptians," but also that the "Egyptians lent unto them." The etymology of one disputed word is little to the purpose; the context shows the true meaning. Our correspondent thinks the Jews requisitioned instead of borrowing. Well, we won't quarrel over a word; but where's the difference? (3) Our correspondent objects to the existing English text in one case, but elects to stand by it literally in another. God cursed the serpent, and sentenced it to go on its belly. He sentenced the man to labor and the woman to the pains of child-birth. Although the word *curse* is not applied to them, they were *cursed in fact*. As to their posterity, we have Paul's word for it that they have all come under the curse.—If our correspondent cannot offer stronger objections than these, our "God the Christians swear by" is not likely to suffer.—Ed.]

## ACID DROPS.

THE materialising mediums are having hard times with unbelievers. Among the recent sufferers is Mrs. Sawyer, who has a high reputation among Spiritualists. While giving a séance in San Francisco a bright light was suddenly turned on and the doors of the cabinet were pulled open. She was seen to have slipped out of the rope that had bound her, a wig was on her head, and some gauze was wrapped around her shoulders, the waist of her dark dress having been removed. She says that these changes were probably made by mischievous spirits, who sometimes interfere in such ways with genuine manifestations while the poor innocent medium is in a helpless trance.

MR. MOODY is having a lively time just now, he is addressing as many as three meetings a night in different churches in a flourishing suburb of Glasgow; and his hearers make for the door and the next kirk, as soon as he makes tracks himself from the platform. One fellow who had been flying about from one Tabernacle to another in hopes of hearing the big gun, but who had always missed him, was heard to remark in tones of disgust, "I canna catch that man at a'; he keeps rinnin' about as if the Deevil was efter him, or him efter the Deevil." Scotty evidently knows what Moody is after, or who is after Moody.

THE *Sydney Bulletin* is responsible for the following:—Christian reader, wipe the froth off your mouth and listen. Did you ever notice that when some unfortunate wretch of a gospel slinger is cornered and hauled up to have the usual "address and testimonial" inflicted upon him, the agony is always heightened by the lunatic drivel of a few of the "most influential citizens." Only the other day, a Roman Catholic clergyman was presented with a pawn-office set of plate, and half a mile of epistle, by the leading inhabitants of Dead Dog Gully, and after making a speech as long as a late breakfast, the presenting orator wound up by saying, he "felt it an' honor, an a—an a—an a JOOTY to hand over this illegint testymonyil to the Rivirind Father Doolin—the frind av' the poor, an' th' father av' half de counthry. Will ye playze keep soilince down the rume there?"

It is stated that the Bishop of London, when he leaves his house in St. James's Square, and rides to his palace at Fulham, passes on his road more than one hundred public-houses built on land belonging to the Church. It is also said that the archbishops and bishops, in their corporate capacity as members of the Ecclesiastical Commission, are the largest owners of public-house property in the kingdom. This, however, comes from one of the lay journals, and was not mentioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, when presiding at the annual meeting of the Church of England Temperance Society last week.

THE merry May meetings have commenced, and all the inharmonious gospel grinders are having a rare time. All varieties of the parasitic tribe *Whitechokeribus*, from the shovel-hatted sky-pilots to the snivelling street-corner tub-thumpers, may be seen wending their way Strand-wards. Exeter Hall is having its



annual evacuation of gush and gibber, slush and slobber. We have directed our Special Commissioner, a very meek and pious-looking party, to attend all important meetings and report for the *Freethinker*. Our Special Commissioner declares that the only prominent fact he has as yet obtained is, that there is in all the societies an urgent demand for help in the shape of hard cash. Deficits are the order of the day. The Baptist Missionary Society modestly puts its deficiency as "about £7,000." The Wesleyan Mission Society have a debt of £8,000. Mr. Mathieson, secretary of the Presbyterian Foreign Missions, says their annual expenditure exceeds the reliable income by £2,000. Its Home Mission deficit is more accurately stated as £793 17s. 11d. The South American Missionary Society are also precise, stating their deficit as £1,247. The Christian Vernacular Education Society, deficit, £842. The British and Foreign School Society, however, boast of having reduced their deficiency to £1,242. Debt appears to be the normal condition of societies, believing that the words, "Owe no man anything," came from the Holy Ghost.

THE most melancholy meeting visited by our Special was that of the Midnight Meeting Movement. He found this organisation, which pretends to deal with "the great social evil," not only in the metropolis but in the provinces, holding its meeting in one of the smallest rooms in Exeter Hall. No minister of repute was present, and various dignitaries who had been invited wrote in cold terms, expressing their inability to aid by their presence these followers of the teacher whose feet were wiped by the hair of the Magdalene.

A LAYMAN, who stated that the work of the M. M. M. often made him heart-sick, was in the chair. Many interesting and sad particulars were given. The report was very vague, several hundreds of girls had been taken into the homes, and doubtless many had been saved. Many however, were known to seek temporary shelter. Nothing was said of the gaps being filled by others. The most interesting statement in the report had nothing to do with the work of the society; it was that the unfortunates of London both subscribed to nurse their sick, and to bury their dead. The meeting showed no more disposition to face the facts than did the delicate dignitaries who stayed away, and our commissioner, who had been bursting to make the good ladies and gentlemen of the M. M. M. a present of a piece of his mind, left very down-hearted and very disgusted.

THE Rev. M. Baxter, editor of the *Christian Herald* and author of "Louis Napoleon, the Destined Monarch of the World," has been carrying on his old game of alarming with prophecies of a speedy end of the world. He now says that a Napoleon will arise as King of Syria, according to Daniel vii., 24, and then develop into the great Antichrist. What heavier comment could be made upon Christianity than that crowds flock to hear this rubbish?

Surely the pleasure is as great  
In being cheated as to cheat.

INFIDELS die, but the lies told about them, however often scotched, spring up again and again in Christian papers, like noxious weeds in a congenial soil. The Rev. Henry Law Harkness, of Worcester, repeats in the *Rock* all the old fables about Voltaire saying on his death-bed, "I shall go to hell;" Paine shrieking for Christ, and Hobbes and Hume trembling and repentant. This reverend maligner of the dead winds up by saying, "Let us earnestly pray that God may never permit an avowed Atheist (Paine and Voltaire are evidently mixed up in his addle-pate with avowed Atheists) to take his seat in the House of Commons and assist in making the laws of our beloved country. Without his having specified that his objection was against avowed, that is, honest Atheists, we might have guessed that the Rev. H. L. Harkness could have no objection to liars.

THERE is something almost ghoulish-like in the twaddle of the clergy over Darwin's tomb. When his "Origin of Species" came out they damned him from all their pulpits. He no more noticed them than a gallant rider heeds the village curs that bark at his horse's heels. His ideas slowly but surely made their way in the world, gaining the assent of competent judges, who imposed their verdict on the incompetent critics. Gradually the clergy grew quiet, when they saw that cursing Darwinism did no more good than cursing Galileo and the new astronomy three centuries before. By-and-bye the "Descent of Man" appeared, and then there arose another howl, which soon sank to a growl, and then died away in a mutter. Now Darwin is dead the clergy put on a brazen look, and shout "He was with us all the while." Why didn't they find out that Darwin was a very good Christian before the whole scientific world had approved his theories?

TWO sermons on Darwin were preached in London last Sunday. One was by the Bishop of Carlisle in Westminster Abbey. After pretending that Darwinism and Christianity were quite compatible, his lordship went on to show that he was entirely ignorant of the scope of Evolution. He was not going to give up his Bible, he said, because he had a moral nature which was just as much a fact as his intellectual nature. The Bishop of Carlisle has only to read Darwin's chapter on the Moral Sentiments, in the "Descent of Man," to see that the great biologist recognised no

supernatural agency in morals. With him *everything* in man was a natural growth.

CANON FARRAR preached the other sermon in the same place in the evening. Misguided zeal, he said, had forced science and religion into unholy antagonism, but it was to be hoped that over Darwin's grave this false antagonism would be reconciled. How kind, to be sure! The vanquished party offering to make it up with the victor! Canon Farrar means something like this—"We have nearly ruined ourselves by setting up Moses against Darwin, but for God's sake don't you utterly ruin us by setting up Darwin against Moses." The clergy want now to buy off the opposition of science with fine words. But it won't do, gentlemen. You will have to give up the endowments and clear out.

THEY manage these things better across the Channel. The Bishop of Carlisle admitted that if Darwin died in France no priest would attend the funeral, or, if one did, no man of science would be present. They are more honest and consistent over there.

ONE Catholic journal, in Paris, ends a slanderous obituary notice by remarking "that is all we have to say about Monkey Darwin." That's the real thing. Hundreds of English parsons would like to say the same, but they are afraid to.

A PUBLIC-HOUSE fiddler, in a Yorkshire town, got converted a short time ago, and joined the Salvation Army. He very soon came out in full bloom as a preacher, but his discourses were sometimes marred by a slight return of the old Adam. One day he was descanting on the glories of heaven. "Ah," he said, "heaven's the place! no sorrow and crying there, but everybody's happy. And everything's on a grand scale. The streets are all gold, and you play on gold trumpets and gold harps—none of your d—d penny whistles there." Tableau.

WE are credibly informed that the trousseau of Prince Leopold's bride was made in Paris instead of London. What do the Tory Free-Traders say to this?

PARSON HOLMES, down in Suffolk, lost his purse with £37 17s. in it. A policeman picked it up, took a lot of trouble to find the owner, and was rewarded with a "much obliged." Anybody not a parson would have given the man in blue something for missis or the baby. Dr. Aveling may note this for his next article on "The Meanness of Parsons."

THE *Christian Age* dishes up a stale lie about a pious daughter who brought home a Bible to an infidel, who had burnt every Bible he could lay his hands on. He then trembled and said, "My child, I cannot read the book; will you read it for me?" That very evening he accompanied her to chapel. And this was the infidel Hone. Now, unfortunately, Hone, although he published profane parodies of the liturgy, never was an unbeliever. Our acquaintance with "infidels" has been somewhat wide, but, often as we have heard from Christians of infidels burning their Bibles, we never knew of a case or heard of one related by an infidel. Infidels usually make a better use of the book. They know its contents and employ it to open the eyes of the superstitious.

ANOTHER lie was very neatly nailed at the Midland Arches last Sunday morning. A Christian controversialist had the audacity to declare that Austin Holyoake recanted upon his death bed. These scoundrels will venture to say anything of an infidel. An esteemed friend at once challenged the statement, and it happened that a well-known peripatetic vendor of Freethought literature was near at hand, whose bag contained "Austin Holyoake's Last Thoughts," in which, but a few hours before death, he stated, "I do not believe in the Christian Deity, nor in any form of so-called supernatural existence." The Christian controversialist was forced to make a public retraction.

W. S. LILLY, the new Catholic writer, has taken a leaf out of Mr. Mallock's book. He follows his lead in calling the world to fly to the bosom of the Church if they would escape the damnation of pessimism. In the current number of the *Nineteenth Century* he considers the view of Schopenhauer "The Goal of Modern Thought," and shows the analogy of those views to the teachings of Gautama. Schopenhaurism, he says, is little more than Buddhism vulgarised. Well Buddhism was the goal of religious thought in India, and Buddhism has stood longer and controlled the lives of millions more than Christianity has ever influenced.

THE Archdeacon of Maidstone, in his charge to the clergy, protests against the secularisation of education. He says that the world is now taking the things formerly given to God. When priests say God, they mean the Church. When they say the Church, they mean themselves.

A CHURCHMAN addresses, through the *Rock*, a remonstrance to Canon Liddon for his praises of Darwin. He doesn't exactly see that the allegation of a hairy tailed quadruped as an ancestor coincides with Mrs. Eve being made out of a rib. It needs a good position in the Church to attain the faith that Moses taught Darwinism.



## SPECIAL NOTICE.

Mr. FOOTE lectures twice in the Southsea Hall, St. Paul's Square, Southsea. On Saturday evening, at 7.30, subject "Bradlaugh and the House of Commons." On Sunday morning, at 10.30, subject "Great Christ is Dead."

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

May 10th, St. James's Hall Demonstration; 14th, Plymouth; 21st, Leigh; 28th, N. S. S. Conference.

June 4th, Glasgow; 11th, morning Midland Arches, evening Claremont Hall, London; 18th, morning Clerkenwell Green, evening Claremont Hall; 25th, morning, Gibraltar Walk, afternoon, Victoria Park, London.

July 2nd, Manchester; 30th, Liverpool.

August 6th, Burnley.

October 15th, Halifax.

## 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.

W. C. W.—Thanks for your "bar" and good wishes.

THOS. R. POCKLINGTON.—We are pleased to hear of your efforts in spreading the cause. Cuttings received with thanks.

WILL DICKSON.—We thank you. See "Acid Drops."

WILLIAM PHILLIPS.—Thanks for your trouble. The bill has often been in print.

CONSTANT READER.—Thanks for cuttings from the *Sydney Bulletin*. We shall be glad to hear further of that journal and exchange.

APISTOS.—Ferdinand Christian Bauer, who was considered the head of the Tubinger or historical school of German Rationalists, was born 1792 and died 1860.

C. B. B.—We thank you for your constant and courteous attention.

ANTI-CANT.—"General" Booth was born at Nottingham in 1829. At the age of 14 he began open-air preaching with the Wesleyans. He has been at the business ever since, almost unknown until about twelve years ago he struck oil by enlisting an "army."

A LOVER OF THE LORD.—It will be incumbent upon us to forward your letters to the Commissioners of Lunacy. The duty is a sad one, but we see no help for it.

H. H.—Received with thanks. We cannot always find space for cuttings of the kind you send.

TUTOR.—Thanks. We are always glad to hear from you.

I. RHODES.—Read first, if accessible, John Stuart Mill's edition of his father's "Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind;" then Bain's "Senses and the Intellect," and "Emotions and the Will;" and, finally, Herbert Spencer's "Psychology." Study these three authors in the order we have given, and you can afford to neglect all other works on the subject unless you have plenty of time.

MR. FOOTE'S "Bible Romances," 15 and 16, "St. John's Nightmare," and "A Virgin Mother," are now ready after a long delay. Nos. 17 and 18, "God in a Box," and "Bully Samson," will soon be published, and the other numbers up to 24 will follow as rapidly as possible.

W. FREEMAN.—The passage in Josephus is spurious. No scholar regards it as authentic. The fact is certain, that no contemporary profane writer mentions Jesus or any of his miracles.

IRRITATED ONE.—Tract distributors are often a nuisance, especially those who go from house to house. Tell them plainly to vanish; and if you look in earnest, they will disappear like Enoch when God took him.

JOHN BAINBRIDGE.—Your "Satirical Defence of the Freethinker" is well written, but just a little behind date. We are pleased to hear from you and learn your approbation of our "Myth Destroyer."

TRUTH.—If you can get any Christian to state the supernaturalists' case, we will undertake a reply. So many great eastern cities were ruined by the constant invasions of enemies, that we find nothing wonderful in the prophecy of the destruction of Babylon, even if it were proved, which it is not, that the prophecy was in existence before the event. (2.) The statement about the gospels jumping on the table has been taken from a fragment of Pappus. It is, however, of too late a date to have any importance beyond showing the credulity of the Christians who could circulate such a tale. We thank you for your activity in making the *Freethinker* known.

MARS.—We had been writing on the subject ere receiving your communication. Your "points" are good, and we shall not hesitate to use them.

JESS.—Cuttings duly received, with thanks.

B. JONES.—Mr. D. M. Bennett was born, of Methodist parents, at Springfield, Ostego Co., New York, in 1818. When between fourteen and fifteen years of age he joined the Shaker community, with whom he resided thirteen years. After leaving them his views became more and more advanced. The *Truthseeker* was started in 1873.

F. GOULDING.—It is always pleasant to know that our work receives such hearty commendation as that you express.

WILL the gentleman who sends us so frequently the *West Sussex Gazette* kindly mark passages he desires us to notice?

J. SILMAN.—Your letter is thoughtful, but you cannot expect us to pin our faith to other men's sleeves, even to Owen and Tuttle. Pamphlets must be ordered from Mr. Ramsey.

W. FITZGERALD.—Thanks. We are pleased to know that our paper is your weekly treat.

C. J. C.—We know no Bible text which says that a just man without a God is better than an unjust man with a God. The nearest approach to the idea is 1 John, iv., 20.

J. RAWLINS.—We have no copy of Jackson's "Foundation of Christianity;" and, as we informed you before, the index to the Proceedings of the British Association makes no mention of any such resolution.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

It appears that Darwin was a thorough-going Radical. He was a constant and generous supporter of the Bromley Liberal Association, and it was chiefly through his opposition that Lord Stanhope was foiled in his attempt to close the footpath from Knockholt Beeches across Chevening Park. This does not bear out the funny theory of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, that our men of science are nearly all Conservatives.

THE *Vienna Presse* says "The Darwinian theory has absorbed all metaphysical and religious speculations."

WE hear that Darwin has left the manuscript of a voluminous biography, which is likely to be published very soon.

LAST Sunday week, the congregation of Dr. Potter, the great Protestant champion of Sheffield, consisted of twenty adults, twenty-three school-children, and sixteen persons in the choir. The real congregation was, of course, the twenty adults. We hope all the other churches in Sheffield were just as empty.

MR. S. REDHEAD, of Cheltenham, has sent us a copy of a useful Freethought pamphlet which he appears to be circulating at his own expense.

PROFESSOR KUENEN has been continuing the Hibbert Lectures during the past week. These lectures are somewhat diluted to suit the weak-kneed, yet to those who can read between the lines there is much in them to overthrow the old superstitions. Speaking of the development of Yahwehism, as he terms the Jewish religion, he said that while the Jews held Yahweh to be mightier than other gods, this was only what the Moabites believed of Chemosh, or the Ammonites of Melki. Yahweh was "of one family with them." It was the prophets who from the time of the eighth century B.C., elevated this conception by dwelling on Yahweh's holiness rather than his might. They thus established an ethical monotheism, which lay latent even under Ezra's Judaism, and paved the way for a universal religion.

PROFESSOR KUENEN disputes Hartmann's view that Paul founded Christianity. He rather finds its origin in Judaism. "Only in a very improper sense could what Jesus founded be called a new creation." It was doubtless flavored by a spice of Hellenic Judaism, but this has no place in the first three gospels. While admitting that the ethics of the Essenes "shed much light on early Christianity," he also denied that it was derived from Essenism. He considers Philo's account of the Therapeutæ to be "the work of some Christian forger at the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century."

MATTHEW ARNOLD contributes "A Word about America" to the *Nineteenth Century*. He says: "Our Dissenting ministers think themselves in Paradise when they visit America." He complains that the people of America are "the most common-schooled and least cultivated people in the world." This he directly attributes to their low type of religion. He says: "But the insufficiency of this religion is now every day becoming more manifest. It deals, indeed, with personages and words which have an indestructible truth and salutariness; but it is rooted and grounded in preternaturalism, it can receive those personages and those words only on conditions of preternaturalism, and a religion of preternaturalism is doomed—whether with or without the battle of Armageddon, for which Lord Salisbury is preparing—to inevitable dissolution." Mr. Arnold gives no evidence of acquaintance with the work which brave men like Ingersoll and others are doing in breaking up this religion of preternaturalism.

THE Wisbeach Parliamentary Debating Society has agreed by a large majority, "That in the interest of religion and morality it is expedient that in all cases an affirmation should be substituted for the oath."

MR. FORSTER has resigned at last, and the imprisoned Irish members are released. Mr. Forster made himself extremely unpopular with the Irish people. He has always been unfortunate as a statesman. A more supple and genial man is needed for the Secretaryship of Ireland. Let us hope that a new man with a new method will restore peace to that distracted country.

THE *Galloway Advertiser* inserts the following account of a terrible grievance, from which one of its correspondents suffers at the hand of a bad young man of Gatehouse:

"Sir,—Will you kindly allow me, in your valuable paper, to make the few following remarks? You must know, sir, that



I am a member of a Church choir in Gatehouse that meets on Friday evenings to practice the psalms for Sunday. This class is attended fairly, and patronised by the popular parish minister. One of its members, while the rest are singing the psalms, is busily engaged perusing the *Freethinker*, occasionally lifting his head to sing a line or two in case he should be noticed by the minister, who, if he knew, would certainly reprove him for such conduct. After the practice is ended he marches down with the rest of us to the Reading Room, and there pulls out his pet periodical out of his revolver pocket, and hands it to one of the young men there, who in turn passes it round, until every member has a chance of cracking some profane joke, to the evident enjoyment of its owner, denoted by the peculiar grin on his face. Surely this is too much of a good thing, and must come of a great and liberal mind to provide Gatehouse Reading Room with a copy of the *Freethinker* at his own expense; but truly, I think the majority of the members of the room would thank him to keep his periodical at home. By giving this publicity you will oblige me greatly, hoping you will excuse me for taking up so much of your valuable space.—I am, sir, yours respectfully,

OBSERVER.

Gatehouse, 22nd April.

We are truly shocked to think that any reader of our modest journal should have profaned the eyes of a good Christian by wantonly showing it in public. We respectfully urge that no others will under any circumstances whatever go and do likewise.

ONE of the best obituary notices of Darwin is that by Grant Allen in the *Academy*. He says "He has revolutionised, not biology alone, but all science; not science alone, but all philosophy; not philosophy alone, but all life. Man, his origin and nature, his future hopes and realisable ideals, seem something different to the present generation from their seeming to the generations that lie behind in the field of time."

#### THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.—SERMON XXIX.

##### GOD?

THIS is a word used by our opponents very freely and constantly, and always more or less "in vain." It is a good name or word to frighten children, of all ages, from the little curly head to the bald pate. It is only the policeman that can compete with it in this respect. It is good also for raising the wind—almost as good as the name of a prince—though its power for that is not what it was. But what is it? What is God?

That, My Dear Friend, all depends upon your position in time and space. If you are in Africa, God is one *thing* (or something else); if in Asia another, in Europe a third, in America a fourth, in Polynesia ever so many more. Had you lived in Judea or Syria 3,000 years ago, your God would have been the Jewish, most likely, in Egypt it would have been Osiris and a few others.

Let us see what the blessed and holy Bible—every word of which is truth—a book so plain that a "wayfaring man though a fool [an Atheist, say] need not err therein,"—what does this inspired book, this autobiography of God, say about its author? Here we are sure to get the truth—a thing Christians hate, as a cat does scalding water.

God (Elohim = gods) made the heavens and the earth; though the heavens cannot now be found; and the earth, then made flat, has since been rounded up into a ball; then resting upon legs like a table, it lost its legs in the process of development, as a frog does its tail in emerging from tadpoledom, and has ever since gone rolling, falling, or rushing through space—possibly its creator is running after his runaway creature and trying to stop it, like a boy after his ball.

We can only suppose the creator had not taken the pains to serve his apprenticeship at world-making; he must have been an amateur, and possibly thought he would make a mere summer-house for himself. Behold it—a large oblong, humpy or hillocky plane, resting upon many legs like a millipede, with the sky over it as a solid roof, beautifully studded with brass nails, driven in at random, and most of them having their heads knocked off by amateur driving. The few with heads left on are now called stars of the first magnitude.

Such was the world which God created for the Jews. This world he peopled with angels, seraphs, cherubs, and other animals, in the upper storey; men and beasts, etc., in the ground floor; and the Devil and his little ones in the cellars. Men—and monkeys, too, of course—were made after his own model. So we know what God is like. Look at a man, the first you meet; he is the creator's living

likeness. But stay! What man? Is it the Caucasian, Tatar, Mongol, Eskimo, Bushman, Patagonian, Mexican, or Botocudo? He was just like Adam, and Eve was the very facsimile of Mrs. God, and dressed just like her before she took to fig-leaves. But what color or size, or shape of head Adam and Eve possessed I do not know. We must not venture farther than the inspired word carries us.

I would here warn my readers against the dishonest and vain attempts made by the Christians to corrupt the Bible, by pretending that all this about man bearing the divine image is to be regarded in a spiritual sense. Fie on them! Have they no respect for the Holy Ghost? Did he, she, or it not know his, her, or its own mind and intention when writing the book? Who are you, Mr. Christian Commentator, that you should sin against the Holy Ghost, and insult him by daring to expound a book he has made sufficiently plain in itself? Or will you blasphemously insinuate that the divine author has not made it plain enough? Unless he has commissioned you to do so, what right have you to meddle with his work? Leave it alone, unless you want to be damned.

This God afterwards "walked in the garden in the cool of the day," and was compelled to ask Adam where he was, and whether he had eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam, not being up to the tricks of law, pleaded guilty; and was summarily dealt with. In a rage, God cursed the ground, the serpent, the woman, and the man. A judge should have been more temperate; but then God had no examples to follow, no precedents to guide him. Then, fearing lest Adam and Eve, with the Devil as prompter, should beat him and the rest of the gods, he drove them out of Eden!

When the human family was slightly increased, Cain and Abel had a fight over the best way to worship their God, and Cain proved his method correct by braining his brother. God was out of the way (like a modern policeman, or the Queen when she is needed) at the time of this murder. "Blasphemy!" I hear the parsons crying. Well, then, tell me, you ambassadors of the Most High, which is greater blasphemy, to say he was not there, or to say with you that he was there, saw all that happened, and did not interfere to prevent bloodshed? No shuffling, now, please! Take which horn you think the easier to rest upon, only be honest.

Then, when it was too late, God came and asked Cain where Abel was. Did he know? If yes, why did he ask? And why did he screen the murderer by that "mark" instead of bringing him to justice? Had Cain stolen one of his apples, he would most likely have punished him; but merely killing a brother was a trifle. The eating of a few apples nearly damned the devil and all mankind; but the murder of a brother—a mere flea-bite!

It strikes me that God must have been suffering from bile for a long time ere making the world. Another bad attack settled upon him when he pronounced sentence upon the Serpent and Co. But the worst bout was in the days of Noah, when he felt disgusted with everybody except Noah and his nice family, and resolved to drown the whole of his creatures besides. Dear me! If the world needed drowning, or so thoroughly sluicing so soon after it was made, whose fault was it? And why was not some apparatus of a suitable kind arranged for it, instead of inflicting wholesale destruction like that?

However, like a mad bull or a madder persecutor, he had his way—and then felt better. He sniffed Noah's sacrifice when the flood was over; and the reek of burning flesh, that would have turned a civilised god sick, delighted this one. The savage! Fancy a hangman going to dinner and discussing the delicacy and goodness of his food after turning off a wretch on the scaffold! Who but the most brutal could endure the sight? Turn from it, and contemplate the delightful spectacle of God, after drowning millions, not one of them half as bad as himself, the dead bodies of his murdered victims, men, women, and babies, strewn over the earth, now regaling himself with the reek of burning flesh, the animal, too, having been murdered for his gratification!

Men never descended to lower depths of depravity and degradation than in accepting this horrid god as theirs; men never were more brutal and disgusting than under his long and gory sway. Christians and Jews have one duty to perform—viz., to repudiate with scorn and loathing, as I have done, this brutal deity. I was taught to worship, and worshipped heartily, till I grew too good and honest for his company!

JOS. SYMES.



## ODDS AND ENDS.

THE clergy are, according to their weekly confessions, miserable sinners. The adjective is fitting. Within these last few days I have seen a priest, who bore the outward aspect of a decent, well-conducted person, kneel on the platform of a crowded railway-station, to kiss the hand of a man of like passions with himself. Such acts are not those of homage. They are acts of self-effacement, confessions that all manhood is lost. I did not know whether of the two I ought to pity the more heartily—kisser or kissed.

What an excellent, sturdy little paper is the *Northern Echo*! I only see it as a rule on Monday mornings, when I am coming south. But I never take it up without finding a leader or leaderette that speaks out a brave, unpromising Radicalism. I wish the little daily could be seen daily. Last Monday week the *Echo* was busy at the work that belongs to every man as well as every newspaper. It recapitulated for us the long list of crimes of which the late Tory Government was guilty. Ordinary voters have very short memories, and nothing is more necessary than to constantly "ding into them" the facts in regard to that time of painful memories.

"Thirty million people, mostly snobs." This wedding of two possibly amiable, but certainly uninteresting young people, has stirred English snobbery to its depths. Columns of papers, to which men turn for news as to how the world wags at home and beyond seas, are filled with details as to a girl's travelling dress and the direction of her eyes during a superstitious ceremony. But, bad as the daily papers have been, the palm for fulsomeness and degrading sycophancy must be given to the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*. This is usually an interesting paper. As long as it keeps to its sporting and its drama, and does not dabble in politics, it is worth a glance. When it deals with politics it talks almost as much folly as Mr. Spurgeon. But after reading the verses by the poetess on the royal marriage, I would rather the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic* dropped occasionally into politics than into poetry.

Mr. W. H. Smith, M.P., is improving. I don't mean politically but in his bookselling. You can buy the *Referee* now at his railway-stalls, and I observe that his young men read it more than they do the *Church Times*. And this reminds me of another way in which all of us may help the good cause. Ask for the *National Reformer* and the *Freethinker* at every bookstall you pass. I don't mean every one you pass in the train, of course. But at all stations seize the opportunity of inquiring for Freethought papers. When the gilded youth, who condescend to sell literature for the Lord of the Admiralty, say "Don't keep it," fall into an almost cataleptic state of wonder, and express unbounded surprise. Seriously, real good may be done by hundreds, thousands of us, asking for our papers on all possible occasions, if only in the direction of breaking up the unjust monopoly already existing.

I wonder whether some of our newspapers ever consider that the way in which they write about murder cases still *sub judice* is equivalent to putting a turn of the rope round an accused man's neck. The *Daily News*, a respectable paper, save for its connexion with the untruthful Mr. Samuel Morley, on Tuesday, April 25th, had a paragraph headed "The Supposed Murder at Ramsgate," that was disgraceful. I dare not quote it, for I reflect that some one of the jury that will have to decide on the fate of the man implicated in this murder, might read these lines. To the writer in the *Daily News* no such thought seems to have occurred, and I do not hesitate to say that no average British jurymen, who had read his sensational "par," could approach the case with an unbiassed mind.

Once again, Snobbery! Two royal persons are travelling across sea at their country's expense. No reflexion of a sinister nature is implied in this phrase. They want a boat. They want a large boat. They want the best boat. They want the large, best boat all to themselves, that they may have room to reflect upon their own superiority. Unselfish, thoughtful, considerate beings, they have their large, best boat, and the passengers who have paid their own fares make the journey in an old one that explodes first and drifts afterwards. The unfortunates in this "old boat" would console themselves with the thought that such of them as were taxpayers had contributed their mite towards the £40 laid out by a grateful country so that the Duke and Duchess of

Edinburgh might have the large, best boat all to themselves. Truly, snobbery is rampant when the people who have their fares paid for them and have no business demanding their attention, have the best of everything, and the honest people who pay their own way have the worst. The oldest boat ought to be given to the former folk. And as one reflects upon royalty thus treated, John S. Clarke, in "Toodles," comes back to memory. Do you remember? He is worried by two obnoxious children. They are not his own. They are placed on his hands by "circumstances" and his own folly. He longs to be rid of the troublesome and useless burden. Who will forget his serio-comic face as he whispers to a nurse-maid, "Take these children. Let them play. Alone. By the sea"?

EDWARD B. AVELING, D.Sc.

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

SO-CALLED RELIGION.—I fear that what is called religion, but is perhaps pew-holding, not obeys but conceals the moral sentiment. I put it to this simple test: Is a rich rogue made to feel his roguery among divines or literary men? No? Then 'tis rogue again under the cassock. What sort of respect can these preachers or newspapers inspire by their weekly praises of texts and saints, when we know that they would say just the same things if Beelzebub had written the chapter, provided it stood where it does in the public opinion.—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*, "The Preacher" p. 10, reprinted from the *Boston Unitarian Review* for January, 1880.

GOD'S FAVOURITES AND ADULTERY.—If it be true that a man who takes another woman to wife in addition to a present wife is guilty of adultery; if this be true as a fundamental principle, and not merely by the force of any local or temporary enactment; if it be true in the widest sense of the term *wife* (i.e., including both wives and concubines), then certainly Abraham was guilty of adultery when he took Hagar to wife in the lifetime of Sarah, and yet, "the Lord appeared to Abram," and gave him no rebuke. Then Jacob was guilty of adultery when God met him at Peniel, with his two wives and his two concubines, yet, "He blessed him there." Then was David living in adultery with his several wives in Hebron, and yet "the Lord God of Hosts was with him." And lastly, then were the sisters, Aholah and Aholibah, joined in adultery, not only to their lovers, the Assyrians and the Egyptians, but to Him also who espoused them both together, and said of them, "They were Mine, and they bare sons and daughters."—*M.D.*, "Hagar, or Scripture Facts concerning Marriage," p. 102, 1881.

INSPIRATION AND REVELATION.—The sacred records of the Israelites and the Christians attribute to each of these religions a supernatural origin. They hold it in common with the adherents of many, nay, of most other forms of religion. Zoroaster, Sakya-Muni, and Mahommed pass among their followers for envoys of the Godhead; and in the estimation of the Brahmins, the Vedas, and the laws of Manu, are holy, divine books. At the same time it does not follow from this that the description of these forms of religion must start from that belief. No one expects or requires this for Buddhism or Islam; with what right, then, can it be demanded with respect to Judaism or Christianity? If we look upon those other religions as so many manifestations of the religious spirit of mankind, are we not bound to examine the Israelitish and the Christian religions also from the same point of view?—*Prof. Kuenen*, "Religion of Israel," p. 6.

ON BIGOTS.—No honest and considerate man will believe in their doctrines, who, inculcating peace and goodwill, continue all the time to assail their fellow-citizens with the utmost rancor at every divergency of opinion, and, forbidding the indulgence of the kindlier affections, exercise at full stretch the fiercer.—*W. Savage Landor*, "Imaginary Conversations: Lucian and Timotheus," vol. ii., p. 27, 1846.

THE Bishop of London has sent a letter to his "dear brethren in the Lord," begging them to collect money for his Fund. The population of London is growing and more gospel-shops are urgently needed. His lordship is peculiarly anxious about "the poor and crowded districts." Ah, my lord bishop, it isn't "grace" they want there; it's wholesome dwellings, pure air, and clean water. Try to improve their wretched habitations, and do something for their bodies before you cant about their souls.

"WILFUL and insincere," says the kindly Christian *Rock*, "are the majority of men who proclaim their inability to believe, they do not try to believe, they have no wish to believe, they refuse to believe." Just so, old lady. They must be bad indeed who refuse to believe with the *Rock*. Nothing but a dose of brinstone will humble their infernal pride.



**PROFANE JOKES.**

A BALTIMORE paper has an article on "Where Editors go when they Die." We reckon Baltimore is the place. They seem to have some pretty dead editors on two or three papers there.

WHO first introduced walking-sticks? Eve, when she presented Adam with a little Cain.

BIBLE QUESTION.—Did the Virgin Mary "give up the ghost" when Joseph married her?

THOSE who are horrified at "evolution" may take comfort in "atavism." If descended from the ape, they may not have descended so far as to preclude all hope of return.

"THE object of this meeting," said a Northern clergyman, on Sunday last, "is to raise sufficient funds to whitewash, and otherwise improve the church. Subscriptions will now be received." "I haven't the money on me just at present," said the local Deacon Skinner, who was never known to part with a cent for anything; "but it'll be all right—put me down for £10." This so startled the astonished parson that he at once had seventeen different kinds of fits within the hour. But he felt better next day when he found Mr. Skinflint Skinner repudiated the debt, on the ground that it was illegal, having been made on the Sawbath day.

A DISTINGUISHED divine gave the following as an appropriate "grace before meat." "O Lord, open thou our mouth, and our lips shall show forth thy praise."

A GOOD old Scotch divine announced from his pulpit one Sunday that on the following Wednesday his round of pastoral visits would include the families residing in Sandhills, embracing all the servant girls in that district. Mrs. M'Alister says she'll never go and hear the old reprobate again.

**MR. SYMES'S ENGAGEMENTS.**

May 7, morning, Mile End Waste; afternoon, Victoria Park; evening, Hall of Science, London; 10, Demonstration Trafalgar Square and St. James's Hall; 20 and 22, Middlesboro'; 21, Stockton-on-Tees; 28, N. S. S. Conference. June 4, Liverpool; 25, Clarendon Hall.—All applications to be sent to Mr. JOSEPH SYMES, 142, Hagley Road, Birmingham.

**NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S FREETHOUGHT OPEN-AIR PROPAGANDA.**

LECTURERS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY, 1882.

STATION AND TIME.	Chairman	7	14	21	28
GIBRALTAR WALK, ... 11.15	Mortimore	Ramsey	Haslam	Job	Thurlow
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