

# THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

## COMIC SKETCH.—XXXII.



THE LORD'S WRESTLING MATCH.

"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me."  
—Genesis xxxii., 25, 26.

## THE DYING PILLOW.

WHILE I was standing at the door of the hall, in which I lectured at Portsmouth early in May, I observed a little band of ladies near the church just opposite, earnestly conversing about some very important matter. Presently one of them detached herself from the group and advanced towards the infidel hall. Her gait and her looks were both timid. She had evidently screwed up her courage to a daring deed. She was bent on charging the infidels with a handful of tracts; and having probably heard that they were a brutal crew, she was apparently afraid that they would drag her inside their den and enjoy a cannibal repast, or commit some other atrocious crime which would make that Sunday for ever infamous in the annals of the town. Much to her surprise, the infidels treated her with consummate politeness. One of them took her tract as tenderly as though it were a will bequeathing him a fortune; and in order that such generosity might be duly reciprocated, he offered her one of my pamphlets in exchange. This, however, was a little too much for her nerves. She hesitated for a moment. It was quite proper for a Christian to trust tracts upon an infidel, but rather impertinent for an infidel to tender one to a Christian. But at last she took it, although from the gingerly way in which she handled it, a stranger might have imagined it was a parcel of dynamite.

[No. 47.]

She even promised to read it, but I suspect she never kept her word. The tone of her voice convinced me that she was telling a white lie, one of those pious fibs which are perfectly justifiable when you tell them for the glory of God.

The title of the lady's big tract was "THE DYING PILLOW; or, the Last Hours of Infidels and Christians Contrasted." It was "intended to show how infidel principles fail in the final conflict, and that the Gospel of God's grace can alone yield support in the solemn hour of death." It professed to be compiled and published by a gentleman who keeps "the Library of Truth" in the vicinity of Fleet Street. If this gentleman's other publications contain the same quantity of truth, we should say that the name of his establishment is an excellent joke. Such a fine vein of humor ought not to be wasted. We recommend its owner to make immediate application at the office of *Punch*, and let that rather dull journal have the benefit of his brilliant genius.

The "Dying Pillow," Part I., contains a most extraordinary collection of infidels. It beats the happy families that used to be exhibited in the streets. Catholics and Freethinkers are jumbled together in the most amusing fashion. Gibbon rubs shoulders with Louis XI., David Hume with Cæsar Borgia, and Mirabeau with Bishop Gardiner. The compiler evidently believes that all infidels go to hell, and every Christian who dies outside the Protestant Church. Only Protestants are saved, all Catholics are damned; which, of course, explains the text, "Many are called but few are chosen."

This precious publication commences with Gibbon, whose last words are said to have been "All is dark and doubtful." This is a flat lie. Gibbon expired with the utmost tranquillity, and we have the authority of his valet and of Lord Sheffield for saying that "he did not, at any time, evince the least sign of alarm or apprehension of death."

Next comes Churchill—I suppose the poet—who exclaimed just before his death, "What a fool I have been!" Now, Churchill was a professed Christian, and his exclamation might well be repeated by thousands more, if they had his sincerity or a little humility.

Byron is declared to have exclaimed in his dying moments, "Come, come, no weakness! let's be a man to the last." But these words had no reference to the supposed terrors of death. Byron was a very proud man. He had the conceit of being above human weakness. It was his habit to repress his emotions; and he hated anyone, especially strangers and menials, to see him in the least affected. Whoever will read Trelawny's "Recollections of Byron and Shelley," instead of trusting to pious tracts, will see at once that the great poet merely muttered the words while half unconscious. The ruling passion of pride was strong in death. But why select one sentence from a score? Why wrest one dark passage from the context which explains it? Trelawny records nearly two pages of Byron's dying words, and not one bears the least trace of fear or misgiving.

Then comes Colonel Charteris, a libertine but no Freethinker, who said, "I would gladly give £30,000 to have it proved to my own satisfaction that there is no such place as hell." Clearly he was no infidel, or he would not have made such an offer. He need not have been so lavish with his money. If he had promised a five-pound note to anybody who could prove that there is a hell, he might have kept his word without spending a penny.

We are next introduced to Wilmot, a dying sceptic, who laid his shrunken hand on the Bible, and said, with a mock solemnity and energy, "The only objection against this book is—a bad life." This story frequently turns up in death-bed tracts; yet it is, without doubt, a pure invention. John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, was one of the boon companions of Charles II. He ran a career of such wild profligacy, that at the age of thirty, as Johnson tells us, "he had



exhausted his fund of life, and reduced himself to a state of weakness and decay." At that time he formed an acquaintance with Bishop Burnet, and the result was "a total change in his manners and opinions." He lived four years longer, and died without a struggle. It is, therefore, impossible that he could have "mocked" at the Bible when he was dying. As to a bad life being the only objection to that book, we venture to demur that it is no objection at all; since nearly all its heroes were great blackguards, while David, the man after God's own heart, was one of the worst scoundrels that ever disgraced the earth.

Having already dealt with the cases of Voltaire, Paine, and Hume in my "Death's Test," and conclusively shown that they died without fear or hypocrisy, I shall pass them by. Many other names mentioned in "The Dying Pillow" may be dismissed with the same brevity. Louis XI. and Charles IX. of France were exceedingly pious kings. Cæsar Borgia was the son of a Pope. Cardinal Mazarin was a distinguished Catholic. Vitellius, the Roman emperor, was neither a Christian nor an infidel, but a Pagan.

After a lying account of the death of Mirabeau, which is also treated on in my "Death's Test," the author of this wonderful tract describes him as a Deist, when he was notoriously an Atheist. By way of compensation, however, Robespierre, who *was* a Deist, is described as a "denier of God." In default of one white, we have two blacks; instead of one truth, a couple of lies.

Lord Nelson, we are informed, "if not strictly an Atheist, lived in notorious sin." If not strictly an Atheist! What is the ignoramus thinking of? Lord Nelson was sincerely religious, and Lady Hamilton, we believe, was of a decidedly pious turn of mind. "Thank God," he said, in that fatal cockpit, "I have done my duty." But, objects the tract-writer, there is "not a word about Jesus Christ and his precious blood." Ah, no! The greatest hero that ever trod a deck, brave as a lion, tender-hearted as a woman, and true as steel, had other matters to think of when his life was ebbing away amid the blaze of Trafalgar. He never had a taste for the whining of priests and fools. He had done his duty; that was enough for him, as it is for every brave man. Then came thoughts of his wife, to whom he was probably true; of Lady Hamilton, whom he wished to see rescued from neglect; and, finally, came that most pathetic incident, when weak, womanish, and sinking, the dying hero turned to his dear friend and comrade, and said, "Kiss me, Hardy." If the Lord Nelsons are doomed to hell, and pious tract-writers are sure of heaven, no honest man would hesitate as to which place he preferred.

The old fable about Volney cowering in a storm is repeated, and Lord Bolingbroke is held up as a frightful warning, although it is difficult to see for what reason, since the writer admits that when his old servant spoke of another world, the dying sceptic replied: "There's no such place; all phantasy and priestcraft."

While writing my "Death's Test" I was puzzled what to do with "the noble Altamont" who cropped up in all these marvellous publications, and whom the casual reader probably regarded as a young nobleman who had recently died in Belgravia. I put him down as the hero of some eighteenth-century romance, and I was not far wrong. His lordship turns up in "The Dying Pillow" as lively as ever, shrieking, yelling, and blaspheming. We are even told that "the following account was penned by an eye-witness of his terrible sufferings," but not a word is vouchsafed as to his identity. At length, however, I have hunted him down, and unmasked him. He is a purely fictitious character, the creation of that sombre poet, Edward Young, who wrote the "Night Thoughts." Somebody or other dressed him up for an old collection of death-bed stories, and he has gone the round ever since, each successive compiler borrowing him from his predecessor; and that is just how these fables are invented and passed current.

Young devoted one of his "Night Thoughts" to the character and career of a wicked infidel named Lorenzo. This performance is dated 1744. In 1754 he published Six Letters to a Friend under the title of "The Centaur not Fabulous." The third letter describes the death-bed of the "gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont," who was reported to be Lord Euston. But report is not very trustworthy. It was reported that Young's son was the original of Lorenzo, but this was fully disproved by Sir Herbert Croft, who contributed the article on Young to Johnson's "Lives of the Poets." The "Night

Thoughts" were begun in 1741. Young's child was not born till June, 1733. In 1741, therefore, says Croft, "this Lorenzo, this finished infidel, this father to whose education vice had for some years put the last hand, was only eight years old." So much for report. Altamont and Lorenzo closely resemble each other, and no doubt both are creations of the poet's fancy. If any young nobleman, handsome, accomplished, and gifted, had lived so iniquitous a life as Altamont, and died so horrible a death, it would have been easy to identify him. No such person ever existed outside Young's imagination. Thus another bubble is pricked, and the noble Altamont goes the way of all frauds.

G. W. FOOTE.

## DARWIN AND RELIGION.

CONSCIOUSLY or unconsciously, Charles Darwin, so recently gone from us, was the most formidable foe religion ever had. All his work was founded upon reason. The teaching of religion has no such basis. His great discoveries admit of experimental verification. Not one of the fundamental propositions of religion in regard to god or heaven or immortality admits of such verification. His vast generalisations are all deduced from myriads of facts. The generalisations of religion are based wholly upon fancies. His rigid demonstrations, his teaching of the unity of existence, his demonstration of immense, unceasing natural laws, left no room for god to intervene in the universe. And whilst the general tenor of his teaching, by its thoroughness and worldliness, is a lasting condemnation of the vague, other-worldly utterances of the men of religion, his traducers in the past, his sycophants to-day, his work in an especial manner was an attack upon religion, in that it demonstrated that upon the points where religious men and religious books had pretended to instruct us, they were entirely and egregiously in the wrong. These blind and wicked men, in their false teaching of the peoples, had, amongst other falsehoods, professed to give an account of man's origin. Charles Darwin has shown the account to be a stupendous lie. And if these evil leaders are inaccurate as to man's origin, they are not likely to be much more accurate as to his destiny. If they have taught falsely as to the past, they probably are teaching falsely as to the yet more inscrutable future. The garden of Eden and heaven and hell all rest upon the same sort of basis. If the one has become a source of laughter to thinking men, the others are in the same condition.

It will be said that to-day the better class of clergy accept Darwinism. But not a captain in the Salvation Army accepts it. Your bishops and archbishops, most of them Freethinkers in their heart of hearts, smile approval of the great truth. But the truly religious people, with whom the fashionable religionists are contemplating amalgamation, reject it with shrieks. The clergy of 1859 rejected it to a man. When the "Origin of Species" first appeared the clergy were true to their creed for once. They denounced the truth as they have denounced every new great truth yet given to the world. Darwinism was Atheism then. It is Atheism now, thank man! They slandered the man after their usual fashion. Never content with opposing a new truth, they always vilify the character of its promulgator. All this was done without any study of Darwin's works. "Believe in Darwin!" I heard one clergyman scream some twenty years ago. "I don't. I never read a word of him."

And now these very men, in their baseness, are calmly appropriating the truths they repudiated and denounced some twenty years back. They are telling us that these have been of old the teachings of the Church: that, could we but read her aright, she has the truths of Evolution within her ancient utterances. We judge her aright. As when she said Darwinism is false, she lied; so now when she says Darwinism is religion, she lies once again. The clergy of 1859 were right. There is no reconciliation possible between the two orders, the one of thought, the other of imagination. But great is the absorbent power of religion. It is in every sense a veritable sponge. As it denounced the truth that the earth went round the sun and then absorbed the very heresy for which it had tortured men, so it has denounced Evolution, and now is absorbing that heresy. The religious folk have the digestion of an ostrich and the impudence of a smaller fowl.

As one seeks the fresh air after suffering from malodors, I turn from them to him. Here I can only venerate his

majestic patience. Though the religious world reviled him, he never reviled again. No phrase even of rebuke to the slanderers is met with in his books. But though he never answered the foolish according to their folly, he was not dumb. When they spoke harshly of him, he answered with another book.

Then and now! Is it not beautiful to see that these clerical tyrants no longer rule the world—that religion bows before the might of science? In 1859 the religious world is unanimous in its outcry against Darwin. In 1882 they bury him in Westminster Abbey. At this also we rejoice. For, looking beyond the little superstitions that must, alas! to-day attend the laying of our illustrious dead by the side of their fellows in that resting-place of the great, we bear in mind that he lies there as a famous Englishman. There creed counts for nothing. All that we think to-day, as we read the honored names on the worn stones, is that these men deserved well of the Republic, and are our brothers.

The priests were right in 1859. There is no peace between religion and science. Only the Roman Catholic Church is consistent. That Church is the most truly religious, and therefore the most wicked and dangerous, of all. Its Bishop of Salford but yesterday declared that Darwin was at this moment in hell, suffering the tortures of the damned. The position of the Bishop of Salford is the only truly religious position, and the religious people who try to reconcile the irreconcilable, who would accept modern truths while they cling to ancient fables, who pretend to believe in religion and in the irreligious truths of science, are palterers with their own souls.

This great cosmopolitan man has passed. Truly a citizen of this world! Those against whom he warred without ceasing are citizens of another. They confess themselves strangers here, and would have us be as they. Away with the rule and guidance of these foreigners to earth! Let them busy themselves with the concerns of their own country, heaven, and trouble us earth-dwellers, earth-lovers, no more. Let us take as our leaders such men as him of whom we speak, who, teaching us what has been on earth, give us guidance also as to how we ought to live to-day. Men like this we will follow gratefully, cheerfully, for we know it is a nobler thing, a more useful work to man, to have discovered a truth like Natural Selection, than to have compiled the Lord's prayer or to have edited the Koran.

EDWARD B. AVELING, D.Sc.

## ACID DROPS.

DOWN at Leeds the Salvationists are singing, Ichabod, Ichabod! Their octogenarian convert, Jane Johnson, has broken loose, after three months' sobriety, and has been locked up for the two-hundred-and-fifty-first time. The old lady got tired of the spirit of the Lord, and fell back again on whiskey. While refreshing herself at a dram-shop, she was overtaken by the "captain," who persuaded her to get into a cab; but after enjoying a ride at his expense to the "barracks," she declined to enter and rejoin the elect. On the contrary, she denounced them in vigorous if not elegant language, describing them as the very reverse of angels.

WHAT will the Salvationists do now? Jane Johnson was their greatest trophy. They paraded the old lady about at Bradford, York, and other northern towns, and even brought her up to London, where she was exhibited on the platform of Exeter Hall. They must either recover the bibulous Jane or secure some other notorious sinner in her stead. We advise them to recover Jane, for she is a splendid advertisement, and worth a pile of money to them.

THE Salvationists have made a fresh purchase. They have bought the Grecian Theatre, where they will give performances, and the dancing-ground adjoining it will serve admirably for *al fresco* hornpipes and breakdowns. Won't there be a rush on the opening night!

By the way, General Booth denies that the Salvationists indulge in dancing; he calls their saltatory movements "leaping for joy." Before long we expect to see them imitating David completely, even down to the matter of costume.

How the Yankee "undertakers," as the French say, do flock to the old country! Moody is about to leave Glasgow, and, in bidding the Glaswegians farewell, he says, "I have a friend, Mr. Sawyer, who is coming over from America." Moody reaps the harvest, and Sawyer follows to do the gleaning.

THE editor of the Catholic *Month* opens a series of articles on

"The Present Phase of Unbelief," dealing with Agnosticism, which, he states, "threatens the very life of religion in England."

A LEEDS handbill of the Salvationists gives the programme: "Sunday, June 11, at 7 a.m., knee drill. 11 a.m., descent of the Holy Ghost." We are not aware if they keep a pigeon on hand ready to descend punctually at the hour.

In a curious old book, entitled "A Journey to Jerusalem; or, a Relation of the Travels of Fourteen Englishmen in the Year 1669," it relates that on Whit-Sunday, in the Holy City, "when they came to read that place, where the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles assembled together, there was a Father upon the Terrass appointed to throw down a white pigeon dressed up with ribbons, in imitation of the Holy Ghost, but he met with some difficulty, for the window was so fast shut that he could not open it a great while, so that we had like to have gone away without their Holy Ghost."

SUNDAY liberty is a matter of slow growth in Scotland. At the Airdrie J. P. Court, last week, seven boys were each fined 7s. 6d., or five days' imprisonment, for playing football on Sunday.

The oldest Glasgow newspaper, the *West Country Intelligence*, dated 1715, had the following among its foreign news: "Vienna, December 21.—A youth, of sixteen years of age, condemned for blaspheming God and his providence, was executed this day eight days. His tongue was first cut out, and then he was beheaded." The world moves slowly, but it does move.

THE Religious Tract Society is going to issue a number of tracts upon the Christian evidences. The first is by Dr. Cairns upon the subject of "Miracles." A miracle he defines as an "act of God which visibly deviates from the ordinary working of his power." Such definitions are always made to fit, yet this one, which would exclude the invisible miracle of transubstantiation, assumes that the ordinary working of God's power is known, that a deviation can be visibly detected, and that such deviation must be a miraculous act of God. Every cataclysm or accident appears to deviate from the ordinary method of nature, but no one classes accidents as supernatural. When God was on earth, turning out devils seemed to be the ordinary working of his power.

DR. CAIRNS contends that they were as able to detect the difference between the miraculous and the non-miraculous two-thousand years ago as now. Perhaps they were. Only they thought the supernatural as common as the natural, while we have found so much that was once deemed supernatural to be explicable by natural law that we never think of invoking the former in the absence of knowledge of the latter. Herod at once concluded that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, and when the inhabitants of Melita saw Paul shake off a viper without its hurting him they said he was a god.

No amount of metaphysical argument can get over the historical fact that the belief in the Christian miracles arose in an age of uncritical superstition among a people full of religious excitement and prone to exaggeration. The readiness with which the Christian writings accredit the casting out of devils to the sons of the Pharisees and, allow that the heretic Simon the sorcerer bewitched the people of Samaria, was only equalled by the readiness with which all who accepted the doctrines of Christianity, likewise accepted its miracles without the slightest investigation.

WONDERFUL are the powers of faith, prayer, and holy water! A certain ducal marriage which will be remembered by the pomp and gorgeous ceremony which attended its celebration, was, despite the benediction of the Papal hierarchy, for a long while distressingly fruitless. Both Duke and Duchess were disappointed and their spiritual advisers perplexed. Happily there exists in the district of the Pyrenees a well or rivulet of Romish renown in cases where the faithful are afflicted with barrenness. Thither her Grace resorted. The "sacred" water was duly administered by the celibate order in consecrated draughts or immersions, and the desired effect was in due time brought about. Unto her a child was born; but, alas! it had water on the brain, and was as blind and idiotic physically as its parents were mentally. This unfortunate offspring of faith, prayer, and holy water is now the heir apparent of ducal dignity. Protestant ladies whisper that this misfortune is a judgment upon her Grace for lending her ear to wicked Papistical counsels.

A CONTEMPORARY cites the number of books catalogued as issued in the department of theology as a proof of the great interest taken in religion. This shows a charming innocence in regard to the book trade. Adepts know that a large percentage of these books are sermons printed either to gratify the vanity of ministers or of their congregations, and never read by the outside world. Booksellers know that there is no such dead stock to cumber their shelves as books on theology, and book-buyers know that whereas they expect to get a secondhand theological book, published at ten shillings, for one—a scientific, and especially a heterodox work, published at the same price, will always command half its value when second-hand.

CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP MANNING has been preaching on the Anti-Christian Revolution, which he attributes to the spirit of desolation which first made its appearance in the Church three hundred years ago. For desolation read free inquiry. Manning says: "There is an Anti-Christian revolution rising everywhere. It is working and rising in France; it is rising in Italy; it has already usurped Rome and the holy place of the Vicar of Jesus Christ—the high priest of the Word Incarnate."

WE have recently come across two samples of Christian charity from Wesleyan hymns which are worth preserving. The first is a kindly reference to the small body of Christians who believe in only one God—

"O might the blood of Sprinkling cry  
For those who spurn the sprinkled blood,  
Assert thy glorious Deity!  
Stretch out thy arm, thou triune God,  
The Unitarian fiend expel,  
And chase his doctrine back to hell."

Hymn 448.

THE next is on Mohammed, who also had the misfortune not to own a three-headed deity. It is from the pen of Charles Wesley—

"The smoke of the infernal cave,  
Which half the Christian world o'erspread,  
Disperse thou, heavenly Light, and save  
The souls by that impostor led—  
That Arab thief as Satan bold,  
Who quite destroyed thy Asian fold."

THE secretary of the Anti-Atheistic Committee, which is supposed to consist of Mr. Newdigate Newdegate and Sir Henry Tyler, writes to the *Record* denouncing the Duke of Argyll's Bill for permitting affirmation, as being legislation "to encourage the open profession of Atheism and to ask members to deny the existence of God as the condition upon which they shall be permitted to affirm their allegiance to the throne." Poor old God must be proud of having such zealous defenders in these days of lukewarm devotion.

THIS secretary asks: "Is the minister of religion to be rejected and admission given to the Atheist." Let the ministers of religion cease from taking State pay, and there will be no objection to their contesting Northampton with Mr. Bradlaugh if they so choose.

"S. S. B." writes to the *Record* upon the Salvation Army: "No amount of good effect (as they assert) by the Salvationists can justify the use of profane and even blasphemous language so closely connected with it, united to a style of action more suited to the pantomime of a theatre than the solemn worship of Almighty God. They are undoubtedly breaking the third commandment, and bringing our holy religion into contempt."

WARD BEECHER has blown an orthodox blast to reassure the clerical fraternity. At a ministerial discussion he is reported to have said that he did not believe progress would come by "tugging at and twisting the meaning out of the word eternity, or in frantic attempts to plant the flag of hope across the death-line, or in cutting the cords of heredity from Adam, or in changing the color of the red blood of atonement into the more genial hues of a pleasant metaphor." We don't believe progress will come that way either. It will come by letting all the nonsense slide. Eternity and the blood, Adam and Jesus Christ, will all go with a rush when Science has done its work.

IN Flaubert's magnificent "Tentation de Saint Antoine" (Temptation of St. Anthony), Hilarion appears before the hermit, transfigured, beautiful as an archangel, luminous as the sun, and of lofty stature. Anthony asks, "Who art thou?" And the vision answers, "My kingdom is of the dimensions of the universe, and my desire has no bounds. I advance for ever, freeing the mind, and weighing the worlds, without hate, without pity, without love, and without God. I am called SCIENCE!"

DR. BERNARDO has had another answer to prayer in the shape of three thousand-pound notes. Evidently prayer pays, if you let the faithful know what you are in the habit of asking for.

SAMUEL MORLEY says he is not ashamed of Jesus. Perhaps not. But we should think Jesus is pretty well ashamed of him.

FATHER HYACINTHE is here lecturing on the need of reform in the French Church, and the Rev. Dr. Pressensé is coming to tell us all about the Origin of Man. England is simply flooded with interesting foreigners. They supply us with music, they occupy our stages, and they are beginning to do our religion as they have long done our washing.

TALMAGE has been asking whether Christians have any right to recreations. He concludes that they may safely go to see L. S. performance.

THE Rev. W. H. Aitken fell from his tricycle near Bedford, and broke his left thigh. With God's blessing, we are told, the

fractured limb is satisfactorily healing. If God is setting the thigh, we suppose he broke it too. A questionable blessing!

REVIVALIST SCROGGIE (what a name!) is perhaps the biggest liar in the trade. His latest yarn is that seven years ago he converted "the leading sceptic in Stockton-on-Tees" in ten minutes. The man went home, burned his infidel library, and is now "a living witness to the Lord Jesus Christ." We know all the leading sceptics in that town, and we trust that one of them will write to Scroggie for further information. At present he hangs out in Glasgow, and naturally enough he's often in the Circus.

THIS is an advertising age, and the clergy, who were always good at cadging, know how to keep abreast with the time. One of these pious bloodsuckers hails from Brighton. The following advertisement of his shows a fine mixture of Pecksniff and Jingle, and as the world is full of fools we have no doubt that it brings the reverend beggar a pretty good income:—"WONDERFUL CURE FOR MORAL DYSPEPSIA.—I felt awfully low and miserable. A vague but dreadful sense of the unreality and worthlessness of life seemed to overwhelm me. 'Is life worth living?' I asked. 'Do I sleep? Do I dream? Are things what they seem, or are visions about?' These gloomy and perplexing thoughts haunted my mind. Mechanically I took up a newspaper (it was the *Weekly Register*), and with listless eyes I glanced over its varied contents. Presently I found myself reading the advertisement which begins 'Wanted—£400.' As I read I became interested in that curious and most instructive experiment. Before I had finished reading I was determined to know the result. I sent *Twelve Stamps to the Rev. N. V. B.* The effect was simply marvellous. All at once there seemed to be a new meaning and interest in life, all my strange lassitude of mind vanished, I felt so bright and happy that I began to sing the good old song, 'Do a kind act when you can.' Gentle Reader! Do you ever suffer from Dyspepsia? Are you ever out of sorts? Is there anything at all ever the matter with you? If so, take my advice, send *Twelve Stamps* at once to the Rev. NICHOLAS VINCENT BRODER, St. Joseph's, Elm Grove, Brighton.—ADVT." We should like to hear from some of our Brighton friends a little more about this Broder.

LORD STAFFORD got up a nice little musical entertainment in his park at Costessey, in celebration of the Feast of Corpus Christi. Canon Duckett and two other priests officiated as M.C.s, and titled ladies, nuns, and children, joined in the choral procession to the Church, the altar of which was "one blaze of light." Lady Stafford sang two solos, and Major Garnet played on the violin. If England is ever invaded, we have no doubt that this "noble defender" will sally out from church with his warlike instrument, slay half the enemy, and put the rest to flight. Samson did wonders with a jawbone, and Garnet might do more with a fiddle.

THE *Pail Mall Gazette* often forgets its Radicalism and goes out of its way to butter priests. It has just bestowed a little fulsome eulogy on Monsignor Perraud, the new Academician. Among other flatteries, it says that "he is for liberty everywhere." By way of illustration, it is stated that he became a priest immediately after the *coup d'état*, and that he owes his bishopric to Madame d'Haussonville and the MacMahons. The text is strange, and the comment is stranger. A Catholic bishop, or indeed any bishop, who is "for liberty everywhere," is as rare as the phoenix.

THE Earl of Whitechokerlea, speaking at a meeting of the Victoria Institute, said he believed that "further investigations of Palestine would prove to the universe that the Bible was right, and the deductions drawn by science erroneous." Does the pious earl expect Palestine explorers to find authentic traces of the god-baby left behind him in the manger, or that the original copies of God's Holy Word, as dictated by the Holy Pigeon, will turn up in some excavation, or does he know what he does mean?

THE detestable tendency of superstition to make the observance of its ceremonies a duty paramount to that of respect for human rights, and to regard its factitious "sins against God" as morally more enormous than sins against man, is not unfairly illustrated, if perhaps a little exaggerated, by the story recently told in the House of Commons, by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, of a father who said to his son: "Now, my boy, beware of the beginning of sin! Many a man has commenced with murder and ended with Sabbath-breaking."

THE Rev. Steward Smythe, of Albion Road, Islington, has acquired too strong a taste for the Communion wine. He was, in consequence, brought up before the Clerkenwell Police Court, and fined 10s. for being drunk and disorderly in Edward Street, Liverpool Road.

EARL CARNARVON is going to block the Duke of Argyll's Oaths Bill in the House of Lords if he can. Ever since his defection from Dizzy's cabinet, the noble earl has posed as the guardian of the constitution. Ten years ago he was a young man of promise; he is now a pompous failure.

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

Mr. FOOTE will deliver two open-air lectures in London to-day (Sunday, June 25th). Morning, at 11.30, Gibraltar Walk, Hackney Road, on "Bible Blunders;" afternoon, at 3, Victoria Park, on "Heaven and Hell."

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

July 2nd, Manchester; 9th and 16th, Claremont Hall, London; 23rd Huddersfield; 30th, Liverpool.

August 6th, Burnley; 13th Rochdale; 20th, West Hartlepool; 27th, Stockton-on-Tees.

September 10th and 17th, Hall of Science, London.

October 15th, Halifax.

November 19th, Hall of Science, London.

## 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.

CONSTANT READER.—We think it just as probable that St. Raymond de Penaforte spread his cloak on the waters, and, setting his staff upright and tying one corner thereto, set sail for Barcelona in this miraculous vessel, as that Jesus walked on the sea of Tiberias.

N.B.—We shall be pleased to hear from you again.

CHAS. LOCK.—Your very curious and, doubtless, valuable coin, is probably of the 16th century, and of Protestant rather than of blasphemous origin. The one motto, "Stulti aliquando sapientes," means, The wise are sometimes fools. The other, "Ecclesia perversa tenet faciem diaboli." A perverted church bears the aspect of a devil.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—C. B. B., Dodo, A. Bain, Both Sides, J. H.

A. CARVER.—Mr. Foote has no copy of the report of his debate on "Spiritualism," with Dr. Sexton, which was published in the *Medium*, March, 1870.

H. CURRY.—Your profane joke has already appeared.

G. ALBEURY.—These slimy reptiles, who visit men's homes in their absence, scarcely deserve as polite a kick as that accorded to the minister by your friend.

KNIGHT.—We are deluged with verse. Yours is well-aimed, but hardly suitable.

"SALADIN," C. H.—Mr. Garner had two valuable papers on the subject of slavery, in the *Secular Review* for January 11th and 25th, 1879. The works by Theo. Parker, Jay, Wilson, and Mrs. B. Stowe will give all necessary information. The Hebrew and Greek words rendered "servant" should more properly be translated "slave." Note especially Exodus xxi., 21.

T. J. T.—Thanks for the cuttings.

LINCOLN.—We do not see how we can help you. You should write to the reverend gentleman. If he converted four secularists at one fell swoop, he must surely know their names. We don't.

AN IRISHMAN.—We are pleased to hear that "to confer upon Ireland intellectual freedom is the aim of all Irishmen who are patriotic in the best sense of the word." Only in that case, some of them must be patriotic in the worst sense of the word.

A. CARNIFEX.—Garibaldi died a freethinker, as he lived ever since he had leisure to think about religion. At his death, he was President of an Atheistic Society.

J. R. S.—Scarcely up to the mark.

AGNOSTIC.—We are not aware that Darwin was an Atheist, but he was certainly no Christian. The real question is, not what Darwinism was, but what Darwinism leads to. If, with the great naturalist, we refuse to believe in "blind chance" (which, you will observe, is a metaphor), we are not obliged to fall back on the doctrines of deity, for the natural properties of matter for ever load the dice. As for the term Freethinker, it means what it plainly expresses—one who thinks freely on all subjects, investigates for himself, forms his own conclusions, and rejects the principle of authority.

RADICAL.—Kindly apply to our publisher.

OUR Freethinker Tracts will be ready next week. They contain nearly twice the usual quantity of matter, and have been specially written by Mr. Foote, Dr. Aveling, Mr. Symes, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Garner, and others. We expect a very large demand. Our readers are referred to the advertisement. The price is so low that profit is out of the question. We shall be satisfied with publicity for the *Freethinker* and progress for the cause.

MR. FOOTE'S "God in a Box" and "Bully Samson," Nos. 17 and 18 of BIBLE ROMANCES, are in the press. We hope to announce them as ready next week.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

INFIDELITY IN GERMANY.—The *Monitor* regrets to learn that infidelity, instead of declining, as some Protestant preachers have claimed, is rapidly spreading in Protestant Germany. It states that in "the City of Hamburg only 3,000 out of 150,000 worship God publicly in any manner. Of the 630,000 Protestants in Berlin, not 12,000 (less than two per cent) attend church on Sundays, and many of these go only for the musical treat; and less than fifteen per cent of the burials are attended

with any religious service. In Darmstadt only about one-third of the marriages are religiously solemnised. In Geneva, the home of Calvin and the original seat of Calvinism, with 25,000 population, "at the only service held there the congregation numbered only 200 females and 23 males. Throughout Germany only fourteen per cent of the population attend any kind of religious service. And in a large number of places, the number of burials and marriages which are performed without any recognition of even the forms of Christianity, ranges all the way from thirty to sixty per cent. This fact shows, as almost no other circumstances could show, the dying out of all regard for religion." In the views of the *Monitor* it is "Rome or Reason."

THE threatened disturbance did not take place last Sunday morning on Clerkenwell Green. Perhaps the rain had a damping effect on the pious ardor of those who hate free speech. Mr. Foote, however, lectured for fifty minutes to a large audience, despite the unfortunate opening of the windows of heaven. In the evening Claremont Hall was filled with an audience even larger than that of the previous Sunday, to hear the lecture on "Garibaldi as Hero and Freethinker." The North London Society is to be congratulated on the steady increase of attendants at its meetings.

THE weather has made very little difference as yet in our London meetings. Dr. Aveling had a capital audience at the Hall of Science last Sunday night.

WE rejoice to hear that a hall has at length been obtained for Sunday lectures by Mr. Bradlaugh in the Tory town of Portsmouth, which he will visit on July 9th.

MESSRS. CASSELL, PETER, GALPIN AND Co., announce a sixpenny edition of Garibaldi's "Rule of the Monk; or, Rome in the Nineteenth Century"—a work we referred to in our obituary notice of the great Italian hero, as affording proof of his Freethought and detestation of priests.

M. RENAN, having completed an elaborate index to the seven volumes of his "History of the Origin of Christianity," has now begun to work upon a new undertaking—"A History of Israel before the Birth of Jesus."

*Knowledge*, in a review of Leslie Stephen's "Science of Ethics," says: "If a citizen may be loyal to the community without any trace of loyalty to person or family; if a man may be a good and faithful soldier without the feeling (or having mastered as a weakness the feeling) of devotion to a standard or an ensign, so may there be many who are faithful to what they hold to be their duties without any of those feelings commonly spoken of as religious—though erroneously, for the word 'religion' applies equally in reality to any influence or principle restraining men's actions."

EVEN the *Family Herald* is infected with the sceptical fever. Its essay for June 17th is entitled, "Are we Atheists?"—a question it suggests answering in the affirmative. It says: "The bare thought of any one being so supremely ridiculous as to lay down his life in the cause of a creed is an anachronism." "Suppose it be actually true, as we chant so melodiously every now and again to the sweetest of music in a beautifully-decorated church, that everyone who would be saved from endless torment must believe certain specific doctrines, how could we look round on those we love dearer than our lives, and bear the horrible thought that as a matter of fact they do not believe these things. Let us gloss the matter over as we may, we are more than doubters; we are disbelievers. The dignitaries of the Church, the clergy, the laity—one and all of us—are simply incredulous on the subject of religion. We do not in our hearts believe the things we say and preach. If we did, nothing—be it respect for the social proprieties, the fear of being thought mad as the apostles of old were judged to be, or any reserve or restraint of which the mind is capable—could so subdue our natural impulses as to enable us to forbear a hour or an instant from going down upon our knees and begging at least those of our own households to flee from the wrath to come."

MR. RAYNER concludes the controversy on Infidel Death-beds in the *Southampton Times*. His letter is able and effective, but as he quotes pretty freely from Mr. Foote's "Death's Test," he should have acknowledged his indebtedness.

M. GAMBETTA is well known to be an Atheist. His definition of religion excludes a god. We mention this because the *Christian World* insinuates that he believed in a "special providence" when he made his heroic exit from Paris in a balloon.

THE same journal is fair enough to say that Mr. J. A. Picton's statement, before the Tower Hamlets electors, that the House of Commons should not be closed against any man on account of his religious opinions, "simply brought down the house."

WE have received some tracts from the Hindu Freethought Union. No. 1 is on "Priestly Tyranny," reprinted from the *Philosophic Inquirer*, of Madras. It gives various citations from the Code of Manu, in which the priestly compilers of those laws,

the Brahmins, like the Levites among the Jews and priests everywhere, made things especially comfortable for themselves at the expense of the other classes.

ANOTHER tract on "Theosophy," is especially well-timed, when both Hindus and others who have discarded their old faiths are but too ready to accord the same credulity to new superstitions. India has too long wandered in a blind alley of theosophy and transcendental speculation. If she is ever to take her due place in the world, her sons will need to bring their fine intellects to bear on the acquisition of science, practical politics, and material prosperity, instead of wasting their energies in vague dreams of acquiring mystic power.

MR. SUTTON, of the Central Schools, Canning Town, during the inclement weather on Sunday last, very kindly placed his school room at the disposal of Mr. Norrish for his lecture on "Gods old and new." As such kindness is none too commonly received by the workers in our cause, we hope that freethinkers in the district will remember it to the account of Mr. Sutton.

MR. MATTHEW ARNOLD describes the Protestant heaven as a "glorified unending tea-meeting." As there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage in that establishment, the only topic of scandal will be the *liaison* between Mary and the Ghost. Some pious old ladies of both sexes will find the tea-fight rather tame.

#### THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.—SERMON XXXIV.

"And Satan came also among them."—(Job i., 6.)<sup>1</sup>

SATAN, like Melchizedek, was without father, without mother, without beginning of days or end of years. It was no uncommon thing in far past days for events of this sort to happen. John Milton seems to have read Satan's family papers, though Christians do not, to a great extent, follow the biography given in "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." The Jews had no devil, except their God, when they went into captivity; when they returned they must have imported several millions of them from Babylonia, for ever since, say some of the Rabbins, every man has 10,000 devils on his right hand, and 1,000 on his left. As there are about 7,000,000 of Jews now in the world, their aggregate complement of devils must be about 77,000,000,000. If all mankind are equally well guarded by them, the total numbers for the world must be 14,500,000,000,000. These estimates make no allowance for human increase.

The devil, or Satan, is generally represented as the enemy, the arch enemy, of God and man. But here in the Book of Job they seem to be on the best of terms, so good, indeed, that they bet against each other on Job's qualities. In fact, the feast and the wager together strongly suggest those lines of Burns which so vividly describe the love of "Tam o' Shanter" for Sutor Johnnie:

"Tam lo'ed him like a verra brithur;  
They had been fou for weeks thegither!"

It is possible, of course, that Jehovah and Satan fell out afterwards; perhaps some parson put ill-will between the friends, or some sneaking angel may have done it.

The plot of the Book of Job is purely barbarian and atrocious. Behold, Jehovah sitting on his throne, surrounded by his family and flatterers. In walks Satan, and Jehovah is apprised of his arrival. It is evidently not the first time they had met or bet. The following conversation ensues:—

JEHOVAH: "Whence comest thou?"

SATAN: "From my usual strolls up and down the earth."

JEHOVAH: "Ha! Hast seen my slave, Job, in thy travels? A splendid fellow! Never saw his like! Perfect! I'll back him against any man to be found."

SATAN: "Not so fast. I know this slave of yours well. But does he serve you for nothing? Between ourselves, now, have you not made him proverbially rich, and also set a hedge round him, so that he shall not be tested? I have no faith, I assure you, in service such as his. Just take away all you've given him, and you'll soon see—he'll curse you to your face."

JEHOVAH: "Done! I'll bet you two to one he'll do nothing of the kind. He is in your power. Do what you like with him, only save his life. I can't afford to lose him."

<sup>1</sup> As I never saw proof of my last Sermon, two or three clerical errors appear in it. The leader's name was Samyaza, not Sannyaza; and Edis should be Ardis, and Emon Armon; Zaniel should be Taniel, Æmers Armors, Zabave Zabave, Zurcl Turcl, Yornyal Yomyael, Azarzyal Azazyel.

SATAN: "Done! You will soon see."

So Satan bade him good day and retired, observing to himself as he went, "Well, what a d—d old fool Jehovah is! I should not swear—of course, I know that; but this is enough to set the best devil or the best god swearing! Here is Jehovah with as good a servant as he could wish to have. Job is a remarkably civil and good fellow; but his master, forsooth, must boast of him as of a game-cock. He evidently regards him as something of that sort—or a bull-dog that won't yelp, do what you will to him. Demme! I am in for it. Now I have no quarrel with Job; none at all. I have no wish to hurt him, and never should have thought of such a thing, if that stupid old master of his had not set me on. Hang it! say I. I wish I'd gone some other route, and not have dropt in at that gala. It is against my very nature to go and do mischief to a good fellow like Job. I wish to goodness the task had fallen to someone else. But I have made the bet, and am not going to be made the world's laughing-stock by backing out of it. My character and reputation are at stake. Though, I am hanged if I would not rather be flogged than do so mean a trick! Still, it's his fault! Why did he tempt me? He must have taken a drop too much at the feast to-day, or else he is in his dotage. Poor Job! and his poor family and herdsmen! I weep for you. Your God is a brute; poor things! He has hounded me on to destroy you, and I am not the fellow for half measures. Still, I'd rather by half kill a few of those silly sons of God, or their dad either, than you. But it is too late to lament. It must be done. Only, lay the blame on the right shoulders."

Meantime the sons of God had ventured to remonstrate with Jehovah on his wicked bet, representing to him how cruel it was to subject Job to such affliction as they saw must follow to decide the wager. But the "ancient of days" soon stopped their clamor by threatening them with six weeks all round in hell-fire if he heard any more of their presumptuous and ill-timed remarks. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" thundered he, in an awful passion. "I'll make an example of you, Mr. Michael, and you, Mr. Gabriel, and the rest of you, even if I should have nobody to wait upon me for a month, if I hear any more of your impertinence. It is not the first time you have had the insolence to thwart my sovereign will. You wanted me to save the world in Noah's day, you did; you cheated me out of Abraham's sacrifice, and induced me for once to eat a ram instead of Isaac; you even begged me to spare the first-born of Egypt, and not to burn Sodom and Gomorrah. Go to your tents; cross me again and I'll damn you; see if I don't."

The meeting broke up in universal ill-temper, and heaven was in a state of gloom for the next fortnight. The angels felt so ashamed at the conduct of their master that they were almost on the point of rebellion, for they felt eternally disgraced by this stupid bet; and had Satan remained, he might have led a successful revolt that would have deposed Jehovah once for all, and seated himself on heaven's throne. He missed his opportunity, unfortunately; and the world still continues under the old regime, ruled as badly as it is possible to be.

One day Job, still trusting in his false friend and God, rose as full of bliss as usual. In the forenoon a man, with wild look and out of breath, rushed up to his tent, and reported that a hostile tribe had just stolen all his oxen and asses, after killing the slaves who were with them. Before he had finished his tale, up ran a second, more frantic than the former, and told how fire from heaven had destroyed all his sheep and his shepherds as well!—

Stay! Fire from heaven! That's God's place. The Devil did not send that. Stay, yet! Fire never comes from hell. Ergo! Heaven is a place of fire; hell is not. In Noah's days heaven was a place of water; later a place of fire! In great bewilderment, Amen! JOS. SYMES.

MR. HARPER, the well-known American publisher, was accosted by a grave-looking clergyman, who began to ask for aid for some charitable fund in this wise: "My friend, I come on business of the Lord—" "Yes, yes," interrupted Mr. Harper; "there's several brothers of us, and the one who attends to the business of the Lord ain't in."

The *Christian Commonwealth* says the one thing needful in the world is more gospel. Before Luke wrote his gospel he tells us many had taken the matter in hand; and Fabricius gives fragments of no less than fifty gospels. Most of these gospels were destroyed by Christians themselves, and yet they cry out, "Wanted, more gospel."

## NOTE ON THE STORY OF THE FLOOD.

A PRIVATE correspondent having requested my opinion upon the comparative originality of the story of the Deluge as deciphered from the Cuneiform tablets discovered by Mr. George Smith and the story found in Genesis, I subjoin the following reasons for rather considering the latter a borrowed version:—

1. Legends of a Deluge were more likely to originate in the region of the great twin streams of Mesopotamia, with their liability to overflow, than in the desert or in Palestine.
2. The vaunted dignity and absence of tedious detail in the Biblical account rather bespeaks it being a later work.
3. The name of Noah and the story of the Flood is not mentioned in any of the Jewish historical books, or in the psalms, or by the prophets before the time of the captivity.
4. If the legend belonged to the North-Western Semitic tribes we should expect to find some traces of it among the Phœnicians and Arabs.
5. We know that the Jews did adopt some of the beliefs of their conquerors—e.g., the belief in a personal evil principle.
6. It is most unlikely that the Babylonians would borrow their legend from an insignificant tribe of captives.

J. M. WHEELER.

## A REMINISCENCE.

In one of last week's "Acid Drops,"  
A funny yarn I see up-crops  
Concerning the great Dr. Ryle—  
Th' Incumbent feared to stir his bile.  
St. Paul, when on this earth in life,  
Allowed a bishop but one wife;  
But "Liverpool" has got his third,  
Which goes direct against the "Word!"  
This little tale brings to my mind  
Another, which in print you'll find:  
This bishop, when a Suffolk rector,  
Was a great Church and State protector;  
His hell-fire gospel, sound and clear,  
Closed all the shops for selling beer;  
And "Are you Saved?" with "Wheat or Chaff?"  
Caused many a Freethinker to laugh.  
In fact, there was no "real jam,"  
For love or money, in Helmingham!  
This rector, he once wrote a book,  
Anent a journey which he took  
In a STAGE-COACH to London town,  
In which a Sceptic was "done brown."  
This Sceptic passed on "Sugar Plums,"  
And cast up Coleuso's queer sums;  
'Till a blind girl straight up arose,  
And metaphorically smote his nose;  
Then quick withdrawing in his shell,  
He owned he'd earned a right to Hell:  
The blind had given him mental sight,  
And he retired to pray that night!  
But mark! Long after there came out  
Another edition—do not doubt—  
The same thing all occurred again,  
But in an EASTERN COUNTIES TRAIN!

Epilogue:—

When greater forces displace trains,  
Again I trust he'll use his brains!

W. D.

June 15th, 1882.

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

UNBELIEF OF BELIEVERS.—A man believes in the immaculate conception. He denies, then, that a certain event took place in accordance with laws exemplified in all similar cases. He impugns, in this instance, the validity of that inductive process upon which he counts at every step in every-day life. He is a scientific sceptic, in the strictest sense, for he is throwing doubt upon the trustworthiness of one of the primary ratiocinative processes. The same is true, whenever an event, admitted by all parties to have occurred, is ascribed by one party to supernatural interference. An amiable apologist expressed his surprise, the other day, that men of science should take into account such trifles as the existence of flint implements, and refuse to take into account the existence of the Bible and Christianity. Surely he never heard of the men of science who denied the existence of the Bible and Christianity. Which man really declines "to take a fact into account?"—the man who declares it to be altogether exceptional and supernatural, or the man who regards it as a result of the normal operation of recognised forces?—which implies the greatest "scepticism"?—the assertion that somebody wrote the book of Genesis by faculties similar to those which enabled another to write Homer, or the assertion that it was utterly impossible that anybody would have written down the legends of the garden of Eden and the ark without the direct assistance of God Almighty? If it is sceptical to deny one agency, it is equally sceptical to deny the other.

What is given to Jehovah is taken from Moses.—*Leslie Stephen*, "Fortnightly Review," vol. xxii., p. 359, 1877.

ON DOGMATIC THEISM.—Theologians ask, who created Nature? without adducing satisfactory evidence that Nature was created, and without reflecting that if it is difficult to believe Nature self-existent, it is much more difficult to believe some self-existent Supernature, capable of producing it. In their anxiety to get rid of a natural difficulty, they invent a supernatural one, and accuse Universalists of "wilful blindness" and "obstinate deafness" for not choosing so unphilosophic a mode of explaining universal mystery.—*Charles Southwell*, "Superstition Unveiled."

A MEDICAL TESTIMONY.—It is impossible to say of any false belief which mankind have had, that it has been the most pernicious in its effects; but we may truly say of the theological notion of the relations of mind and body, that it has been surpassed by few false doctrines in the evil which it has worked.—*Henry Maudsley, M.D.*, "Body and Mind," p. 120, 1873.

IMPERFECTIONS OF JESUS.—If a question was put to Jesus by any religious but educated man, neither a civil nor an instructive reply could be counted on; so prevalent is the imputation to him of insult and defiance when any invested with authority wanted from him reasons and proof. Hearers who desire to be his submissive disciples do not fare much better, at least in Luke. Jesus called out to one, "Follow me." And when he replied, "Lord (or sire), suffer me first to go and bring my father," Jesus is made to reply heartlessly, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." . . . If Mahommed had given utterance to such precepts, Christians would call them outrageous and brutal.—*Prof. Francis William Newman*. "What is Christianity without Christ," p. 16.

THE whole tissue of conduct ascribed to him is such as cannot be justified by a purely moral critic, whatever his theory concerning the person of Jesus.—*Ibid.*, p. 17.

## PROFANE JOKES.

ONE of the subjects for confirmation at a bishop's recent visitation, on being asked by the clergyman to whom she applied for her certificate of qualifications, "what her godfathers and godmothers promised for her?" said with much naïvete, "I've yeard that they promised to give me hafe a dozen zilver teaspoons, but I've never had 'em yet."

MOSES says himself (Numb. xii., 3), "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." Despite his slaying the Egyptian, his orders regarding the Midianites, and his little exhibitions of temper, we believe him, for through all his trials he managed to keep his Aaron.—See it? *hair on*. Holy Moses!

A LADY was busily engaged in domestic affairs when some one rang the street-door bell, and the Catholic servant girl was bidden to say her mistress was not at home. "Yes ma'am," she replied; "and when I confess to the priest, shall I confess the lie as your sin or mine?"

A PAINTING of the prodigal son, on exhibition in one of the Paris galleries, is designated as follows:—"The prodigal, in watching the hogs, thinks of his parents." "Rather rough on his parents," says Guibollard.

VOLTAIRE and Piron, the rival poets, were once staying together at the country house of a mutual friend and patron. One day Piron wrote in chalk on the door of Voltaire's apartment, the word "Scamp." No sooner had Voltaire seen it than he stepped over into the room which Piron occupied. "Whatever brings you here?" said Piron. "Sir," replied Voltaire, "I saw your name on my door, and I have come to return the visit."—*Charivari*.

A CLERGYMAN meeting an inebriated neighbor, exclaimed, "Drunk again, Wilkins?" to which Wilkins, in a semi-confidential tone, responded, "Sho am I, parson!"

"WHO made you?" was asked of a small girl. She replied, "God made me that length"—indicating with her two hands the ordinary size of a newborn infant—"and I growed the rest mysel'."

BEING asked what made him so dirty, an unwashed street Arab's reply was, "I was made, as they tell me, of dust, and I suppose it works out."

ONE of the old laws of Connecticut said, "No one should run on the Sabbath day, except reverently." Imagine a man just out of church pursuing a flying hat reverently before a high wind and in the presence of an interested congregation!

## MR. SYMES'S ENGAGEMENTS.

June 25 (morning), Clerkenwell Green; (evening), Claremont Hall, July 2, Heckmondwike; 16 and 17, Huddersfield; 23, Dundee; 30, West Hartlepool. August 13, Hall of Science, London. September 24, Hall of Science, London. November 12, Halifax.—All applications to be sent to Mr. JOSEPH SYMES, 142, Hagley Road, Birmingham.

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