

July 23 Aug 6

PROSECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY.

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Vol. II.—No. 33.]

AUGUST 13, 1882.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

“COMIC BIBLE” SKETCHES.—XXXV.



A DEVIL DOCTOR.

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him and hurt him not.—LUKE IV., 35.

FRIENDLY CRITICS.

SEEING the importance of our prosecution, and the interest it is exciting, the *Daily News* has considerably opened its columns to a correspondence on the blasphemy laws. It was commenced by Mr. G. J. Holyoake in a characteristic letter, in which he contrived to say a great deal about himself and very little about the subject. Mr. Holyoake has for many years played the role of the candid friend, saying the hardest things possible of Freethinkers and paying the sweetest compliments to Christians. His letters to the press on the Bradlaugh question are almost proverbial for want of practical insight and wild inaccuracy of statement. Mr. Holyoake's knowledge of law is just equal to Artemus Ward's knowledge of science, and his mistakes are equally numerous without being half as diverting. His memory also is treacherous as to old events, so that you are never safe in accepting his account of what happened many years ago; and even when it only dates back a few months you are obliged to take his statements with a very large grain of salt.

If Mr. Holyoake's letter to the *Daily News* were not so inordinately long we would reproduce it in full. Several lines are wasted in avoiding an explanation of his own im-

prisonment for blasphemy forty years ago. He is evidently rather ashamed of the strong words he then used, and he adds that if he had to express the same sentiment now he should "speak with like explicitness, though it may be with more solicitude for the beliefs of others." We venture to differ from Mr. Holyoake. He would do nothing of the kind. He has quite lost the art of explicit speech. His late utterances on Freethinkers and Freethought have all been as vague as a misty landscape. The only thing definite about them is his intention to be vicious.

Solicitude for the beliefs of others! There is the secret of Mr. Holyoake's failure. He is always courting the enemy instead of fighting them, and always holding his own side back instead of leading them on. For a long while he has paraded the neutral ground between the opposed armies, preaching peace where there can be no peace, and then adjourning to the fertile gardens that happen to be in possession of the enemy. Freethinkers are sick and tired of this policy, and they earnestly request the interloper to get out of the way of their bullets.

Mr. Holyoake says we have had "substantial freedom of speech ever since" his trial. This may be very flattering to his vanity, but unfortunately it is not true. His pamphlet is still called "The Last Trial for Atheism," but that does not alter the fact that many trials have taken place since. Thomas Paterson, James Finlay, and Matilda Roalfe were imprisoned after him, not to mention smaller people who were harassed by the authorities. Mr. Holyoake has a tenacious memory of his own achievements, but he is singularly forgetful of his brave contemporaries who went to gaol with a gallant heart, who took imprisonment as one of the natural risks of their work, and scarcely deigned to mention their sufferings after their release.

"I never complained," says Mr. Holyoake. Then he has never read his own "Last Trial for Atheism," nor his letters to the *Oracle of Reason*. His complaints were natural and affecting. They were in no way disgraceful. But Mr. Holyoake is ashamed of them now, and lightly denies that he ever made them.

The worst feature of Mr. Holyoake's letter is his extraordinary statement that "the Attorney-General must hold that there is a special aggravation in a case before a prosecution can be instituted." Mr. Bradlaugh at once wrote to the *Daily News* and corrected this egregious blunder. Mr. Holyoake's readers would otherwise imagine that Sir Henry James had found circumstances of aggravation in our case. "Under the Newspaper Libel Act," wrote Mr. Bradlaugh, "passed last year, no prosecution of any kind for libel in a newspaper can be commenced without the fiat, in England, of the Director of Public Prosecutions, or in Ireland of the Irish Attorney-General. For spoken words or for blasphemous libel in any publication other than a newspaper, an indictment may be preferred by any individual without any previous intervention of the Attorney-General or any other official." So much for Mr. Holyoake's law. He is of course under no obligation to study it, but he is under an obligation not to make ignorant statements about it to the manifest injury of others.

"Eleutherius" followed Mr. Holyoake on the wishy-washy side. This gentleman thought all religions should be "protected." He would not allow Buddhism to be "assailed by unworthy weapons." Blasphemy was not easy to define, but he thought "scurrility" was something



near the mark, and he opined that the jury might be left to decide in every case. "A. B." who we understand is Mrs. Besant, rejoined with a short statement of the law of blasphemy, which completely settled poor "Eleutherius."

Then came a splendid letter from Professor Hunter, of University College, London. It is so fine that we feel justified in quoting it in full:—

"BLASPHEMY PROSECUTIONS.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'DAILY NEWS.'

"SIR,—It is a pity that 'Eleutherius,' before supporting the law as to blasphemy did not take the trouble to ascertain what the law is. First of all, there is statutory blasphemy, as established by the 9 and 10 William III. and 35 and 53 George III., cap. 160. The joint effect of these statutes is that 'everyone commits a misdemeanour, and is liable to the punishments hereinafter mentioned, who, having been educated in, or at any time having made profession of the Christian religion within this realm, by writing, printing, teaching, or advised speaking, denies the Christian religion to be true, or the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of divine authority.' The punishments are—for a first offence, incapacity to hold any office or employment, ecclesiastical, civil, or military, and deprivation of such office if he holds any; and for the second offence, imprisonment for three years and incapacity to sue or plead in any court of law, or to receive any legacy or gift. That this statute of William III. means intolerance, and nothing else, is obvious from a subsequent section, which provides that these penalties will be remitted if the culprit renounces his erroneous opinions in the same court where he was convicted within four months after his conviction. It is more difficult to quote precise authority as to the exact limits of blasphemy at common law; but Mr. Justice Stephen states that 'a denial of the truth of Christianity in general, or of the existence of God, whether the terms of such publications are decent or otherwise,' is a blasphemous libel. The English law on the subject of blasphemy does not admit of defence in the manner suggested by 'Eleutherius.' It is a relic of barbarism and folly. It owes its place in our law-book simply to the fact that it has been a dead letter. To enforce it is to invoke all that is just and honorable in public opinion to demand its destruction. It is a weapon always ready to the hand of mischievous fools or designing knaves.

"In framing the Indian Penal Code, the English Government had to consider the question of dealing with insults to one or other of the numerous religions that prevail in India. On the one hand, it was of vital importance to the Government ostentatiously to separate itself from any attack on the religion of its Indian subjects; on the other hand, it had to keep the peace among a fanatical population. Accordingly very stringent provisions were made to give the Government a means of controlling the hot-headed fanatics of the different sects, whether Christian or heathen. Under those provisions no prosecution could take place against the *Freethinker* or any publication. On the other hand, if a Christian minister were to damage or break an idol with the knowledge that such would be considered an insult to their religion by the worshippers of the idol, he is punishable with imprisonment for two years, or with fine, or both. The Indian Penal Code makes it criminal to do one of the following things—to destroy, damage, or defile any place of worship or any object held sacred; to disturb any assembly engaged in religious worship or ceremonies; to trespass in any place of sepulture or offer indignity to a corpse; or 'with the deliberate intention of wounding the religious feelings of any person, to utter any word or to make any sound in the hearing of that person, or make any gesture in the sight of that person.' The Indian Code proceeds upon a rational distinction. Nobody is obliged to read the *Freethinker* or any other paper that he dislikes, but if a fanatic assails your ears or your eyes with what you consider a profane exhibition, you have some reason to complain. In India there is perfect freedom of theological discussion, and the Indian code provided by Englishmen for a fanatical population contains no such barbarous topic as 'blasphemous libel.' One can hardly imagine a greater insult to the general body of our countrymen than to suppose that they are not fit for a law that has proved sufficient among the fanatical sects of India.—I am, &c.,

"Fountain Court, Temple.

W. A. HUNTER."

Professor Hunter's letter is so good that we think of asking his permission to print it as a Tract. It would certainly do a great service to the cause of liberty.

On the following day I sent a letter to the *Daily News* on the same subject. It contains so much that I wish my fellow citizens to ponder, that it may well form a part of this article:—

"BLASPHEMY PROSECUTIONS.

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'DAILY NEWS.'

"SIR,—Mr. Holyoake's interesting letter conveys the impression that imprisonment is rather an agreeable change, and that the law of blasphemy should be retained not only for the

protection of Christians, but for the æsthetic discipline of Free-thinkers. Those who know how bitterly Mr. Holyoake complained of his sufferings in gaol, and how fiercely he denounced the barbarous law which inflicted them, are aware that in this, as in many other cases, distance lends enchantment to the view. Mere jocoseness, too, scarcely suffices when men, who feel that they have committed no crime, are in danger of being ruined by fines, of being caged like wild beasts for an uncertain period, and of losing all civil rights for the rest of their lives. Mr. Bradlaugh has already corrected one of Mr. Holyoake's legal blunders, and Professor Hunter has by implication corrected all the rest. The law is perfectly clear, and needs no subtle explanation. Blasphemy in England is denial of the truth of Christianity, and it makes no difference how the crime is committed, whether by scholarship, argument, or ridicule; just as it makes no difference in the crime of murder whether the victim be disposed of by violence or stratagem. You may murder brutally with a crowbar or artistically with poison, but the variance is unessential. All murder is murder, and all blasphemy is blasphemy; and the law which maintains this, however otherwise objectionable, has at least the merit of consistence. The idea of granting immunity to all heresy, except that which employs ridicule, is absurd, and never could have arisen outside this land of illogical compromise. It is like tolerating the author of 'Supernatural Religion,' and gagging Mr. Matthew Arnold; or, to put a stronger case, like letting D'Alembert go free and clapping Voltaire in gaol. Ridicule is only a crime when its subject is above criticism. Once admit that religion may be discussed freely, and all restrictions must vanish save those which apply to every other topic. Freethinkers ask no more than this, and they will not be satisfied with less. In any case, they may well object to the proposal of 'Eleutherius' that juries shall decide what language is blasphemous without any exact definition to guide them. It would place all dissidents from the popular creed at the mercy of twelve arbitrary and irresponsible conformers. Mr. Holyoake's satirical advice is only the logical result, especially after Sir Thomas Chambers's charge to the grand jury at the Central Criminal Court. Let ridicule be tried by a jury who never employed it; let the blockheads try the wits; and let every Freethinker accused of blasphemy be tried by twelve churchwardens. I do not understand Mr. Holyoake's reference to 'violence and obscenity,' and certainly it has no relation to the *Freethinker*, which is only indicted for blasphemy. A little less vagueness is desirable. The essence of the question, Should there be any blasphemy law at all? Those who are alleged to be guilty must be punished either on behalf of God, which is a blasphemous absurdity, or in the interest of society, which is intelligible and open to discussion. In this respect Professor Hunter's argument is unanswerable. Religious people are entitled to have their feelings considered (not necessarily respected) precisely like their fellow-citizens, and the ordinary law affords them legitimate protection. It is scarcely just that they should regard their feelings as contemptuous with the world, and proscribe everything they might possibly dislike. The *Freethinker* was forced on no one's attention, it could be patronised or neglected, it had to be bought before it could be read, and nobody was obliged to read it twice. Why should it be molested? Why should not its readers be its judges? They are its judges, and their verdict is given. Whatever happens to me, who am charged with the crime of editing it, the paper cannot be put down, for the Freethought party will support it to the uttermost while it is attacked. Bigotry will have to learn that there is only one form of persecution successful, and that is extermination,—

Yours obediently,

G. W. FOOTE."

9, South-crescent.

We cannot close without acknowledging the friendly paragraphs in the *Weekly Dispatch*, the *Referee*, and other London journals, and the wise articles in such provincial papers as the *Liverpool Daily Post*. Before our trial comes on public opinion will be aroused on the question; and the very hostility of the professional Christian press will only serve to help us by disgusting honest people and convincing them that it is sought to make us only the *first* victims in a general crusade against freedom of speech.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE DECAY OF FAITH.

THE editor of the *Westminster Review*, not having the fear of blasphemy laws before his eyes, has inserted in the current number a very suggestive and pronounced paper under this title, which is well calculated to startle orthodox readers. Its whole purpose is to show that all supernatural opinions whatever are dissolving under the conditions of our modern civilisation. It impugns in so many words not only the truth of the Christian religion but the ideas upon which it, in common with other religions, is based.

It is evident that a just opinion on the question whether faith is decaying, can only be arrived at by an extended

survey of what faith has been in the past, and a comparison with what it is at present. Neither the extinction nor the transformation of a religion is the work of a day. It is a long drawn-out secular process enduring through many stages, from the first dawn of doubt to open dissent and absolute denial.

The *Westminster* reviewer takes us back to the ages of faith, and shows us how completely the plane of vision has changed. Demons, angels, spirits, witches and ghosts, then common as blackberries, have vanished. Miracles, visions and potents, which were once every day occurrences, are now repudiated. We deny the inherent efficacy of sacraments, relics, signs, formulas and charms. The belief in the superiority of faith to conduct has become reversed. Conduct is considered more than creed. To doubt is no longer a sign of guilt, save with the ignorant. It is this life not the next, secular concerns not religions, which arouse our attention and sympathies. Science has supplanted spiritualism. Morality has superseded theology in influence over opinions and conduct. The position of the clergy has been compromised, and the veils of a popular statesman, scientist or *litterateur*, command more interest than the fulminations of the class. The natural has extinguished, or nearly extinguished, the supernatural. We have looked supernaturalism in the face and discovered that the terrors of our ancestors had their origin in their own morbid imaginations. We have observed the laws which lie in silent strength behind the processes of nature, and infused a spirit of uniformity into our conceptions of them. This idea of the universal reign of law has excluded all notions of personal interference with the order of natural events. The Knowledge, which is Power, is our only Providence. We do not pray, if we pray at all, in the same sense as our forefathers did. Religion has become not only profoundly modified, but attenuated. Its influence has declined, its area been circumscribed. It no longer commands the absorbing interests of all classes, as it did but a century or two ago. It has come to be regarded as a holiday suit, to be worn on special occasions and on Sundays. Our lives are no longer dominated by religious beliefs, although we may shrink from openly proclaiming our emancipation from them.

Practically all that is left to religion is a shadowy belief in a Deity and a future life. But the former mainly depended, among the masses, upon the belief in a ruler who specially regarded us, a Father who would provide for our wants. Theology, with its doctrine of the efficacy of prayer, made a direct appeal to human selfishness. The advantages supposed to be realised were out of all proportion to the efforts expended in securing them. But this doctrine has been undermined by scientific teaching of the universality of law and of the littleness of this planet. The scientific view also stands in the way of the theological doctrine of future existence. Formerly theology taught that a future life awaited both body and soul. The discoveries of science necessitated the abandonment of the grosser conception of the resurrection of the body, as taught by the early phases of religion, including early Christianity. The immortality of the soul remains rested rather upon longing than on logic, on faith and not on fact. We have no experience of mind apart from organic structure.

Among the causes helping to conserve faith has been the notion that it is bound up with morals; but a survey of the world's conditions has shown that morals depend upon social conditions and not upon theological beliefs. The most elevated morals have been and are found entirely apart from supernaturalism. Upon a natural basis morals are ever advancing, proving the utility of new traits of character, and adding further touches to the moral ideal of the age; while with morality based upon revelation no progress is possible. It is incumbered with a code adapted to local circumstances and tainted with the coarseness and incompleteness of barbarous social conditions. "In the case of Christianity," says the reviewer, "though once in advance of the moral standard of the age, it now lingers far behind it. The necessity for a religious sanction for morals is now no longer felt, and, indeed, is regarded as a serious disadvantage, by tending to bring about a stagnation in the moral atmosphere, instead of that adaptive elasticity required to overtake the ever-changing conditions of modern civilisation."

Another cause retarding the decay of faith has been the historical foundation upon which it professedly rests. The

popular mind, accustomed to view things in the concrete, has required the association of dates, documents, events and persons with their beliefs. But critical inquiry into the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred books has completely shattered their claims to credence. These writings, besides their self-contradictions, have never been historically traced to their reputed authors with that exactness their importance imperatively demands. The most fatal objection, however, to the truth of the Christian religion, is that the ignorance and superstitious habit of mind of the age in which it was promulgated, rendered the testimony of that age to the reality of the events upon which it rests utterly valueless.

The last influence conserving religion is the existence of a class interested in its maintenance and propagation. In the most important Christian body the clergy are divorced from family and social ties, and irrevocably married to the church. In other instances they are alienated from the interests and sympathies of society by a system of sectional and distorted education, as well as by the influence of class feeling and personal interest. It has been said that if a class were interested in proving that two and two count five, it would secure a large number of zealous and satisfied converts. We quite believe it. That two and one make one is a fundamental verity with these solemnly-constituted impostors. This arithmetical feat is even outdone by the mental gymnastics involved in the belief that a little flour-paste, after being mumbled over by a priest, becomes converted into the whole body—bones, flesh, and blood—of a person who died over 1800 years ago. But a little acquaintance with history, however, shows that the influence of the clergy has seriously declined. Men begin to think for themselves. Every item of progress has been won despite the bitter hostility and intolerance of the black regiments. They have fossilized their dogmas until none can preach them save those who are so dull that they cannot master the logical effect of recent criticism, or so dishonest that they find no moral incongruity in the advocacy of opinions they do not hold in the ordinary and conventional sense. But a class which is intellectually dull, or morally blunt, cannot long retain ascendancy over the public mind; and that process of deterioration in the character and influence of the clergy, which during the last three centuries has materially compromised their position, seems likely to result in the total extinction of all respect for the office and services of the class.

Our reviewer summarises the results of his survey in the following words: "The historical basis of Christianity has vanished. The logical evidence used in support of the central thought of theology receives no countenance from modern science. The class isolated and interested to defend religion is distrusted and discredited. Morality needs no support from religion, and, indeed, is stifled by the parasitical growth entwining it in its poisonous folds. The material advantages promised to the earnest prayers of the true believers have disappeared before science, like a morning mist under a summer sun. Only the dream of immortality—as baseless a phantasy as ever beguiled the human judgment—remains as an effective opinion, propping up the cumbering fabric of religion and superstition. But surely it also will disappear. The Positive spirit will every generation reach a lower and lower stratum of society. Society will yet learn not to mould its opinions and conduct by its desires, but will come to limit its aspirations within the lines marked by intelligence. Men's egoistic instincts will merge in the altruistic, and the only immortality sought for will be the contribution of true thoughts, good deeds, and pure emotions to our common and aggregate humanity."

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

TALMAGE has a striking way of putting it. He says that Isaiah "put the telescope of prophecy to his eye, and saw, seven hundred and fifty years ahead, one Jesus advancing to the rescue." If the vision of old Isaiah's telescope reached to seeing Talmage advancing to the rescue of orthodoxy we guess he would have dropped the instrument in dismay.

CHRISTIANS never discover the odiousness of theological language until they hear it from the mouths of infidels. The Rev. F. Ballard, or some other, complains in a certain contemporary that Mr. Symes' *Freethinker* tract, "Who will be Damned—if Christianity be True?" contains the big D no

fewer than twenty-six times. He forgot to mention that it was strictly founded on New Testament usage.

THE *Book* gives a yelp on German and English Rationalism, and complains of "the determined opposition to, and destructive onslaughts which are continually being attempted against the very citadel of Truth—the inspired books of Revelation. Not a book in the Bible is free from attack." The *Book* forgets to add that no book can bear the charge.

THE book of directions, issued by the Salvation Army, warns against reading secular literature and the ordinary newspapers. Nothing is recommended but "your Bible, your hymn-book, the *War Cry*, and books published at our own stores." Intellectuals fed on this pabulum will become light enough to float away straight to eternal glory.

DR. BEGG is getting up a petition of Free Churchmen against the use of instrumental music in churches, on the ground of its being unscriptural. We wonder where the old bigot finds scriptural authority for howling the Psalms of David, as is done in his own kirk every Sabbath.

DR. PARKER finds no difficulty in the story of Mary, Gabriel, and the pigeon. He says: "Every man is born into the family of God by what may be termed a miraculous conception. A nine months' gestation is an easily dispensed with part of the process.

PARKER continues—Why make any puzzle about Saul being converted miraculously. Your own conversion is as big a miracle. We suspect there is some truth in this, and wonder if Parker has been dazed by a sunstroke.

NOT far from Bristol, last Sunday week, a parson denounced our *Freethinker* Tracts from the pulpit, and declared that he would prosecute anybody he found distributing them in his parish. How these clericals do hate competition! Free Trade means death to them, and they know it.

A RELIGIOUS contemporary says that Christ should be held up as an example to the Church. We have read in certain curious story-books that he was once held up very conspicuously as an example to the Church. That was a long way off and a good while ago, and the Church has never thought of imitating him yet. At the peril of our eternal damnation, we doubt the utility of putting him up again.

A PROFANE correspondent suggests that a party who some 1800 years ago had a pigeon for a progenitor, would probably have been pigeon-breasted. Is it not more likely, however, that his parent was a duck, since he is recorded to have walked on water? Others think that the son being a lamb, the father must have been a ram; but there is no end to the mazes of theological zoology.

CHRISTIAN toleration is hard to understand. The Salvationists, who by the prominence they give to female ministrations go directly in the teeth of scripture, are allowed to parade the streets and make any hubbub they please, but a Mormon preacher, who expounded his doctrines from the Bible, at Hackney, last week, was hustled and kicked nearly out of life by an excited crowd, who could not listen to such abominable doctrines as that practised by all God's favorites.

THE *Church Review* considers it no breach of charity to affirm that of all kinds of races of men a Protestant public is the most thick-headed. We agree. They strain at the gnat of transubstantiation after swallowing the camel of the Trinity, and this, to us, betokens thickheadedness. But the *C. R.* uses its strong language because of Protestant objection to Ritualism. It calls the Church Association a stupid and pestiferous clique, and empties its dirtiest washpot over the anti-tractarians, and casts its muddiest shoe at the evangelicals.

DURING last summer the streets of London were perambulated by the agents of Reuben May. This enterprising town missionary had compiled a lying penny pamphlet on Dying Infidels, and his agents were sent out to sell it to the faithful in order to raise the wind. For many years Reuben has been successfully working the pious dodge. His practice has been to act "on his own hook" so as to avoid too much prying into his affairs, and to send out circulars to his dupes soliciting subscriptions for all sorts of philanthropic objects. These documents are generally very pathetic, and no doubt they bring in a good deal of cash. But *Truth* says that when Reuben asks for funds for the "poor" and the "sick" he means himself. Mr. Labouchere's journal has recently contained some dreadful exposures of this religious humbug. The fellow's last circular is dated July 22nd, and begs good Christians to send him money to give a holiday in the country to children. Now the writer in *Truth* states that "Reuben, in 1875, obtained money to take 1,600 persons for a treat to Pier Gardens, Erith, for which he agreed to pay £21 to the proprietor; not having paid one farthing, he was sentenced to

fourteen days' imprisonment, and the proprietor only recovered his money after this gentle reminder. This is only one instance of many in which the said Reuben has appropriated to his own use money given to him for charitable objects."

SUCH humbugs as Reuben May can only flourish in an atmosphere of piety. Earl Shaftesbury and other "philanthropists" have given him support, and we have no doubt he will go on diddling to the end of the chapter.

THE Bishop of Manchester complains that church building has become to a large extent competitive. He consecrated a new church a fortnight ago, and on passing that way a few days after he found "two other rival buildings rising side by side." The Bishop has hit upon one truth at last. If it were not for the spirit of rivalry between the sects Christianity would soon go to the dogs. There would be no new churches, the old ones would be empty, and parsons would have to work for their living like other folk.

THE Bishop of Sodor and Man has taken to outdoor preaching. This is the first step in his imitation of Christ. We suppose the next will be feeding the congregation with a few sardines and French rolls, and filling a Pickford's van with the crumbs.

THERE are three ways of getting money without earning it—begging, borrowing, and stealing. General Booth has tried the first, to obtain the cash to purchase the Grecian, and failed. He is now trying the second. If that fails, will he try the third? Would it not be best to imitate General Peter, and "holy ghost" a few rich Ananiases and Sapphiras?

ST. JUDE'S CHURCH, Liverpool, has been the scene of a row between the High and Low factions. Bobbies had to be called in to keep the peace, for the godly were about to

"Prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks."

The arrival of the gentlemen in blue obliged them to rest satisfied with what the reporter describes as "groans, hisses, and yells." It is a pity they weren't left to fight it out. There might have been a few fools less in the world.

A MAN who makes two railway journeys, to and fro, every Sunday, in order to enjoy the privilege of worship in a particular church, must be assumed to be exceptionally pious, and piety is supposed to beget honesty in one's dealings with other people as well as in one's profession of obedience to divine laws. There was something wrong, however, about the piety of the devout churchgoer who was convicted at Lambeth Police-court the other day of systematically defrauding the railway company by making one return ticket do duty for his two journeys.—*Weekly Dispatch*.

THE Salvationists are always getting into hot water. One of them has just been sent to gaol for seven days in Dundee for stealing a ring. She was apprehended at a meeting of the army.

A LOCAL Tory paper has the effrontery to say that Mr. Tamlyn, of Burnley, destroyed a Bible at one of his recent Freethought lectures in the town. We are informed on the best authority that Mr. Tamlyn did nothing of the kind. He did cut it up, but it was *the Bible*, not *a Bible*. The article makes all the difference.

WE once heard a tale told by an open-air teacher in Birmingham of an infidel who roasted his Bible before a big fire, and then mixed the ashes with a quart of ale. The strange decoction settled his hash; he almost met the fate of Judas when he fell headlong. Now Birmingham ale isn't very bad stuff, as we can testify. It must therefore have been the Bible that killed the poor fellow. Moral: Avoid the Bible.

RELIGION OF HUMANITY.—Those who are so wrapped up in self that they are unable to identify their feelings with anything which will survive them, or to feel their life prolonged in their younger contemporaries and in all who help to carry on the progressive movement of human affairs, require the notion of another selfish life beyond the grave to enable them to keep up any interest in existence, since the present life, as its termination approaches, dwindles into something too insignificant to be worth caring about. But if the religion of Humanity were as sedulously cultivated as the supernatural religions are (and there is no difficulty in conceiving that it might be much more so), all who had received the customary amount of moral cultivation would up to the hour of death, live ideally in the life of those who are to follow them; and though doubtless they would often willingly survive as individuals for a much longer period than the present duration of life, it appears to me probable that after a length of time, different in different individuals, they would have had enough of existence, and would gladly lie down and take their eternal rest.—*J. S. Mill*, "Utility of Religion," p. 119.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures three times to-day (Sunday, August 13), in the Co-operative Hall, Rochdale: : Morning, at 11, "An Hour with the Devil;" afternoon, at 3, "Hell Fire and Salvation by Faith;" evening, at 6.30, "Blasphemy and Blasphemers."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

August 13th, Rochdale; 20th, West Hartlepool; 21st to 25th, Durham District; 27th, Stockton-on-Tees.

September 3rd, Claremont Hall, London; 10th, Hall of Science, London; 17th, Hall of Science, London; 24th, Nottingham.

October 1st, Claremont Hall, London; 8th, Leeds; 15th, Halifax; 22nd, Manchester.

November 12, Liverpool; 19th, Hall of Science, London; 26th, Claremont Hall, London.

CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL business communications to be addressed to the Publisher, 15 Harp Alley, Farringdon Street, E.C.

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

H. B.—Thanks. We shall be glad to see the picture you mention. Mr. S. WATTS, Hairdresser, Charles Street, Oxford Street, Manchester, sells the *Freethinker* and all other Secular publications.

F. L. TUCKER.—Collecting-sheets for our Defence Fund sent as desired. We are cheered on our way by such letters as yours.

J. H. WIPHAM.—Order transmitted as you ask. Please send all such things to our publisher direct. We are not so sure as you that this "liberal" age will not allow Freethinkers to go to gaol. In many respects it is an emaculate age.

WITTWON.—Your verse got mislaid in our transfer to new quarters. Can you send another copy?

A READER asks if any one has a complete set of the *Freethinker* for 1881.

T. EDWARDS.—We are glad to hear that you take three copies weekly and give two away. We hope other readers will go and do likewise. We shall certainly win in the long run.

W. CAMERON.—Cuttings are always useful. Our readers cannot do better than send us any relevant paragraphs from newspapers.

ELVONS.—We don't believe in the lasting use of such sensational agencies. Leave them to the Salvation Army. Our work is a slow one, but then it is sure.

T. R. HINDE.—Mr. Foote intends to conduct his own defence. We are ready to do anything to exculpate Mr. Bradlaugh.

J. MILLAR.—You did well to write to the newspaper you mention. All publicity helps. Your previous letter did not reach us or it has got mislaid.

S. SMITH.—We should much like to settle the case personally with Tyler in an empty room, but we fear there is no chance of that.

W. BOWLER.—Received with thanks.

A. STEWART.—Please apply to our publisher for the back numbers. Your set will be complete without the one unpublished number, as we ran on consecutively without including it. Only a half-dozen copies were pulled. We certainly think that literary lectures should be mixed with the scientific.

F. R.—Gardiner's "Faiths of the World" is the best work, but it is rather expensive. There is, unfortunately, nothing in a cheap form.

C. B. B.—Received with thanks.

A. CARVER.—We may follow Mr. Symes's suggestion. It was done once before. But it is blasphemy even to publish foul Bible texts in a separate form.

W. T. L.—Man is not the only animal that laughs, but he is the only animal foolish enough to keep a priest. We are delighted to hear that the open-air work goes on so well in the London parks.

J. R. B.—We have too much verse in hand already. Thanks for your good wishes. We do not intend to advertise the journal you mention by noticing its attacks.

J. DOVER.—Mr. Tamlyn did nothing of the kind. See "Acid Drops."

TO OUR READERS.

SOME of the wholesale agents have erased the *Freethinker* from their lists through fear of prosecution. This will work itself out in the long run, but for the present it may injure our circulation, unless our readers make a special effort to aid us. If their local newsagent says that his wholesale agent will not supply the *Freethinker*, they should tell him that other agents are not so timid or so nice, and threaten to take their custom elsewhere if their orders are not executed.

Where the London agent will not supply, and the local agent has no choice, we are willing to send a parcel to any house for enclosure. Where this plan fails we shall be pleased to arrange for a direct supply by rail or post.

SUGAR PLUMS.

WE have received the second number of the *Thinker*, published at Madras, under the auspices of the Hindu Free-thought Union. Its object is "a crusade against superstition, custom, poverty, and prostitution" Rather a big programme. We wish our young contemporary all success.

THE *Philosophical Inquirer* (of Madras), edited by P. Mudaliar, is still alive and kicking. It has dropped its Tamil half, and now appears entirely in English.

THE *Anti-Christian*, a monthly magazine, published at Calcutta and edited by Kaliprasanna Kavyabisharah (we hope we've spelt it right), has reached its sixth number. It is a very plain-spoken little sceptic. Its first article in the June number ends thus: "Of all the obscene books that have tended to degrade humanity and bar the way of progress, the Bible is one of the vilest, if not the vilest." Fortunately the writer of this sentence lives in a half-civilised and despotic country; if he lived in a highly civilised and free country like England, he would be in danger of imprisonment for blasphemy.

THE *Anti-Christian* is down on our exported gospel hacks. "While," it says, "poor natives of the land, educated though they be, are serving as petty clerks in some Government or merchant's office, these missionary gentlemen are drawing a handsome salary for preaching absurd biblical lessons. Their purse is well-filled, while we poor people of India suffer from famine."

CHRISTIAN charity and meekness shine conspicuously in the part of the *Anti-Christian* reserved for correspondence. One irate preacher says, "I will no longer read your blasphemies," and gives a timely warning against judgment day and hell fire. Another calls the editor a blasphemous and presumptuous person, and others write in the same vein. The champions of faith are pretty much alike all the world over.

THE Deceased Wife's Bill has passed the Canadian Parliament, and now only awaits the Queen's consent, which of course will not be withheld.

THE *Hulme Gazette* maintains its independent, outspoken character. In a pithy article on Blasphemy it boldly attacks the Christian spirit of persecution, and declares that the maligned defendants in the latest prosecution for blasphemy "are among the most intellectual men of our times, and are supported by tens of thousands of the best men in the country." It concludes by saying that "Persecution in this free and intelligent age is the death-knell of faith; it is the mill-stone to its neck, it is death by its own poison."

COLONEL RAMSEY, in his "Rough Recollections," says that an old lady of his acquaintance told him the following story about Earl Beaconsfield's boyhood:—"When a girl she used to dine with her parents at an annual Christmas dinner given by Mr. Murray, of Albemarle Street, to his literary friends. Disraeli the elder and his family were always there. After dinner the children were allowed to play a round game together; but after the first year they all refused to play with Master Ben because he cheated so." Cheated is a harsh word. Young Ben was simply looking after his scientific frontier.

THE clergy are not generally noted for wit, but there is a gay dog to be met with among them here and there. We have just lighted on a good story of Dr. Mountain who was chaplain to George III. The Archbishop of York had died suddenly, and the King was telling his chaplain of his difficulty as to appointing a successor. "Sire," said Dr. Mountain, "if your Majesty had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you would say to this mountain, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea.'" The chaplain deserved the see for his wit, but we suppose it was lost on Farmer George.

THE great German naturalist, Haeckel, has written an account of his visit to Ceylon. He takes occasion to indulge in a very just sneer at the editor of the *Ceylon Observer*, who conducts his journal "in that spirit of severe and gloomy orthodoxy which unfortunately distinguishes so many pretended English Liberal papers." It will do some of them good to know how they look in the eyes of the great German.

HAECKEL tells a good ghost story also. A friend of his leased a haunted villa out in Ceylon, and sat up at night for the ghosts with a loaded revolver. They turned out to be wild cats. Haeckel evidently thinks that no ghost could stand a six-shooter.

AT St. Michael's Church, Wood Street, right opposite Morley's place of business, the congregation, last Sunday week, consisted of nobody. We never heard of a smaller.

THE *Hampshire Telegraph* finds space for a discussion of the Sunday question. Mr. Brumage and other Portsmouth Freethinkers began by defending Sunday freedom, but they have had to end by defending what their Portsmouth opponents call "the principles of Bradlaugh, Foote, and Co." But we are not the only people who go in for music and recreation on Sunday. The Sabbatharians have only to visit any Christian country in Europe, and they will find everybody doing what we advocate. Let us all be unhappy on Sunday, is a song nowhere heard outside England and the Puritan parts of America.

ONE of the Christian correspondents says that Mr. Bradlaugh got £200 for his three lectures at Portsmouth. It is too good to be true. Yet it is certain that Mr. Bradlaugh had crowded audiences who paid for admission. This is what the polite Christians call "getting money out of his dupes." Of course they are naturally envious, but they are fools to show it so plainly.

FREETHINKERS should keep up a correspondence in the local press wherever it is possible. Nothing does our cause more good.

PAUL BERT the famous atheistic scientist, delivered a lecture last Sunday at the Trocadero in Paris on the civil education of the people. There was a tremendous audience, and Gambetta was present in a side box. This is a good sign. The only stable thing in French politics is the attachment of Gambetta to his old friends and theirs to him. He is bound to come into power again by-and-bye, and we shall yet see the political genius of France directed by a virile statesman instead of a Government of Eunuchs.

THUS CONSCIENCE DOTTH MAKE COWARDS OF THEM ALL.

FOR years past I, in common with other Freethinkers, have again and again, times out of number, challenged the clergy to defend their doctrines in public debate. The results are small. One defender of the faith has met me twice; but I do not expect to encounter him again, seeing that he had almost to be dragged to the encounter the second time. Another I met once; and he is gone into silence. A third I met for ten nights, and then he ran, though still owing me twelve nights more. A fourth I have met four or five times, and only regret that he has not honestly enough to render him a desirable antagonist. A fifth met me once, and then went to law against a newspaper proprietor for libelling him. He won't meet me again. Other noted defenders of superstition have repeatedly been invited to meet me in debate, and only one of them ever returned an honest reply. Some say they do not think debates do any good; one confessed openly that he found they did more harm than good, and converted Christians to infidelity, rather than infidels to Christianity. This I thought to be a remarkably outspoken view of the case, and I did not question its truth. Another offers to debate if the proceeds go to some charity. I propose the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund for one half, and the other parties invariably decline. Then they say *local* charity. I have accepted these conditions once or twice; but they are very unfair. If a man can afford to work for nothing, let him; he is the man to work for charitable institutions. If he cannot, he is a hypocrite to propose such terms. And I generally find the poorest defenders of the faith are the most ready to offer or accept a challenge on such conditions. Not long ago, however, a real live parson, sleek as a canon, and well-to-do, offered to meet me, if the debate were conducted on the Socratic method, and the proceeds given to a local charity. I agreed at once that one-half of the debate should be Socratic (in form, if not in quality), and that the proceeds should be disposed of as above. The negotiations proceeded, not very amicably, as the Christian party were unboundedly insolent and overbearing; and it soon appeared that they did not want debating, but the credit of a victory, without the danger of a defeat. The clergyman, it transpired, would make just a *nominal* charge for gas and the use of his schoolroom for the debate. As he was at home, and I had to travel about eighty miles, I said that I also must make just a mere *nominal* charge for travelling and hotel expenses. This gave so great a shock to the Christian party that the negotiations were dropped forthwith. The idea of an Atheist claiming any rights, or having the audacity to demand fair play in dealing with an ambassador of Christ, was altogether too much for their pious nerves; and so the debate never came off.

I have mentioned the above facts for the purpose of showing how reluctant Christians are to defend their creeds, except where no defence is needed—that is, in the midst of such as believe it. In the churches and chapels, to be sure, they are bold as lions. There they boast of the old conquests of Christianity instead of trying to win more for her. But they fear us. We are no better than they, it is true; but we have truth and they only falsehood. If Christianity were true, or they really believed it to be so, what could we do? They would give us no rest. We should be challenged to debate every night in the week. Clergymen of all denominations would make the pulpits ring with exposures of our opinions, and they would never fail to invite us to discuss their utterances on the spot. But "conscience doth make cowards of them all." They dare not face honest and open debate. They dare not subject their views to honest criticism. And yet they hate us with an intensity that is indescribable.

What, however, have they to complain of? We are not endowed by government; we are not wealthy; we are not excessively learned; we do not forbid discussion, but earnestly court it; we never shrink from any honest contest with them, as they know. What more do they want? If they hate us, they hate fair play; they hate us for our good views, for our true principles; they hate us because we are in the right and they in the wrong. As the cowards of Athens hated Socrates, so do our Christian neighbors hate us. Not for the evil we do, but for the good, they would damn us if they had the power.

The persecution now going on for blasphemy, the attempt to put down the *Freethinker*, is proof positive that we are in the right. We do nothing slyly, but openly and above board; we advocate no tyranny; we advertise no bubble company; we incite no crime. On the contrary, we preach truth as we understand it, truth our foes do not try to quell; we advocate freedom; we appeal to all that is good and noble in man; no man is the worse, but the better, for our utterances; we are a breath of pure piercing air blowing through the fever dens of theology; a stream of pure cooling, vivifying water flowing through the Christian desert. Our foes cannot deny it. Let them, if they can. We challenge them, defy them!

If Christians had any truth or honor on their side, they never would have persecuted as they have always done; could they answer our utterances, they would not molest our persons; if the clergy had not been cowards, Tyler would not have begun his dirty work—would not have deliberately chosen to take his part with Judas, the Jesuits, and the inquisitors. They fear the truth. "The sinners in Zion (the churches) are a fraud, fearfulness hath seized the hypocrites." Their persecution proves us strong in right, and themselves weak in falsehood and all mean and cowardly things. JOS. SYMES.

"FREETHINKER" DEFENCE FUND.

Glasgow (per A. Forrester): F. Smith, 10s.; A. Forrester, 5s.; Mrs. Forrester, 2s. 6d.; A. Forrester, jun., 1s.; Miss Forrester, 1s.; Miss A. Forrester, 1s.; Master J. Forrester, 6d.; Well Wisher, 2s. 6d.; — Hamilton, 1s.; Mrs. Leitch, 1s.; Collected at Bookstall, 4s. *Liverpool* (per C. Stocker): H. O. 5s.; J. Faulkes, 2s.; A. Anderson, 2s. 6d.; E. Sims, 2s.; — Gregory, 6d.; D. T. 2s. 6d.; — Dodd, 6d.; — Jones, 6d.; — Jones, 2s.; W. R., 10d.; Friend, 6d.; W. C. 6d.; T. Dunn, 3d.; Miss Lorshaw, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Beatty, 2s.; J. Tanner, 10s.; J. Mather, 2s. 6d.; T. Dowthwaite, 1s.; W. Peter, 6d.; R. Turpin, £1. *Liverpool* (per Mr. Foote): R. Hampson, 1s.; — Jenkins, 1s.; — Jones, 1s.; — Justice, 1s.; Mrs. Tanuer, 10s.; Friend, 1s.; Mr. Harriman, 10s.; — Smith, 6d.; P. R. G., 6d.; F. M. G., 6d.; J. Whitfield, 10s.; E. Jones, 2s. 6d.; Miss Turner, 5s.; P. Danelley, 1s.; W. Mackintosh, 1s.; J. Carroll, 6d.; E. Maclanghlan, 5s.; H. M., 2s.; W. Varley, 5s.; Friend, 1s.; — Gregory, 1s.; J. Macrill, 1s.; E. M., 2s.; Y. Z., £1. *Manchester* (per J. Routledge): — Musicus, 1s.; J. Knowles, 3d.; H. Wood, 3s.; G. Gregory, 6d.; J. T., 1s.; J. W., 2d.; S. L. P., 5s. *Hartlepool* (per G. Barnes, third list): J. Wilkin, 3d.; R. Renick, 3d.; G. Turnbull, 6d.; W. Jones, 3d.; T. Lake, 3d.; A. Small, 3d.; J. Collins, 6d.; C. Rolands, 3d.; W. Laurie, 3d.; R. Stringer, 3d.; H. Peacock, 6d.; W. Flanders, 3d.; G. Barnes, 3d.; G. Warrand, 3d.; H. Fordham, 6d.; S. Tucker, 3d.; G. Rolands, 3d.; T. Skinner, 3d.; R. Curry, 4d.; J. Allison, 3d.; A. Parr, 6d.; F. A., 1s.; J. Swales, 3d.; J. Pringle, 1s.; T. W. W., 6d.; Collected at Mr. Symes's lectures, 10s. 10d. Per A. Moss: Friend at Mile End, 1s.; Ditto at Victoria Park, 6d.; J. Spencer, 5s.; W. Mortimer, £1; F. Gibon, 1s.; J. Pemberton, 1s. *Stockport* Friends (per J. Bell) 3s. *Leicester* (per M.

Bunton: T. L., 10s.; J. Hartshorn, 1s. *Huddersfield* (per W. Spivey): Charlotte Brook, 1s.; J. Taylor, 6d.; J. Brook, 1s.; J. Lee, 1s.; — Bradley, 6d.; Mrs. Bradley, 6d.; M. Moore, 1s.; W. Woffenden, 1s.; A. Woffenden, 1s.; W. Taylor, 2s. 6d.; J. P., 1s. 6d.

RIGHT AND MIGHT.

In those dark days when might alone was right,
And ruling despots plied the iron rod,
O'er earth's fair spots the permeating blight
Crushed better things than bigots to the sod;
So all that gave man freedom, peace and rest,
Suffered a gloom that knew no streak of light,
The while oppression's wheels, gore-stained, unblest,
Ground on and zealots cried, "Might shall be right!"

And now to-day they stand in places high,
Who tell us might alone shall rule again;
Great truth forbid that now the people's cry
Should rise unheeded while they toil in vain.
'Tis well for purse-proud knaves that they can find
Base tools for hire, who sell themselves for place;
Who in their hate cast principle behind,
And shuffle to a goal inscribed—"Disgrace."

Might is *not* right; right must be might at last.
What in the coming struggle though we fail?
One day there'll rise a voice with trumpet blast,
And future ages shall repeat its tale;
Over those lands where bigotry has reigned
Shall fly the truth to give the world new light,
And this one great advancement shall be gained—
The cry reversed, to read, "Right must be Might!"

JOHN ROWELL WALLER.

CHILDREN'S EXCURSION.

HANDSOME breaks will accompany this excursion, so that friends wishing to go with, can do so; tickets, two shillings each. We leave the Hall of Science at 9:30, and return from Loughton at six. The following additional subscriptions have been received, and we shall be glad to have more. Friend, 10s. 6d.; N. W. R., 5s.; G. Calvert, 5s.; M. W., 1s.; R. Robey, 1s.; Election, 2s.; B. Dent, 15s.; W. Helsey, 1s. Applications for children's tickets should be made to Mr. Dunville, 24, Morpeth Road, Victoria Park, and should contain a stamped and directed envelope. Applicants are requested also to state the branch to which they belong. All children's tickets are free.—W. J. RAMSEY.

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

HELL NECESSARY TO CHRISTIAN DOGMA.—Give up material fire, and you lose the bodily resurrection. Renounce the bodily resurrection, and away goes the visible coming of Christ to a general judgment, and the climacteric completeness of the Church-scheme of redemption is wanting. Mar the wholeness of the redemption plan, and farewell to the incarnation and vicarious atonement. Neglect the vicarious atonement, and down crumbles the hollow and broken shell of the popular theology helplessly into its grave.—*William Rounseville Alger*, "A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life," p. 518, tenth edition, New York, 1878.

MODERN RELIGION A SURVIVAL OF GROSSER SUPERSTITION.—If we trace the history of religious opinion in our own and neighboring countries, we find as we go back in line, closer and closer approach to those gross supernatural conceptions, the normal intellectual heritage of less civilised peoples of the present day. Carrying the historical retrospect no further than three or four centuries back, we reach in Europe a condition of emotion and a state of opinion wherein religion, superstition, spiritualism, and fetichism, all meet and mingle on common, harmonious and realistic terms.—*Westminster Review*, "The Decay of Faith," July, 1882, p. 63.

BELIEF IN GOD—RELIGION.—There is no evidence that man was originally endowed with the ennobling belief in the existence of an omnipotent God. On the contrary, there is ample evidence, derived not from hasty travellers, but from men who have long resided with savages, that numerous races have existed, and still exist, who have no idea of one or more gods, and have no words in their language to express such an idea.—"Darwin's Descent of Man," p. 65.

THE JEW GOD.—His service was at no time an easy one, and he was liable to outbursts of passion which rendered it peculiarly oppressive. Tolerant as he might be towards some des-

criptions of immorality, he had no mercy whatever for disloyalty towards himself. On one occasion he characterised himself by the name of "jealous," which was but too appropriate, and implied the possession of one of the least admirable of human weaknesses. Now the Jews were unfortunately prone to lapses of this kind. Such was the severity with which these offences were treated, that it is questionable whether it would not have been a far happier fate to be doomed in the Red Sea with the Egyptians than preserved with the children of Israel.—*Viscount Amberley*, "An Analysis of Religious Belief," vol. ii., p. 308; 1876.

REVIVAL OF PERSECUTION.—It will be said that we do not put to death the introducers of new opinions; we are not like our fathers who slew the prophets, we even build sepulchres to them. It is true we no longer put heretics to death; and the amount of penal infliction which modern feeling would probably tolerate, even against the most obnoxious opinions, is not sufficient to extirpate them. But let us not flatter ourselves that we are yet free from the stain even of legal persecution. Penalties for opinions, or at least for its expression, still exist by law, and their enforcement is not, even in these times, so unexampled as to make it at all incredible that they may some day be revived in full force. . . . What is boasted of at the present time as the revival of religion, is always, in narrow and uncultivated minds, at least as much the revival of bigotry; and where there is the strong permanent leaven of intolerance in the feelings of a people, which at all times abides in the middle classes of this country, it needs but little to provoke them into actively persecuting those whom they have never ceased to think proper objects of persecution.—*John Stuart Mill*, "On Liberty," pp. 54—57; 1859.

IMPIETY.—On every side I hear the cry of impiety. The Christian is impious in Asia, the Mussulman in Europe, the Papist at London, the Calvinist at Paris, the Jansenist at the top of the Rue St. Jacques, the Molinist at the bottom of the faubourg St. Medard. Who then is impious? Is everyone or nobody?—*Denis Diderot*, "Pensees Philosophiques," xxxv.

PRAYER.—A request for more rain—even a request for another loaf of bread—is a request for an infinite series of operations utterly beyond our knowledge. It is the old story:—

"Ye gods, annihilate but space and time
And make two lovers happy!"

The insect asks that the pebble which obstructs its path may be removed; and it really asks, though it knows it not, that mountains may be uprooted, and the climates of continents changed. Nor is a belief in the efficacy of prayer—understood in this sense—reconcilable with any lofty form of Theism. What can a prayer from man to the Ruler of the Universe express beyond a cry for relief and a confession of utter ignorance? At a certain mental stage, religion means a belief in an invisible poor-law board which will give outdoor relief on application; as at another period it means a belief, naively expressed by the amiable Tucker, who says that heaven is a supernatural bank, with the advantage that, unlike the Bank of England, it can never break, and it allows us an enormous rate of interest for any temporary sacrifice of pleasure.—*Leslie Stephen*, "Essays on Freethinking and Plain Speaking," pp. 134, 135.

PROFANE JOKES.

"FELLOW citizens," said a western murderer to the crowd around the gallows, "this is the saddest moment of my life. It isn't that I mind being jerked out of Dakota by the end of a rope, but that I am sorry to think I shall never see any of you again. I feel I've got a through ticket straight up into Abraham's bosom."

NOT EXACTLY.—She had ordered nothing but vegetables and was eating of them vigorously, when a little old lady seated next to her—one of those busybodies ever anxious to be pleasant—smiled and interrogatively said, "Vegetarian?" "No," said the other, in quick response, "Unitarian; I'm from Boston—are you?" One of those grand old Beethoven laughs without words went round the table.

A ROUTE PLANNED OUT.—We have an old citizen in this place, writes a correspondent at Industry Ill., who is very hard of hearing. He has been talking for some time of visiting Germany in the fall. I sat beside him at meeting the other night. After the sermon was over the minister took a turn round the church, shaking hands and talking. Presently he came to the old citizen, and taking his hand he commenced: "My dear old friend, are you thinking of going to heaven?" "Yah," said the German, "ven I gits my green-backs changed mit gold." "You don't understand me," remarked the other. "I mean, don't you want to go to heaven?" "Vell, I tinks not; I vas at New Haven once, and it is a pad place. I believe I goes to Germany in the fall."

Mr. Foote's Pamphlets.

Secularism the True Philosophy of Life. An Exposition
and a Defence 4d.

Atheism and Morality 2d.

The Futility of Prayer 2d.

Death's Test: or Christian Lies about Dying Infidels. 2d.

Atheism and Suicide 1d.

The God Christians Swear By 2d.

Was Jesus Insane? 1d.

BIBLE ROMANCES.

One Penny Each.

- I. The Creation Story—II. Noah's Flood—III. Eve and the
Apple—IV. The Bible Devil—V. The Ten Plagues—
VI. Jonah and the Whale—VII. The Wandering Jews—
VIII. The Tower of Babel—IX. Balaam's Ass—X. God's
Thieves in Canaan—XI. Cain and Abel—XII. Lot's Wife.

The First Series, bound in elegant wrapper, Price One Shilling.

Second Series:

- XIII. Daniel and the Lions.—XIV. The Jew Judges.—XV.
Saint John's Nightmare.—XVI. A Virgin Mother.—
XVII. God in a Box.—XVIII. Bully Samson.

London: 15, Harp Alley, Farringdon Street, E.C.

NOW READY,

Frauds & Follies of the Fathers

By J. M. WHEELER

To be Completed in Six Penny Numbers. Nos. 1 and
2 now ready.

This work will deal with the alleged authorities for the Gospels, and
expose the forgeries and frauds which have been palmed off on a
credulous public as Christian Evidences. Nos. 1 and 2 deal with the
Apostolic Fathers, Saints Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp.

London: FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, 28, Stonecutter St., E.C.

3s. 9d. **HEARTH-RUGS.** 3s. 9d.

1,500 RUGS SOLD IN TWO MONTHS.

MESSRS. HALL and CO. have much pleasure in an-
nouncing that they will forward free to every reader of this
paper (subject to conditions named below) a large and beautifully
designed **HEARTH-RUG.**

1	Hearth Rug, carriage paid	...	3s. 9d.
2	"	"	7s. 0d.
3	"	"	10s. 0d.

If stamps, 3d. extra with each order.

The size of each Rug is 72 inches by 36 inches. These Rugs are made in
five colors, which, being artistically blended, will suit any colored carpet
or suite. At the present time, when so much is being done to spread the
taste for all that is elegant and refined, Messrs. Hall & Co. are encouraged
to think that their efforts in this direction will be duly appreciated.
The Rug will be sent carriage free to any part of the United Kingdom
on receipt of P.O.O. for 3s. 9d., or 48 stamps. In ordering, it will be
desirable to write name and address very plainly, and to enclose the
application form found below.

ORDER FORM.

On receipt of this form, accompanied by a P.O.O. for
3s. 9d. (or forty-eight stamps), we agree to forward,
carriage free, a large and exquisitely-designed **HEARTH-**
RUG, 72 in. by 36 in.—(Signed) F. R. HALL & CO.,
58, Thornhill Road, London, N.

The following is a specimen of the testimonials received:—

"35, Derby Street, Larkfield, Rochdale.

"Gentlemen,—I have received the **Hearthrug** safely. Both my
husband and myself are very much pleased with it; it is a marvel of
cheapness as well as of style.—Yours respectfully, F. HORTON."

P.O.O.'s to be made payable at General Post Office, E.C., to F. R.
HALL & CO., 58, Thornhill Road, Barnsbury, London, N.

THWAITES' LIVER PILLS

Are acknowledged to be the best Family Medicine in the World by the
many thousands that are using them in preference to all others. It is
almost impossible to enumerate in an advertisement what they are
good for; it would take up too much of your time to read it, and after
you had read it you might say it was only advertising puff; but I ask
ONE TRIAL of the **LIVER PILLS**; if not better than any you have
tried before, I cannot expect a continuance of your custom. I recom-
mend them for *Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Dizziness, Biliousness,*
Costiveness, Nervousness, Palpitation of the Heart, Piles, etc., all of
which are, in many cases, caused by the Liver being inactive, or what
we call a sluggish Liver. Try some of the **LIVER PILLS** as soon as
you can, as they are pure Herb Pills, and may be used at any time
by anyone without any change of diet or danger of taking cold. Pre-
pared only by **GEORGE THWAITES**, 2, Church Row, Stockton-on-Tees.
Sold at 1s. 1d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or by post for 15 or 36 Penny
Stamps. A Price List of Herbs free.

NOW READY.

FREETHINKER TRACTS.

Specially designed for general distribution. Readers of the *Freethinker*
are earnestly requested to scatter them broadcast. The price puts
them within the reach of all.

- I.—**Bible Blunders.** By G. W. FOOTE.
II.—**Who's to be Damned?—if Christianity be True.**
By JOSEPH SYMES.
III.—**Darwin and Religion.** By EDWARD B. AVELING, D.Sc.
IV.—**The Salvation Craze.** By G. W. FOOTE.
V.—**Heterodox Nuts for Orthodox Teeth.** THE GOSPELS.
By J. E. GARNER.
VI.—**The Bible and Teetotalism.** By J. M. WHEELER.
VII.—**How Methodists Get the Holy Ghost.** By J. R.
WALLER.
VIII.—**Salvation by Faith.** By COLONEL R. G. INGERSOLL.

Price Sixpence per hundred, single or assorted; by post Eight-
pence. Packets of a thousand or upwards sent carriage free. Special
terms to Societies taking a quantity.

H. A. KEMP, 15, Harp Alley, Farringdon Street, E.C.

J. WORSTER,

WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANT,

"DUKE OF ORMOND,"

PRINCES STREET, WESTMINSTER.

The "*National Reformer*," "*Freethinker*," and other *Freethought*
Journals at the Bar.

TEETH, 2s. 6d. each, on vulcanite; upper or lower
set, £1. Best quality, on vulcanite, 4s. a tooth; upper or
lower set, £2. No extras. Completed in four hours when required.
Best teeth on platinum, 7s. 6d. each; on 18-carat gold, 15s. Painless
extraction daily, with gas, 6s.; without gas, 1s.; stopping,
2s. 6d.—Mr. STANTON, R.D., 128 Strand, London. Hours nine to
eight.

GODFREE'S (Knightsbridge) RESTAURANT, 4,
Brompton Road.—2nd and 3rd Class Dining and Supper
Rooms, 6 Brompton Road and 2 Middle Row, Knightsbridge. Hot
Joints from 12 a.m. to 12 p.m. Soups, Fried and Stewed Eels,
Tripe, and Entrees always ready. Malt Liquors as from the London
and Scotch Breweries. Choice Wines and Cigars. Tea and Coffee.
Private room for ladies.

ACID DROPS and SUGAR PLUMS.

SWEETS from 3d. per lb. Send stamp for Price List
to H. C. LEA and CO., Wholesale and Export Confectioners,
Burton-on-Trent. Please name the *Freethinker* when writing.

HIGH CLASS PURELY SECULAR EDUCATION.

MR. and MRS. SYMES RE-OPENED their FREE-
THOUGHT SCHOOL, Monday, July 31. No other School
offers Similar Advantages. The Education is Thorough; the Life
and Studies of the pupils are a bunch of purest pleasure; the
gloom of theology is unknown.—BEECH HOUSE, 142 Hagley Road,
Birmingham.

SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE FREETHINKER.

First Thirty Words	£0 1 0
Every Additional Ten, or Part of Ten Words	...	0 0 4
Quarter Column	0 8 0
Half a Column	0 13 0
Column	1 0 0
Page	1 15 0

PROSECUTIONS for BLASPHEMY.

Freethinkers should read—

The Laws Relating to Blasphemy and Heresy.—Giving their
history, quotations from various cases, with extracts and
references to all the best authorities. By C. BRADLAUGH.
6d.

The Past and Present of the Heresy Laws.—By PROFESSOR
HUNTER. 3d. The two sent free by post for Nine Stamps.

London: FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY, 28, Stone-
cutter Street, E.C.

Printed and published by H. A. KEMP, 15, Harp Alley, Farringdon
Street, E.C.