

PROSECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY.

THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

“COMIC BIBLE” SKETCHES.—XL.



THE DEVIL AND THE PIGS.

So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine.—MATTHEW viii., 31-2.

VARLEY'S VIRTUE.

HENRY VARLEY found the converting business rather dull in London, so he has gone off to “fresh woods and pastures new” in Scotland. For the last fortnight he has been trying his luck in Edinburgh, and as there is a section of its inhabitants who belong to the “unco’ guid,” he has achieved a certain measure of success. These people have vinegar in their veins, stupid pride in their faces, and hypocrisy in their hearts. They cannot enjoy themselves, and they hate to see other people doing it. A life with any color in it they regard as earthly, sensual and devilish; and they naturally welcome with open arms a pious preacher from London, who knows all about vice and dissipation, and can trace every bit of the immorality of the great metropolis to young people going to see the pantomime at Christmas after being partially corrupted by Punch and Judy in the streets.

These are nice people, and nice people, as Swift said, are people with nasty ideas. They like to dwell on all things filthy and loathsome in order to express their abhorrence, and take dirt in their mouths to show how they can spit it out. Henry Varley is just the man for these people. He knows how to excite their prurient curiosity. Twelve months ago he published a pamphlet, full of garbled extracts from various works on the population question, “for men only;” and we dare say he earned an easy penny by this suggestive advertisement. Down at Edinburgh he follows the same sweet trade. He has lectured there on “The Social Evil,” a subject on which he is doubtless an

authority, and in order to draw a large audience he announced that “women would not be admitted.” According to report his lecture was very sorry stuff. Before he had spoken a few minutes his old love of defaming his betters flashed out. After describing the career of “a fallen woman,” whose first step in vice was visiting a theatre, he raised his arms and exclaimed, “Look at that miserable woman, Sarah Bernhardt.” Whereupon one young gentleman, who had strayed among the godly libellers, jumped up, and crying “You are a slanderer, sir,” left the room. The next day Varley discoursed in the Cowgate, where a woman took up a handful of dirt and threw it in his face, thus probably answering filth with filth.

The *Scotsman* reported Varley’s “vice” lecture, and the result is that he now seeks to explain away his dastardly insult to the great French actress. He has addressed to the *Scotsman* the following elegant epistle:—

“VIRTUE AND VICE.

“Edinburgh, September 12, 1882.

“Sir,—A paragraph in your impression of Monday last concerning my remark in reference to Sarah Bernhardt conveys an erroneous impression.

“Certainly I did not hear what your informant affirms. I was counselling young men specially to avoid the theatre, where, with splendor of scenic effect, vice and immorality are made to appear both fascinating and attractive. Such performers I hold the members of the *Comedie Francaise* to be, and I regard Madame Sarah Bernhardt as one of the most miserable women on earth, because she degrades her great gifts by throwing the glamor of her finished acting into such shameful plays as ‘Adrienne’ and ‘Le Demi Monde.’ I maintain that the *Comedie Francaise* has thrown a charm about licentiousness by

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their brilliant and costly stage representations, the result of which has been permanent injury to the morals of many of our middle and upper classes.

"Speaking for myself, I would rather lie in the bed of the channel of the Firth of Forth, with a millstone about my neck than I would be Madame Sarah Bernhardt. It used to be said that

"Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
That to be hated needs but to be seen."

But it is made exquisite and delicious in the hands of these polished actors.—I am, &c. "HENRY VARLEY."

This slaughter-house revivalist makes a very cheap boast. The alternative in his last paragraph will never present itself. He is like the vulgar who say "not for the world," well knowing they will never be offered such a magnificent bribe. His forte is not genius but virtue. Yet we doubt if Henry Varley's virtue is after all worth quite so much as Sarah Bernhardt's genius; and we surmise that if the angels were polled, and allowed to vote by ballot, their decision would be in favor of her entering heaven, even though Varley had to find lodgings elsewhere.

Varley's knowledge of the French theatre is about equal to his knowledge of the French language. Certainly the great actress could never corrupt *his* morals, for it is pretty clear that he could not understand a word she said. He does not know the gender of "Comédie," and he spells it without the accent. By "Adrienne" we presume he means "Adrienne Lecouvreur." If a Frenchman were to speak of Shakespeare's play of "Julius," and omit the "Casar," we should scarcely think him fit to discourse on the English drama. Yet that is just how Varley speaks of Scribe's celebrated play.

Nor is Varley's English any better than his French. We have noted at least a dozen blunders in this short epistle. He misquotes Pope's couplet, because he is ignorant of grammar and devoid of ear. The *Scotsman* charitably suggests that "it is perhaps absurd to expect so conscientiously good a man to quote correctly." Ordinary mortals would think it enough to say that the theatre is *fascinating* without adding *attractive*. There is another anti-climax in the very same sentence. After the strong word *vice* comes the weaker word *immorality*. The next sentence is worthy of being selected as "a frightful example" to students of English composition. But it is no worse than that lying in the *bed of the channel of the Firth of Forth*. Varley does not know that the Firth has no channel. It is an estuary. The same word, slightly varied in spelling, means an estuary or bay in Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Icelandic. No wonder, after all this tautology, the scribe throws in a gratuitous millstone. It would make no difference what he had round his neck, whether a millstone or a halter, if he were once at the bottom of the Firth of Forth. And we venture to say that if he would only try how it feels down there, the world would have some reason to be thankful. A buoy could be placed over the spot, and the pious gentry who applauded his rubbish in the Assembly Hall might go out there once a week, and sing Tennyson's hymn beginning "Out of the deeps, my boy out of the deeps."

Doubtless Varley would reply that he objects to fishes, although Jesus Christ and the apostles were very partial to them. He might also contend that virtue can dispense with grammar, and even with charity and common sense. "I own," he might say, "that my orthography is weak, that my syntax is bad and my etymology worse, and that I am not skilled in the wisdom of this world; but then, as the moral gentleman says in Hood's poem,

"Who on earth can say I am not *pious*?"

We yield to that appeal. He *is* pious. So is Mr. Samuel Morley, so is Mr. Newdegate, so is Sir Henry Tyler, and so was Mr. Charles Guiteau. No doubt he is virtuous too, after the fashion of the "unco' guid." Yet for all that the civilised world will not forsake the theatre for his tabernacle. "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale? Yes, by Saint Anne; and ginger shall be hot in the mouth too."

G. W. FOOTE.

CLERGYMAN'S WIFE (who takes great interest in her industrial school): "Jane Brown, I'm sorry to hear you are not diligent in your needlework. Now you know who it is that finds work for idle hands to do?" Jane Brown, artfully, thinking to propitiate: "If you please, 'm, you do, 'm."

J. S. MILL ON BLASPHEMY PROSECUTIONS.

PROFESSOR BAIN, in his recent work on John Stuart Mill (reviewed in the *Freethinker* for March 26), points out (p. 33) as among the early contributions of Mill to the *Westminster Review*, the first article in the third number (July, 1824,) on Religious Prosecutions. This article, though not the first written by the young philosopher, for in the previous number he had made a slashing onslaught at the *Edinburgh Review*, was written while only in his eighteenth year, and would be noteworthy on that account if on no other. It is further interesting as showing that in his early youth Mill was not only imbued with those principles which he has so ably advocated in his book on "Liberty," but that he had already studied their working in detail. The paper is moreover of especial interest to Freethinkers at a time when long-dormant bigotry has awoken from its nap and cries again for the suppression of "blasphemy."

At the time when Mill put forth this plea for toleration the fearless Richard Carlile was enduring his six years imprisonment in Dorchester gaol. Wm. Campion, John Clarke, Wm. Haley, and T. R. Perry, were in Newgate for three years each; R. Hassell, and W. Tunbridge for two years; T. Jefferies for eighteen months; and Wm. Cochrane and John Christopher for six months each; Jas. Affleck, in Edinburgh, was in prison for three months; Jas. Watson, H. Boyle, and Joseph Rhodes had just come out of prison after sentences of twelve months, eighteen months, and two years respectively. Jane Carlile, and Mary Ann Carlile, her sister-in-law, had also recently suffered two years imprisonment each.

The Tylers of the day were triumphant. A certain Rev. W. B. Whitehead had moreover put forth a vindication of the prosecution of Infidel blasphemers, in the form of a letter to D. Ricardo. It was this which drew forth the review by Mill. He commences in the following striking manner:—

"About this time there arose a set of men who denounced the prevalent system of religion as superstitious and idolatrous; who believed themselves destined to be its reformers, and aimed at reducing it to certain simple principles; who pursued this object with fearlessness and perseverance, although they had to encounter the opposition both of public opinion and of the constituted authorities, and many of whom, when tried for blasphemy, scrupled not to repeat, in the face of their judges, the obnoxious expressions for which they had been arraigned, and were about to suffer. They gloried in addressing themselves to the multitude; and the sympathy which was excited by the proceedings against them, induced many to listen with a favorable ear to their opinions."

He then remarks how such a passage might be supposed to describe either the first Christians, the Reformers, or Carlile and his associates; or that it applied alike to all; "so nearly allied in one point of view, were glory and infamy, saintship and criminality, the Catholic calendar and the Newgate calendar, a niche in St. Peter's church and a dungeon in Dorchester gaol."

Mill then argues for the right and expediency of free discussion upon religion, in a manner continually reminding us of the essay on "Liberty."

"Whoever believes that Christianity is of divine origin, and consequently more benignant in its tendency than any other religion, must also believe it to be for the interest of a large majority of the inhabitants of the earth, that their present religious systems should be assailed and overturned, for that to be planted in their stead. Unless men had acted on this principle, the most absurd and debasing superstitions which have existed must have been perpetuated; and unless they continue to act upon it, those which now exist must be perpetuated."

He shows Christianity cannot be considered an exception since none can say its results are not susceptible of improvement. The prohibition of the public denial of Christianity moreover would only produce hypocrisy. To be effective it must prohibit all except the authorised interpretation of Christianity, otherwise heresy would creep in under the guise of another interpretation. As Woolston, for instance, denied the miracles under pretence of giving them an allegorical signification. The tiger of intolerance must always have blood, and can digest a heretic as easily as an infidel. It always catches those hindmost in the race of faith. When Unitarianism was unknown, Nonconformity was a crime. Till Deism spread, Unitarianism was a crime. In these days of undisguised Atheism, Deism is tolerated. All the reasoning which applies to the sup-

pression of the strongest forms of heresy can be carried on to the extirpation of the mildest.

Mill further shows that religious prosecutions are ineffectual, and serve mainly to advertise the obnoxious opinions and to enlist on the side of infidelity that sympathy which human nature will generally feel with those who are persecuted. He then attacks the specious argument, of which we hear, and are likely to hear, so much in our own day, that fair argument may be allowed against Christianity but not reviling, contumely, or caricature. The so-called license for fair argument is nullified by the letter of the statute against Blasphemy (9 and 10 William and Mary) which is enacted against those who "deny the Christian religion to be true, or the Holy Scriptures to be of divine authority," irrespective of the manner of such denial. Moreover, in the case *Rex v. Woolston* when the offence was not a direct denial, but an allegorical interpretation of the New Testament, which, in the opinion of Lord Raymond, "struck at the very root of Christianity;" the Court declared that "they would not suffer it to be debated whether to write against Christianity in general, was not an offence against common law." In truth the pretence that the law allows of fair argument against Christianity is utterly false. The statute law does nothing of the kind. Certain judges, influenced by the toleration of the age, have sought to give this interpretation to the common law, According to this view, indecent blasphemy alone is punished. *Decent blasphemy is safe.* The Deity may be denied but it must be done with due decorum. His revelation may be disputed but it must be disputed politely. You may disbelieve and disprove the Christian religion, but it must be done with taste and grace. Scepticism skilled in verballism may escape the law. Scepticism speaking straight to the point must suffer. But the Freethinker is left in this position. The Christian while claiming merit for tolerating fair argument, while there is a prospect of conviction on the score of reviling, can still fall back on the statute law affirming the illegality of everything which tends to the disproof of Christianity.

Mill ably argues that the line between argument and reviling is too difficult even for legal acuteness to draw; that he who disbelieves and attempts to disprove Christianity can put his arguments into no form which may not be pronounced calumnious and illegal; and that therefore the only mode of securing free inquiry from that restraint is to tolerate the one as well as the other. A conclusion which he proceeds to strengthen by the following considerations.

"To declare that an act is legal, but with the proviso that it be performed in a gentle and decorous manner, is opening a wide door for arbitrary discretion on the one part, and dissatisfaction on the other. The difficulty is greatly increased when the act itself is offensive to those who sit in judgment upon the manner of its performance. Suppose that it were made expulsion from the House of Commons to address the chair ungracefully—what a clamor would there be for the unconditional allowance or prohibition of speech! Could the distinction be accurately ascertained, it would be hard to debar the man of ungainly habits from doing that which he might think required of him by duty to his constituents and his country. But it is infinitely more unjust to debar a man who may have a comprehensive and vigorous, though a coarse and vulgar mind, from publishing his speculations on theological topics, because his style partakes of his own rudeness, and lacks the polish of that of Hume or Gibbon. If the proposition that Christianity is untrue may be legally conveyed to the mind, what can be more absurd than to say that to express that proposition by certain undefined and undefinable selections of terms shall constitute a crime?"

The eloquent peroration with which Mill concludes this old but not obsolete article has already been quoted in the *Freethinker* in the before-mentioned review.

J. M. WHEELER.

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THE TRADE OF WAR.

BY ERNEST JONES.

Nations, like men, too oft are given to roam,
And seek abroad what they could find at home;
They send their armies out on ventures far;
Their halt is—havoc; and their journey—war;
Destruction's traders; who, to start their trade,
Steal, for the bayonet, metal from the spade;
The interest is—blood; the capital is—life;
The debt is—vengeance; the instalment—strife;
The payments—death; and wounds are the receipt;
The markets—battle; and the whole—a cheat,

(*Revolt of Hindostan.*)

ACID DROPS.

THE *Christian World* says of the new sect: "We were recently assured by a gentleman, the superintendent of a Sunday-school in Gloucestershire, that the only result of the entrance of the Army into his neighbourhood was the withdrawal of the elder boys and girls from the school, where they were receiving sound Christian instruction, in order to take part in the orgies of the Salvationists." And yet there are infidels who dispute the beneficial results of Booth's revival!

TALMAGE says Infidel lecturers would be better sweeping crossings than imperilling souls by aspersing the religion of the blessed Savior. "Lucianus" opines that Peter and Andrew (his brother), and James and John (his brother) would have done better for themselves and better for the world if instead of trying to net honest men and women with the bait of a dead Jew, they had minded their fishing-tackle and stuck to the Lake of Galilee.

ANOTHER instance of episcopal cheek comes from Bombay. The Bishop of that See has issued a pastoral on the Indian Law of divorce in which he promises his influence to support all who choose to obey the law of the Church rather than that of the State, and says, further, that he will withhold licences from any clergyman not holding similar views.

MISS C. E. WOOD, of Newcastle, who has long been the most successful of the so-called "materialising mediums," has at last been exposed by the spiritists themselves. *Light*, their organ, for September 16th, contains accounts of Mr. Cade, another medium, having seized the supposed materialised spirit. He discovered it to be Miss Wood herself attired in muslin, through which parts of her nude body could be seen. He insisted on taking some of the muslin by way of evidence, and this he obtained "after a severe struggle."

DR. HATELY WADDELL, of Glasgow, who has edited Burns and put the psalms of David into old Scotch, has a rare talent for Biblical exegesis. Preaching from the verses in the 20th chapter of St. John's Nightmare, beginning:—"And I saw an angel come down from Heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon and bound him a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit." If ever an angel, he informed his audience, came down from heaven to earth for a work like this, it was the angel of electrical science. It came direct from heaven. If such an angel brought a chain in his hand, it was the telegraph wire, and the electric cable coiled up and carried on his arm. If ever such an angel had such a key as spoken of in the text it was the submarine telegraph. Just in proportion as electricity circled the earth, just in proportion

would the Devil be defeated. Though we may dissent from Dr. Waddell's interpretation of Revelation we decidedly agree that Edison's services to humanity outvalue those of all the angels that were ever hatched.

THE death of Dr. Pusey has recalled attention to the movement in the Church of England which forty years ago went under his name. That movement never has been and never can be anything but a stepping stone towards Rome. Dr. Pusey himself was left "high and dry" by his more logical comrades, Manning, Oakley, and Newman. But all Protestants who do not accept the legitimate consequences of exercising the right of private judgment are in an equally inconsistent position.

THE fetish of an infallible book is even more inconsequential and absurd than the fetish of an infallible Church. The two Newmans, one (Francis William) becoming a pure rationalist, and the other (John Henry) becoming a complete Catholic, well illustrate the necessary result in logical minds. Puseyism and Ritualism are bye roads to Romanism when not the thing itself playing under false pretences.

As far as we have watched "General" Booth we always find his eye directed to the main chance. It is now found that part of the Grecian Theatre, for which he raised subscriptions to the tune of over £16,000, has been fitted up as an hotel. Such a rendezvous in the City Road will doubtless prove a good speculation, but we wonder if Archbishop Tait suspected this when he handed over his fiver.

How the Bishops are beginning to patronise the Salvation Army now it is so successful! The Bishop of Truro has just been patting the Boothites on the back, although he admits that some of their practices are "revolting." Revolting they are, but still they succeed and pay, and that is all professional soul-savers care for in the long run.

THE *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* is a loud Jingo, very pious, and about as accurate as the gospels. For sheer invention and party gasconade we would back it against any journal in the world, except perhaps the *Paris Figaro*. This Church and State organ of the Tory manufacturers and publicans of Sheffield has just announced that the late Mr. Peace was an Atheist. The *Sheffield D. T.* must really be in the D. T.'s. Too much whiskey hath made it mad. It has only to refer back to its own columns to see that Mr. Peace told the gaol chaplain that he believed in God and the Devil too, but did not care for either of them; and it must be fully aware, from its knowledge of Sheffield piety, that Mr. Peace's sentiment is shared by thousands of his co-religionists.

THE Teetotal movement (falsely called Temperance, which means use without abuse) has now a history of fifty years. It was going to destroy the drink traffic, and it still boasts that it will do so. But it never will. It is founded on the radically false Christian idea that preaching will do everything, and that you can grasp ends without using means. England drinks more now than it did fifty years ago. The Teetotal movement has made no impression. In 1831 there were 50,000 licensed houses in England and Wales, or one to every 260 of the population; now there are 150,000, or one for every 170. In 1831 the amount spent on drink averaged £3 per head; it now averages £4. In Scotland they have had a Sunday Closing Bill in operation for years, yet drunkenness is steadily on the increase. Sunday closing will do just as much good in England. These well-meaning but erring reformers have been trained in a wrong school. They have never been taught to look after the causes of effects. Just as God said "Let there be light" and there was light, so they think they may say "Let drunkenness cease" and it will cease. But wagging the tongue and signing the pledge will do no good. The *material conditions* that surround the people must be altered before you can reasonably expect any change in *them*. Root out the slums of our cities, abolish the smoke nuisance, give us more oxygen in the air, more parks, more open spaces, broader streets, and plenty of trees; open the museums, art galleries, and libraries on Sunday, instead of shutting the public-house; provide wholesome refreshments at a reasonable cost for the working man and his family when they go out; establish clubs, institutes, and societies, where people may drink when they are thirsty and refrain when they are not; do all or any of these things, and you strike at the causes of drunkenness. Leave them undone, and all the preaching and pledging of another fifty years will only result in a further increase of our deplorable intemperance, with its ruined homes, its misery and vice, its workhouses, its asylums, and its gaols.

A CHRISTIAN writer states that "there is room for reformation in all the churches." Why doesn't he tell us that Queen Anne is dead?

MOODY has been speaking in the following oracular manner at Swansea:—"The Bible is a supernatural book." If one

part of it is true, the whole of it is true. Infidels may cavil, but they cannot destroy the truths of the Bible." Infidels were never so foolish as to expect they could. They want to destroy the *falsities* of the Bible and not its truths. Does the Yankee revivalist mean all that is implied in his second proposition? Is the whole of the Bible false if one part of it is false? If so, the first chapter of Genesis settles the whole blessed book.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* advertises itself as "the most independent religious journal published." It is about the most independent of knowledge and common sense of all the journals we know except the *War Cry*.

THOSE who know most about Christianity have always disputed its pretensions. Of all the farces played in Christendom, that of seeking to convert the Jews to Christianity is the most absurd. Judaism stands in relation to Christianity as a parent who disowns his offspring. The chosen race only accept the Christian faith either to gain money, as with the very poor, or to gain position, like the Miss Rothschild, who has recently become a princess.

WE have been sent the Report of the Berkshire Auxilliary of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. Although this Society has an income of over £37,000 we cannot learn from its report of any new converts save five at Berlin, where the Anti-Semitic agitation has driven some poor Jews towards the missionaries, and one reported from Jerusalem. However, the Report says: "How many of Israel's sons have been brought to the saving knowledge of the truth through the efforts of your missionaries, is known only to Him in whose hands are the hearts of the children of men," and they hope with continued prayer and increasing effort—i.e., more subscriptions—to have greater success in future.

THE Report says of Smyrna, that the Jews there who pretend to be liberal are infidel in heart. The account of the convert in Jerusalem reminds us of how the Protestant Jewish community was first established there. None of the Jerusalem Jews accepting Christianity, a small colony was imported from various places at a cost of above £4,000 per head.

ST. JUDE'S CHURCH, Liverpool, was last Sunday the scene of another scuffle. Those of the congregation who object to the Rev. Mr. Fitzroy's Ritualistic ministrations actually made an attack on him in the church, the choir being surrounded by a mob. The rev. gentleman had to take refuge in one of the pews, and afterwards retired to the vestry.

THE *Echo* notes that "prior to his sermon at York Cathedral, yesterday, Canon Paget said, with reference to the War in Egypt, they wanted to thank God for their great and extraordinary success. The Southampton Secular Society, on the other hand, occupied itself with reading Mr. Henry Richard's letter on the Egyptian crisis. Instead of thanking God for victory, the Southampton Secularists entered a protest against the action of the British Government."

WE should not advise Freethinkers to send their children to spend their holidays at Barmouth. On Sunday week a lady allowed her little child (aged four) to go to the beach and while away the morning hours by digging in the sands. A pious policeman of this godly watering-place soon hove in sight, and detecting the juvenile culprit at this desecration of the Lord's day at once arrested the juvenile offender and walked off with the terrified youngster, nurse, spade, sand-bucket and all. This village Dogberry, however, had no Moses to bring the guilty parties before, or they might have been stoned to death with stones, as was done to the man who gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day (Numb. xv., 32—36).

COULD anything be more disgustingly blasphemous than the form of thanksgiving drawn up by the Archbishop of York? These priestly humbugs make out that their god gives all the victories to our troops, but they never say a word about our defeats. They were silent about Isandula and Majuba Hill. Archbishop Thomson says it is "the most High God [how many are there?] to whom we owe this swift victory." We rather guess that Sir Garnet Wolseley and the army in Egypt take a different view.

JAMES SMITH, of Ansonia, Connecticut, a young ruffian of twenty-three, was hanged a fortnight ago for murdering a policeman. He was buried in his native village the following Sunday, and ten thousand people followed his corpse to the grave. While in gaol his spiritual condition was an object of general interest. Any number of priests helped to prepare him for glory, and pious ladies sent him flowers. A pillow was placed on the coffin with a white dove, and the words "Thou art forgiven" and "Hope." Not a thought was given to the poor bobby, who is very likely frizzling in hell.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures in Nottingham, on Saturday evening, September 23rd, in the Lecture Room (corner of North Street and Shakespeare Street), at 8 o'clock: subject, "Royalty: its Cost and its Worth." On Sunday, the 24th, three times in the Royal Alhambra: Morning, at 11, "The Gospel of Free-thought;" Afternoon, at 3, "Darwin versus Moses;" Evening, at 6.45, "Blasphemy and Blasphemers."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

October 1st, Claremont Hall, London; 5th, Hall of Science, London; 8th, Leeds; 12th, Hall of Science; 15th, Halifax; 19th, Hall of Science; 22nd, Manchester; 26th, Hall of Science; 29th, Portsmouth; October 30th, Southampton.

November 5th, Heckmondwike; 12, Liverpool; 19th, Hall of Science, London; 26th, Claremont Hall, London.

December 3rd, Huddersfield; 10th, Bradford; and 17th, Grimsby.

January 14th (1883), Manchester.

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

RECEIVED WITH THANKS:—John Jones, "Ennis," T. C. I., W. Turner, James Cunliffe, J. H. Hopkins, H. Hopkins.

W. TAYLOR.—Your query is substantially the same as that of Friday to Robinson Crusoe: "Why Goramighty no kill Devil?" We have not yet met the person or parson that does not "give it up."

W. MILLER.—Helvetius it was who said if God had made man in his own image, the biped had returned the compliment by making God in his.

H. G. DATSON.—Surely the *reductio ad absurdum* is one of the most potent forms of argument. We think, too, that we do explain Christianity in our attacks. Our method is a popular one, as befits a penny paper, but we convey a good deal of information without pretending to do so. Indirect teaching, which avoids the evils of pedantry, is most palatable and therefore most likely to be taken.—We believe the Thursday Lectures will be published in a slightly abridged form. Mr. Foote's series will scarcely bear abridging, he will prepare them for the press afterwards if he can find time.

W. STOKES.—Thanks for the cuttings. We are sorry to hear that you have a difficulty in procuring your *Freethinker* owing to the insufficient supply at the Hall. Mr. Foote will be pleased to visit Birmingham again.

MR. FOOTE begs correspondents to send all communications meant for him to his private address as above, and not to Harp Alley or elsewhere.

MR. TRAPP, 104 Central Street, E.C., sells the *Freethinker* and all Secular publications.

WM. CAMERON.—In Bible times "servants" were nearly always slaves. Any lexicon will define the Greek word "doulos," which in our version is translated "servant" as "slave." Its root signifies "bound." Another word altogether is used for hired servant. Cuttings are always welcome.

J. S.—A little immature.

QUESTIONS FOR THE ORTHODOX.—Full of good sense but rather crudely put.

JOSEPH LUMLEY.—Must stand over a little. We are, as usual, overwhelmed with verse.

E. P. P. M.—Your lines are vigorous and well expressed, but we really have no space at present.

T. S. C.—The *Freethinker* is published early on Thursday morning, and your London agent has no excuse for the delay.

A. WALKER.—The idea is a very good one, but it would require the genius of a Blake to work it out properly. However, we will see what can be done.

A. H.—We are glad to hear that the Maidstone Freethinkers are moving. Your little paper is very good in its way, but as our space is so limited we need something original.

PHONO.—Thanks for the extract. Your suggestion is a good one, and we will try to carry it out in our next batch of tracts.

T. KNOWLES.—The joke is an old one. See Sugar Plums.

J. TAYLOR.—Your letter is, unfortunately, too long.

W. A. T.—We have long meant to do what you advise, but we have had so many other things to do of late. As soon as possible we will see to it.

IRLANDAIS.—There are plenty of wholesale agents ready to supply the *Freethinker*. If your local newsagent cares to insist he can easily get what he requires. If he does not insist, you should.

F. ROSTER.—Your physical theory is very interesting, and perhaps true, but it is no answer to Mr. Heaford's advertisement.

DOVER FREETHINKER.—It is, as you say, very strange that the Rev. W. E. Light should live in such a fine, well-situated house, and yet tell his congregation that Christ in God is the only real necessary of life.

J. GOODFELLOW.—Tell the Hawick friends that we will do our best to satisfy their expectations.

S. B. B.—It is part of a larger bill often printed before.

C. NICHOLSON.—We are much obliged.

Next Week we shall publish a Full-page Cartoon, entitled "The Salvation Dodge." It will be one of the raciest and most trenchant satires on General Booth and the Boothites. Our readers should order early so as to secure a supply, as there is sure to be a run on the Number.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE'S "Blasphemy no Crime" is now ready. There will be a very large demand for it, if we may judge by the orders already received. Mr. Hilditch, of the Finsbury Branch, has taken eight dozen for gratuitous distribution.

Daylight, an independent little journal published at Norwich, calls attention to the distribution of Freethinker tracts in Peterborough Market-place, and, better still, gives an account of the arguments of Secularists. Our arguments only need to be known for our principles to spread, and our prosecutors are fortunately bent upon securing for us the desired publicity.

THE *London City Mission Magazine* for September heads one article with the title, "Annual Report of Infidel Hall District." It complains that of 1000 families inhabiting St. Luke's, London (the Hall of Science district), 400 are totally inaccessible to the ministrations of the Society's agents, "being either indifferent or bitterly hostile to anything appertaining to Christianity." Of course, all who object to the Society's agents poking their noses into their homes—which usually happens in the absence of the head of the house—are set down as wickedly corrupt.

IN November next the number of members of the School Board for London will be raised from fifty to fifty-three by the addition of two to the representation of Lambeth and one to that of Chelsea. An unsectarian or Secularist candidate would have a fair chance of success in either of these divisions, especially as Roman Catholic candidates are likely to appear in the field.

WE may expect a universal reformation early next year. The Evangelical Alliance is arranging for "a week of prayer" all over the world, to commence on January 7th. All the ills that souls are heir to will be expressly denounced, and the Lord will be politely reminded that it is his duty to abolish them. According to Scripture "the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much." All they want is the righteous man. Would it not be well to defer the praying till they have found him, and then to keep on praying till they get everything they want? In any case nothing can be done without that righteous man. Diogenes went about searching for one in vain, but surely there must be any number in a Church which boasts of its Newdegates, Morleys, Churchills, Varleys and Tylers.

A NEWSAGENT writes to us from a small town in the West of England, describing the way in which he pushes Freethought literature round the parish. He asks a customer if he has read the "Age of Reason;" offers to lend it for week on sale or return; and in every case except one the book has been bought. He circulates a copy almost every week by this means. To all other Freethinking newsagents we say, "Go ye and do likewise."

YESTERDAY week a detachment of the Salvation Army made a descent on Pendlebury under the command of Mad Jack. As they returned homewards at night in their big war-chariot (a carrier's lorry fitted up with seats) the supports gave way, and the whole squad were precipitated to the bottom. Out of the debris came the shouts of men and women—"The Lord help me," "Take this form off my foot," "Good Lord deliver us," and other pious ejaculations. The Lord made no response, but three infidels helped them out of their plight and sent them on their way rejoicing.

THE East Street Baptist Chapel, Southampton, runs a half-penny monthly, in the September number of which much capital is made of a statement made by Mr. Foote six years ago respecting Secular benevolence. What was largely true then is utterly untrue now. The Benevolent Fund is extremely well supported, and there is more than enough money to relieve every deserving case. With regard to the other quotation from an article of about the same date, we beg to say that the National Secular Society is now exceedingly well organised, that it is able to support a paid secretary, that its members list grows every month, and that it does more work in proportion to its size than any other organisation in the kingdom. Will the Rev. H. Carrington Lake print this in his next number?

THE Southampton Secular Society has done well to publish a confutation of the Rev. C. J. Whitmore's tract "What becomes of Secular Leaders?" It is printed as a leaflet, and should be widely circulated.

MR. J. BARKER writes that the Freethinkers of the neighborhood meet at the High Cross, Tottenham, this afternoon at 3 and march to the spot where Mr Thurlow will deliver an open-air address. The Christians have been trying to drive them away by brute force, and they go about boasting that all the Freethought leaders will soon be in gaol for blasphemy. Let our friends show a bold front.

MR. FOOTE lectured to an enormous audience on Clerkenwell Green last Sunday morning. Mr Mitchell, one of the paid agents of the Christian Evidence Society, tried to cause a disturbance, but the audience only treated his insults and braggadocio with loud laughter. There was a large sale of the *Freethinker*. In the evening Mr. Foote lectured to a large audience at the Hall of Science.

A GERMAN Hebrew, or an Englishman who has been reading his "Hans Breitmann," sends us the following little note:—

MY DEAR FREEDINKER,—I know not moosh bout der English. Not so long ago I vas in your country vere I see many dings "For shentlemens only," in vat you call Strand. I go a leetle vay oop a street, and see shop mit dis notice in der vindow, "On View a Classical Picture. For Gentlemen only." All dat I oonderstand very vell. But I come back round der corner, dere I see big house, "Exeter Hall," mit big notice at der door—"Bible Reading at 3.15. For Young Men only." Vel now I vant to know if der English have two Bibles, von for ladies and von for shentlemens.

WE can inform our correspondent that although there is no separate Bible for ladies and gentlemen there is one for children and one for adults. The child's Bible, however, is not popular. The little ones are usually well acquainted with the dirty passages of the authorised version, and pious ladies who refuse to read novels gulp them down as choice Sunday reading, having the authority of the Holy Ghost for their nastiness.

EX-REV. GEORGE MILN was among the speakers during the last session of the New York Freethinkers' Convention. The Methodist party had the cheek to send the following:—

"To the President of Freethinkers' Convention: All hail the power of Jesus' name. We are building more than one Methodist church for every day in the year, and propose to make it two a day. (Signed) C. C. McCABE.
Secretary Board of Church Extension, M. E. Church.

A reply was wired as under:—

"Let us hear less of Jesus' name and see more of his works: build fewer churches and pay your taxes on them like honest men; build better churches, since liberty, science, and humanity will need them one of these days, and won't want to pay too much for repairs. (Signed) T. B. WAKEMAN.
"Prest. Pro tem. of Freethinkers' Convention."

WHO ARE THE WICKED?

[Continued from p. 283.]

THE "Wicked and Evil Disposed!" What people are those? He who drowned the world, destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with fire, persecuted to extinction the Canaanites, and will damn unbelievers—he must be infinitely wicked and evil disposed; and his followers, in their degree, are just like him. No malice or malignity can equal that which is inspired by religion, and no religion equals the Christian in that respect. Ecclesiastical history is the record of one long, immense, unbroken crime; an exhibition of malice unparalleled in the annals of man. Its permanent spirit, which Jesus bequeathed to the Church, and which has never left it, may be seen in these sentences: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv., 26). "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. x., 34). "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. xxv., 41). These texts show what the master was—an incarnate fiend, if incarnate at all.

That is, no doubt, blasphemy; and here is more from a Christian writer:—"Christ foretold the destruction of the city and the temple, and the calamity of the Jews, fully and clearly; but being asked when this should be, he gave an answer in a sublime and prophetic style. . . . This he might possibly do to perplex the unbelieving persecuting

Jews, if his discourses should ever fall into their hands, that they might not learn to avoid the impending evil" (Jortin's Remarks on Eccl. Hist., vol. I., p. 37; ed. London, 1846). Why is not Jortin's book prosecuted? Nay! Why is not the Bible suppressed, which records such crimes and purposed crimes of Jesus and his father?

Here follow a few more quotations from Jortin intended to show how wicked and evil-disposed Christians formerly were. We need no quotations to show us their wickedness and malice to-day; though it is interesting to note that they have been such in all ages. Under Constantine probably, certainly near his time, many pagan priests and prophets were arrested and tortured—vol. I., 70. Of Vigilantius, Jortin remarks, that "He came off very well, if he suffered (at the hands of St. Jerome) no greater harm than to be called fool, blockhead, madman, demoniac, lunatic, heretic, Arian, Eumonian, Samaritan, Jew, Pagan, infidel, apostate, blasphemer, calumniator, despiser of martyrs bishops and emperors, glutton, sot, liar, ass, and dog" (p. 256). The crime of Vigilantius was that he had spoken against the too great honors bestowed upon the martyrs. In so far he was a Freethinker; and Jerome, inspired by the example of Jesus, who called the Pharisees hypocrites, generation of vipers, etc., not being able to burn Vigilantius, spat his venom in the style just recorded.

"It was," says Jortin, "an old custom with the Christians to burn heretical writings, and to forbid the reading of them. The accounts, therefore, which we have of ancient heretics are usually very imperfect, and not to be depended upon; for the orthodox, either through resentment or ignorance, have not done them justice" (p. 296). Justice! That is a quality no god or prophet or saint ever yet exhibited towards a heretic or unbeliever! Moses murdered the Canaanites, and then blackened their character to justify his deed. So, no doubt, did the orthodox to the heretics. We know for certain that the orthodox to-day can show no approach to justice in dealing with us. I don't expect it. I would as soon ask it of a pack of hungry wolves. A wolf might relent and show mercy. A man inspired by the spirit that kindled hell-fire cannot relent—it were easier for Jumbo to go through the eye of a needle. A man must himself doubt before he can show mercy to doubt in another.

Of the Manichæans, Jortin says: "In their morals they seem to have been as most of their contemporaries (must have been, say I, shockingly bad, if not better than the orthodox), and by no means scandalous; yet in this point they met with cruel usage, and were charged with shocking impurities and abominations in their religious ceremonies, and in celebrating the Lord's Supper" (p. 303). This is the perpetual logic of the orthodox. They have nothing but lies as the basis of their faith; they cannot convince opponents, therefore they try to blacken their characters. "It has been for a long time (ay! always, good doctor,) a kind of merit to accuse, and even to calumniate heretics; and a crime to excuse them. Why should a man engage in their defence, unless he be engaged in their errors? This spirit and temper passed from the Jews to the Christians, and has continued to this day: and so far is it carried, that to commend the learning, the eloquence, the abilities, the virtues of some illustrious sectary, is to be a favorer of heretics, and to tread the paths that lead to excommunication. The learned world is well acquainted with this Ecclesiastical Policy, and not ignorant of its reasons. Upon a fair examination it will appear that no part of history hath been more falsified and misrepresented than that which relates to sects and heresies" (p. 304).

"Evagrius, an adorer of monkery, has given us a strange account of the monks of Palestine in the 5th century. Some . . . live in little dens just big enough to hold them; others, more eminent, males and females, repair to deserts, wearing nothing but a small cover for their nakedness, walk on all fours, eat grass and roots like beasts, run away and hide, if a stranger approaches. Another sort, more perfect still, haunt cities and places of great resort, pretending to be mad, and go and bathe with women in the public baths" (p. 338). He who wrote in praise of the saints that went about in sheep-skins and goat-skins (Hebrews xi.) must surely have seen the Christians referred to by Evagrius. Some of the monks, to get to heaven sooner, killed themselves in various ways. Christians have not faith enough for that to-day; they can only

blaspheme and persecute. Some of the monks "would not catch and kill the vermin which devoured them, in which they far surpassed the Jews, who only spared them upon the Sabbath day."

Here is a bit of grim humor which shows Jortin in his true light, and Christian divines also:—"Our Chelsea College, as they say, was designed by King James I. for *polemic divines*; and then, with a very small and easy alteration, it was made a receptacle for maimed and *disabled soldiers*. If the king's project had been put in execution the house would probably have been a house of discord, and *Peace be within thy walls* would have been a fruitless wish and a prayer bestowed in vain upon it. . . . The *Baleares*, to teach their children the use of the sling, hung up their dinner, and did not let them eat it till they had fetched it down with a stone. In like manner, the fellows of this college were not to have been admitted to commons till they had discovered a new heresy in the writings of some contemporary, and had confuted the doctrine and worried the author" (p. 341, note).

No Freethinker ever said worse of divines; and it is impossible to paint their trade blacker than it is. Theology has shed more blood than anything else. Why? Because it is a lie.

JOSEPH SYMES.

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE LATE MYLES McSWEENEY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have in my possession about 300 vols. of books, the remainder of the library of the late Myles McSweeney, which are to be drawn for in twenty-five lots, the whole of the proceeds to be given to Mrs. McSweeney, who is in very poor circumstances. The tickets are threepence each and can be obtained of me or at 28 Stonecutter Street. Among the books are the first and second editions of Robert Taylor's "Diegesis," which editions are now extremely rare. These will be the first and second prizes with twelve other volumes with each.

R. FORDER,

35 Alderney Road, Mile End, London, E.

REVIEW.

How William Hone, the persecuted publisher of Fleet Street, beat the Bigots on his Three Trials for Blasphemy. By J. F. B. London: H. A. Kemp, 15 Harp Alley, Farringdon Street.

THE present prosecution of the *Freethinker* has redirected attention to those past trials through which it had been supposed complete freedom of expression had been secured. Among the more famous of these were the trials of Hone, for alleged blasphemous parodies, which resulted in verdicts of acquittal. The author has given an historic summary of these within the limits of a penny pamphlet, which cannot fail to be of interest at the present time. He pertinently asks "Will not the men of 1882 prove themselves as great friends of liberty as their fathers? Are we not enemies of political persecution under the cloak of religion?"

FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY.—In conclusion, as the result of this investigation, it may be repeated, that no evidence is found, of the existence in the first century, of either of the following doctrines: the immaculate conception—the miracles of Christ—his material resurrection. No one of these doctrines is to be found in the epistles of the New Testament, nor have we been able to find them in any other writings of the first century.—*Judge C. B. Waite, A.M.*, "History of the Christian Religion to the year 200," p. 433; Chicago; 1881.

THE ATONEMENT.—It is impossible that the sin of one man can be imposed upon another. It is by a fiction not to be realised by the mind that the transference is to be made. Nor can blood of any sort wipe away sin. Sin has to be repented of and turned from, and can be got rid of in no other manner.—*Judge Thomas Lumsden Strange*, "The Sources of Development of Christianity," p. 254; 1875.

ORTHODOXY AND MORALITY.—From the orthodox or the semi-orthodox come all the querulous misgivings as to the natural foundations of duty; all the assertions that the reasonableness of selfish license and selfish tyranny begin to appear. Orthodoxy it is which in our time *has* reason to feel its own moral ground shaking under its feet, and consequently

orthodoxy it is which, at any critical juncture, loses alike its faith in principle, and its hope in patience, and falls into action that is intemperate, national, sectarian, inhumane.—*Miss L. Bevington, Fortnightly Review*, Aug., 1881., p. 135.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION.—Christ, whose last words were used in prayer for the forgiveness of his enemies, is made through St. John to pour forth feelings full of hatred against those who disagreed with the writer on matters of doctrine, especially the followers of Paul. He hurls his envenomed shaft at the heart of the great Apostle. It was at Ephesus, where the war was warmest between Paul's friends and the followers of the Alexandrian school. To the church at that place Christ is made to say: "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience. and *how thou canst not bear them which are evil*: and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. ii., 2). Who could use such language but a malignant partisan? Christ, the Son of God, is made to use the language of a bar-room bully. When will those who profess to be Christians, learn that Christ was all kindness, gentleness, and love. They admit the authenticity and divine origin of writings that prove the Son of God was not even a gentleman.—*George Reber*, "The Christ of Paul," p. 390; New York, 1874.

PROFANE JOKES.

A prophet is a good guesser, who gets things wrong four times out of five, and whose excuses for his failures are more ingenious than his prophecys.—*Josh Billings*.

A LITTLE boy, whose impecunious parents are always moving from one house to another, was asked by the Sunday School Teacher "Why did the Israelites move out of Egypt?" Because they could not pay their rent, I reckon," was the reply.

PETER, Paul, Luke, and John (the apostles) were having a quiet hand at "Nap" one night. After the deal had been made, Luke calls one, Peter two, Paul three, and Peter four. Just then Christ entered, inquired what they were playing, asked for a hand. Was dealt a hand, and then said, "How many's called?" Peter says, "Four." "Well, I'll go six," said Christ. "Hold!" shouts Peter; "We don't want any of your miracles here."

TWO SIDES.—"There are two sides to everything," said the preacher; "I repeat it, there are two sides—" At this juncture a tired-looking little man stood up in the front seat to say, "Well, if you've no objection, I'll just step out and see if there are two sides to this church. I know that there is an inside, and if I find there is an outside you'll know it by my not coming back. You needn't be alarmed if I shouldn't return." And as he walked up the aisle he was followed by the admiring eyes of the whole congregation. Their sympathies were with him, but they were deficient in moral courage.

THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR.—The *Toronto Globe* has the following: "Brother Smith, what does this mean? 'What does what mean?' 'Bringing a nigger to this church.' 'But he is intelligent and well educated.' 'Who cares for that? He is a nigger.' 'But he is a friend of mine.' 'What of that? Must you therefore insult the whole congregation?' 'But he is a Christian, and belongs to the same denomination.' 'What do I care for that? Let him go and worship with his fellow-niggers.' 'But he is worth \$5,000,000,' said the merchant. 'Worth what?' 'Five million dollars.' 'Worth \$5,000,000! Brother Smith, introduce me.'

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