

# PROSECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY.

# THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Vol. II.—No. 40.]

OCTOBER 1, 1882.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.



THE SALVATION DODGE.





## THE GOD OF BATTLES.

LAST Sunday, in response to the Archbishop of York's invitation, the churches and chapels echoed with thanksgivings to God for our "victory" in Egypt. All the religious sects agreed for once. Catholic joined hands with Protestant, Dissenters with Churchmen, and even the Jews shared in the chorus of thanks. There are people who say that the children of Israel have very good reason to be grateful, and that their thanks for divine aid are the sincerest of all.

In nearly all the sermons from the pulpit God was most sublimely patronised. His conduct was carefully reviewed and pronounced very good. He was informed of the many beneficial results of his answering our prayers for success, and it was hinted that as he is rather slow in making up his mind, he had better do his thinking by deputy, and henceforth take the straight tip from us.

Several preachers thanked the Lord for having endowed our generals with genius and courage in the emergency. What a roaring farce! Sir Garnet Wolseley was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the expedition because of his tried ability. He was supplied with the best staff officers, and the very pick of the British and Indian armies. In addition, he was assisted by the finest ironclad fleet in the world, commanded by Sir Beauchamp Seymour, who has more than once been selected for delicate and arduous duties in the Mediterranean. Yet, after all this, the clericals have the impudence to say that God Almighty gave wisdom to our officers and courage to our men! It is a very poor compliment to the British Army, from Sir Garnet Wolseley to the drummer boy, to suppose that God had to endow them with fresh virtues before they could beat such a poor rabble as the Egyptians.

Our military success in Egypt was a dead certainty from the first. As soon as it was found that none of the European powers would interfere, and that England would simply have to walk over the course, out comes the Archbishop of Canterbury with his prayer for victory. By and by Arabi's stronghold is carried, and his whole defence falls like a house of cards. Then the Archbishop of York rushes out shouting "Glory to our God! He's done it all. Hallelujah!" And all the godly sing chorus to his solo, and wind up with a big Amen.

But what has become of the Archbishop of Canterbury? Ah, what? Directly he issued his form of prayer for our soldiers and sailors in Egypt, he was struck down with a dangerous illness which nearly proved mortal. Was this a judgment on him? And if not, why not? If there is a providence in one thing, there is a providence in another. In that case it is perfectly clear that the Lord was highly displeased with the Archbishop; and if he had died rather suddenly, the jury might have found a verdict of "Died by the visitation of God."

These clericals are cunning fellows in their own trade. They keep a ghost behind a curtain, and access to him can only be had through them. When any good thing is likely to happen of itself, they ask the ghost to be sure and send it. When it comes they cry "Our ghost has done it; he's a good, practical, working ghost after all, and worth more than the money he costs." But if anything goes wrong, if instead of a Tel-el-Kebir we get an Isandula or a Majuba Hill, they are as quiet as mice about their ghost. Mum's the word then. Sly dogs! They play heads I win, tails you lose; and we, like a lot of fools, accept these terms as the fairest ever offered.

They know, as well as we, that their ghost behind the curtain is a sham. He never did anything and never will. Things happen according to their nature, despite all the prayers in the world. The race is to the swift and the battle to the strong; and, as Napoleon said, God is always on the side of the biggest battalions.

Is God the God of other nations as well as the British; and does he hear their prayers as well ours? If so, how does he decide between opposing armies? Does he always give victory to the just cause? If so, how is it that the just cause is always the strong cause? Are we to accept the doctrine that might is right, and that God always sees most virtues in those who have the best generals, the largest armies, and the biggest guns?

The God of Battles is a relic of fetishism. Nations of old prayed to their god because he was theirs and no one's else. The Jews prayed to Jahveh, the Philistines to Dagon,

the Moabites to Baal, the Assyrians to Bel, and so on. All gods were tribal or national, and therefore no two armies prayed to either of them for a victory which only one could win. There was no risk of such an absurd confusion. Old Jahveh, for instance, managed all their business for the Jews, on the express condition that they dealt with no other house; and while they fought other people he fought their gods. He was indeed a God of Battles, for he used actually to join in the scrimmage, just as Pan fought with the Greeks at Marathon. On one occasion he flung stones at the enemy, and on another he took off the wheels of their chariots. But our God of Battles never shows up in such fine form. He is nothing but a ghost behind the curtain, a poor puppet in the hands of knaves for the fleecing of fools.

Surely if God can decide quarrels after fighting he can decide them before. Why do not the nations, if they all worship the same deity, submit their quarrels to him, and save the misery and expense of war? Why, for instance, did not the Archbishop of Canterbury and the chief Moslem priest of Cairo hold a praying match like the one between Elijah and the priests of Baal? On their own theory there would be some sense in that. But they haven't faith enough for such a trial. One would be fatal to them and their craft. It would prick the bladder of mystery by which they swim, and sink them to endless perdition. And they know it. Hence they shirk every real test, such as earnest men would court, and continue to practise on the credulity of mankind. The God of Battles fights their battles, but he never fights for honest men and people struggling against oppression. G. W. FOOTE.

## THE SALVATIONISTS.

As a student of anthropology my attention has often been directed to the survivals or revivals of primitive shamanism and devil-worship which may be found in modern religion. These periodic revivals, whether manifested by Anabaptists, Muggletonians, Ranters, Spiritists, or Salvationists, have many features in common. Under cover of peculiar inspiration, fanatics set themselves above public opinion, and adopt various methods of working up religious excitement. This frequently evinces itself in a desire to return to primitive fashions, in the way of love-feasts and "all night with Jesus" meetings. The connection of sexuality and Salvationism has never been sufficiently investigated, but it is unmistakable.

That Salvationism is "a screaming success" is by no means surprising. There are always plenty of vulgar, ignorant people who are carried away by *schwärmmerie* and show, and who delight to wallow in the mire of superstition and fanaticism.

The Army has, moreover, done the only thing possible to galvanise a dying faith into an appearance of life. It has put it into the front rank among popular amusements, fully able to compete with the low music hall and "penny gaff." The gospel of hubbub always draws a crowd. So the Salvationists provide plenty of uproar. There being no charge at the doors the performances naturally attract a number who have nothing to do and who gladly snatch at anything breaking the monotony of everyday dullness. The brisk passing round of collecting-boxes, the support of the faithful anxious to save their souls, or of the wealthy anxious to do something for the poor, to direct their attention to celestial spheres, or, at any rate, make them contented and stop in their places here, provides funds for the entertainment.

Church going and the usual round of religion is generally a deplorably dull affair. The Salvationists make it lively enough. Their prayers are not long-winded prosy platitudes addressed to an Infinite Divinity immeasurably above them, but screechy ejaculations bawled and brought down to the level of the coarsest mind and the densest deity. Their hymns and harangues are not of the old humdrum type, but exhilarating effusions. Their songs have plenty of chorus, are indeed sometimes all chorus together, with accompaniments of brass band, hand clapping, thigh slapping, feet stamping, arm and handkerchief waving, and nigger tamborine business.

And then they have the women, soul-midwives, whose obstetrical services are always efficacious at the pangs and throes of new birth. Paul said he did not suffer women to speak,



and that they should learn in silence and subjection; but then Paul, unlike "General" Booth, had no wife or daughters whose services he could put into requisition. The Salvation sisters are a great attraction. They seek the Lord in season and out of season, and sing with great ardor their celebrated warsong, "Oh, let the dear master come in; oh, keep him no more outside of the door; oh, let the dear master come in?" As the General is reported to have said, "Balaam was converted by an ass, Peter by a cock, and many of the Salvation Army by the instrumentality of women." Did not Anne Boleyn do a deal for the Reformation? The sisters affect simplicity of dress. They are anxious, it is said, to return to the simplicity of Eden. As their dresses, till privately paid for, belong to the Army, and none of them are allowed to marry without permission of the "General," they are devoted servants of the cause.

Excitement of some kind seems a necessity for those whose daily lives are a round of drudgery. The Boothites provide plenty of excitement. Byron says: "There's naught no doubt so much the spirit calms as rum and true religion." It comes to pretty much the same thing whether you are intoxicated with the one or the other. The symptoms are strikingly similar. I have seen at the Salvationist meetings men and women with maudlin tears, wildly tossing their arms about and shouting in a way which, if exhibited in the public street, would ensure their being "run in" as drunk and disorderly. The Holy Spirit in their hearts had the same effect as alcohol in their heads. Now religious dram-drinkers like their theology, like their gin, undiluted. And the Salvationists supply the stimulant at full strength. Considerably "above proof," I should say. Their sentiments are expressed by a character drawn from life in one of Mrs. Stowe's novels, who says: "If I pays for hell-fire I wants to hev hell-fire, and to hev it hot too; none of your prophesying smooth things for me." The brimstone business always pays well. "A kirk without a hell," as the old Scotch beadle said, "is'na worth a damn." Without a hell Salvationism would be a vulgar entertainment and nothing more. Religious fervor and ferment is excited by representing the eternal destinies of the audience to depend upon their instantaneously coming up to the "mercy seat," or the space near the platform, and there be prayed over or pray, and give their testimony of conversion, for which heaven is the adequate reward. This is verily obtaining eternal beatitude on easy terms. The curious thing is, it is usually the same people who come forward from time to time. But some sort of souls need a deal of saving. It is significant that those who confess to having led the worst lives seem readiest to believe that a temporary outbreak of excited feeling will wash all their sins away. It is an old observation, "the greater the sinner, the greater the saint;" and in the Army it is a special distinction to have been an unmitigated ruffian. It makes such a good qualification for teaching others. To maintain these exalted feelings from day to day must, we fear, become as tiresome as a thousand repetitions of "Our Boys" to the actors. The sublime spectacle of the Army, shouting and howling from early morn until midnight, as at the Grecian Theatre last Sunday, must require a powerful out-pouring of the Spirit. Their task must have been as onerous to the officers as the Boxing-day performances of a pantomime. I suspect, however, it has the same compensation. It pays. This is the secret of Salvationism.

I had intended to detail some of my own funny experiences with the Salvationists, but exigencies of space warn me to reserve these for another occasion.

LUCIANUS.

#### "FREETHINKER" DEFENCE FUND.

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Robson, 6d.; John H. Cresswell, 5s. Arbroath (per D. Lamond): Du, 1s.; D. Lamond, 1s.; J. Steel, 1s.; J. Oswald, 1s.; D. D. Davidson, 3d.; J. Spark, 3d.; J. Roberts, 3d.; J. Porter, 1s. Hartlepool (per G. Barnes): W. Jones, 3d.; R. Renwick, 3d.; J. Wilkin, 3d.; A. Small, 3d.; T. Skinner, 1s.; G. Warrand, 3d.; G. Barnes, 6d.; W. Laurie, 6d.; J. Swales, 3d. Plymouth and Devonport Branch of the N. S. S., £1. Cardiff Friend (per F. M.), 5s.; Emma Gatley, 2s. 6d.; W. Brierley, 7s. 6d.; S. Hartmann, 2s.; W. Garton, 2s.

## ACID DROPS.

IN the little book, entitled "All About the Salvation Army," published at Headquarters, an entire page is occupied with giving the "form of bequest" to the Rev. William Booth. Full particulars are also afforded in regard to making Post-office orders payable to the said "General" and crossing cheques with the name of his bank.

It is amusing to note the comments of the religious press in regard to the coming Church Congress. The *Rock* pooh-poohs it as a gathering of Ritualists afflicted with millinerian mania. The *Church Review* calls the Anti-Ritualists a "set of grovelling hypocrites."

'Tis strange such hellish wrath should rise  
'Twixt heavenly saints of kingdom come;  
While one gang *hoocus pocus* cries,  
The other bawls for *fo faw fum*.

MARTIN LUTHER did not deal with his theological opponents in a *dilletante* style. He prayed in regard to them thusly: "Put them in whatever sauce you please, roasted or fried, or baked, or stewed, or boiled, or hashed, they are nothing but asses, oh God!" Which W. D. thus versifies:—

All those who my theology resent  
Will not reform and at my feet repent,  
Oh God, serve up with any sauce you please:  
Roasted or fried, or toasted like to cheese;  
Baked, stewed, boiled, hashed; and let them be well done;  
For they, dear God, are asses, every one.  
Cook them at once, for I have set my heart on  
A jolly frizzle—the great delight of Martin!

CHRISTIAN charity is well exemplified in the *Protestant Standard*, which declares that if Dr. Pusey died unrepenting his errors he will have to stand before his Maker to render an account concerning the many souls he has destroyed.

THE Edmunds' Act forbidding any official under the United States to have more than one wife has come into force and is creating some commotion in Utah. The Mormons say they are resolved at any cost not to submit to the extirpation of the divine institution of polygamy. What God sanctioned in Abraham, Jacob, David, and Jesus did not disallow, should be permitted in a Christian country. The Mormons claim to be Christians and have as good a title as most other sects. Meantime, however, they are attempting to evade the law, rather than disputing it. Polygamist officials have ostensibly separated from more than one wife, and live openly only with her. The others they keep "sealed" or rather concealed.

THE Rev. J. Lyle, better known as "Father Ignatius," has been putting his foot into it. He has been canvassing for funds to restore Llanthony Abbey, whereupon Mr. Walter Savage Landor, the proprietor, who seems to have some of the vigorous sentiments of his father, writes to the papers warning the public that no restoration of the Abbey will be permitted, and that he has given order to his agent to turn off any monks found skulking about his grounds.

THERE seems to be a difficulty in getting an Anglican bishop to succeed Bishop Cheetham at the see of Sierra Leone. The climate is too bad and the salary too small. The doctor, it was said, would not permit the last nominee to go out. Providence cannot be depended upon for taking care of bishops' healths, so they wisely resolve to consult a doctor, knowing that their faith will not make them whole, not to mention casting out diseases from other people.

ANOTHER sale by auction under distraint for Extraordinary Tithes, took place on Wednesday at Ticehurst, Sussex, by the authority of the Rev. A. Eden, the vicar. After the sale a public meeting was held, at which strong resolutions were passed protesting against the continuance of this obnoxious and unjust impost. The Kentish and Sussex hop and fruit-growers are taking the right course to remedy their grievances. Let them steadily refuse to pay the tithes, and after every sale under distraint hold a public meeting in protest, and public opinion will in time force the pious parasites to live on the fruit of their own labor.

THE Salvation Army is not going to have a monopoly in



the saving trade. The Salvation Navy, under Admiral Tug, possibly a connection of the illustrious pugilist, has been started, and those ranging themselves under its flag are cheered by a parody of a famous old sea-song, viz. :—

“Come all you sinners, young and old,  
With hearts once cast in 'eaven's mold  
And join our Christian Navy bold  
On board of the 'Allelujah!

We're bound to floor the forts of sin  
And the Devil himself will soon cave in;  
Then join the side that is sure to win—  
On board of the 'Allelujah!”

At a recent meeting of the St. Savior's Board of Guardians Mr. Evans inquired if the proceedings of the Salvation Army had anything to do with the alarming increase of insanity in the Union that had just been reported. He was informed that one case was an instance of religious mania arising from the excitement of the Salvation Army campaign, and that a woman, who was present at the Blue Ribbon Army meeting at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, had been taken to Camberwell Workhouse as a lunatic.

THE *British Medical Journal* remarks that “No doubt that species of physical intoxication which vehement indulgence in religious exercises and emotions induce, will some time end in mental derangement in persons who would not otherwise have become insane.” But it attributes most of such cases to the fact that such services as those of the Army are attractive to persons already half-crazed.

MEDLAND LETHBRIDGE writes to the *Church Review* upon the Holy Inquisition: “I look upon such a tribunal as quite a legitimate means towards a much-desired end—the stamping out of heresy: a more regular way of going about the business than torturing and slaughtering without any Inquisition, as Protestants have done.” Clericalism is always the same, and both Protestants and Catholics can find good authority for persecution in the texts: “Compel them to come in,” “Bring them hither and slay them before me,” “It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorah,” “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed,” etc.

THE Temperance Movement is certainly spreading as far as the numbers who take the pledge or the bit of blue ribbon is concerned. Did this imply real temperance all would be gratified. But teetotallers are often the most intemperate of people, and we regret to observe they are more and more leaving their good old policy of persuasion for political and social combination to force their views on all who do not pronounce their shibboleth. This is sure to raise a reaction against them among moderate people whose sympathies are with them while they attempt to reform the drunkard and mitigate the evils of excessive drinking.

ALREADY a Yellow Ribbon Army has been established in opposition to the Blue, and if it is taken up as enthusiastically as its rival we may expect to see the followers of Richard Booth in as many faction fights as those of “General” Booth.

“AN Abhorrer of Atheism” writes to the *Tottenham Weekly Herald* anent the meetings on Tottenham Green: “I am glad to say the platform, on which the Atheist was preaching, was hurled to the ground by several of the crowd, which I hope will be repeated every time he makes his appearance.” We wonder if “the Abhorrer of Atheism” is the reverend rascal who incited to this breach of the peace. If Mr. Thurlow, the person referred to, does not lecture again, it is only because the season is over. This Sunday Mr. Leman lectures on “The Land for the People,” at 3.30, and we trust all Freethinkers in the neighborhood will muster and see that he has fair play.

By order of King Jesus and General Booth.

TO be Sold (without reserve) 1,000,000 Salvation Shares in the NEW JERUSALEM DWELLINGS COMPANY. These dwellings will consist of many mansions of solid gold, “garnished with all manner of precious stones” (Rev. xxi., 19). They will be fitted up with a patent electric-light, and thus have “no need of the sun, neither of the moon.” Every purchaser will be entitled, upon presenting his coupon, to receive a robe washed in the blood of the Lamb, a golden Jew's harp, and a Salvation song-book. No reasonable offer refused.

THE *Spectator* says Dr. Tait is the best Archbishop of the century. This may be quite true without it being much to his praise. All the archbishops have been either weak or worse. Dr. Manners Sutton was principally occupied in attending to his private affairs, in jobbing for his family, and in finding rich preferments for his sons-in-law; his success in this last department is shown by the records of Bishop Percy and Archdeacon Croft. Dr. Hawley was a man of good cha-

acter, but deplorably weak. He was quite overshadowed by Bishop Bloomfield, of whom he stood in great awe. Dr. Sumner was not only feeble but fanatical. During his reign of fourteen years no one cared twopence for his opinion. Archbishop Longley, the predecessor of Tait, was old and worn out ere he got his £15,000 for supervising the souls of the see of Canterbury.

A METHODIST parson out west has been bitten by a rattlesnake. The snake died, but the minister recovered. This is a solemn warning to snakes.

ACCORDING to the Perfectionists of Michigan a new goddess has appeared. The Divinity has settled upon Miss Dor Beekman. Dora is now one with God, and when she speaks it is the voice of God. Whosoever believes this, say the Perfectionists, become perfect. Henceforth they can do no wrong.

MASCULINE deities have been so long in fashion that it is only fair the fairer and more adorable, not to say better sex, should have a turn. We doubt not Miss Dora Beekman is a better specimen of a divinity than the one we read of in the Bible, who was bound to be of the male gender since he had an only begotten Son. Protestants who do not recognise the immaculate purity of his favorite, the Virgin Mary (who had a lot of other children by an earthly father), are especially one-sided in worshipping only the masculine powers.

If the lion had been the sculptor the man would have been underneath, and if women had made our religion we should have heard of the Divine Woman, Perfect Goddess, and Perfect Woman, etc. This will probably be the cult under petticoat government, when women get their rights, and put the inferior sex in their proper place.

SOME of the early mythologists, anxious for fair play, made God an hermaphrodite. Theodore Parker used to pray to “our Father and Mother who art in Heaven.” We have a profane and very-much-married friend who prays to “our Mother-in-Law who ought to be in Heaven.”

As we expected, the exposure at Peterborough of Miss Wood (the Newcastle materialising medium) has little effect on the faith or credulity—the words are synonymous—of Spiritists. Her friends are rallying round and asserting her innocence despite the seventeen witnesses of her exposure. One of her friends, Mr. Wm. Paynter, writes to *Light* that the letter of her exposers only shows them to be “devoid of honor and the sentiment of English hospitality,” and even the medium who seized her he asserts to be “crassly ignorant of the laws necessary to the production of what is called materialisation.”

G. DAMIANI, a well-known spiritist, explains the whole matter. He tells us “Catching the spirit is the same as catching the medium, of whom the materialised form is part and parcel. This has been explained and proved over and over again for years and years past.” There is no doubt of this. Mrs. Corner, Katie King, and all the other mediums who have been caught, all explain it this way. If you catch the spirit you catch them.

THERE was one of these spirits had a habit of hair-pulling. A wicked sceptic dressed his hair with lamp-black, and had the satisfaction of seeing the medium's hands covered therewith. But the spiritists unanimously explained it—that so great was the sympathy between the medium and the spirit that whatever affected the one was sure to be manifested upon the other. One of the spiritist writers declared that the spirit hand, being composed of magnetic elements drawn from the medium, when it was dissolved and the magnetic fluid returned, it carried with it whatever material substance it had touched and left it deposited on the surface of the material hand of the medium. How rash, then, to conclude that the medium was an impostor!

MIRACLES.—It is certain that throughout the whole period during which miracles are said to have been performed, gross ignorance and superstition prevailed, and nowhere more so than amongst the Jews, where those miracles occurred. Almost every operation of nature was inexplicable, and everything which was inexplicable was considered supernatural. Miracles seemed as credible to the mind of that age as deviations from the order of nature seem incredible in ours.—“Supernatural Religion,” vol. i., p. 200: 1876.

CHRISTIAN MORALITY IMPRACTICABLE.—“Sell all thou hast and give to the poor.” “Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat.” Why do not all Christians reduce these and similar precepts of Christ into practice? Simply because they are *unnatural*, and they perceive their erroneousness, their moral obliquity, their fanatical and pernicious tendency.—James Platt, “Morality,” p. 133; 1878.



## SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures this evening (Sunday, October 1st) at Claremont Hall, Penton Street, London, N., at 7 o'clock, on "Sunset and Dawn." Thursday, October 5th, at the Hall of Science, Old Street, at 8.30, on "John Stuart Mill."

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

October 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.

## 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.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—C. Spencer, Tutor, A. J. R., W. H. Hewitt, T. B. L., T. H. Houde, *Lynn Advertiser*, St. O.

A MAIDSTONE FREETHINKER.—Correspond.

A WAVEBER.—Great licences are allowed to poets.

D. EVANS.—Your contributions are always welcome. There is no Welsh translation of the "Age of Reason" in the British Museum. To publish extracts in the form of a Welsh pamphlet we should think would have a telling effect on your countrymen.

T. THURLOW.—We are sorry your letter is too long for insertion. Your plucky outdoor advocacy of Freethought in the teeth of Christian bigotry commands our esteem. We refer to Tottenham in "Acid Drops."

LYDD JOHNSON mentions that in resisting the Christian roughs in Hyde Park, a friend, whose address is unknown, dropped a sum of money, which will be handed over to the Defence Fund if it meets with his approval. Over 20,000 have listened to the lectures in Hyde Park during the present season.

A. B. S.—Tylor's "Anthropology" is published by Macmillan, price 7s. 6d.

A. Z.—Farrar's work is of no critical value.

W. LEE.—Until a late period all criminal indictments read that the party indicted was "instigated by the Devil." This came down from the time when witchcraft was believed in on the authority of the Bible.

H. WITHAM.—We thank you for the paper and are glad to hear that the sale of the *Freethinker* is steadily increasing in your district.

W. WEBSTER writes from Dundee: "Have just arrived here from London and nearly heart-broken at not being able to procure my beloved *Freethinker*. Surely there must be 'something rotten' in the state of Scotland." We can assure W. W. that there are several places where the *Freethinker* may be procured in Dundee.

TUTOR.—Your account of the Battersea Park Infidel Slayer is very amusing. Paper received with thanks.

A. J. B. (Edinburgh).—We regret not having space, and thank you all the same.

D. S. B.—See Genesis xxi., 1, 2; Hosea iii., 1; Luke xix., 27, and other passages in Cooper's "Holy Scriptures Analysed."

E. DAWSON.—We are pleased to hear of your pushing Freethought in the Midlands. Doubtless the *Freethinker* will sell if you could get it exhibited.

F. MILLAR desires us to announce that a meeting will be held at the Ship Inn, New Road, Peterboro', on Tuesday, October 3rd, at 6.45 p.m., for the purpose of forming a Branch of the National Secular Society.

S. WILLIS.—Mr. Foote's "Blasphemy No Crime" contains all you require, both as to facts and arguments. It is now on sale, price threepence.

J. TAYLOR.—We have no objection to your printing the letter we declined at your own expense. Correspondents who cannot get their letters inserted always consider them "unanswerable."

D. LAMOND.—Thanks. Many newsagents would largely increase their sale of the *Freethinker* if they would only exhibit it in the window.

P. W. M.—We regret to hear of the rowdiness at Tottenham, and trust that the Freethinkers will persevere with their meetings in spite of pious brutality.

W. JACKSON wishes to know the address of any newsagent who supplies the *Freethinker* in Wigan or Southport.

J. IRVING.—Your tract is forcible and deserves to be circulated, but we have no room for reprints.

THE *Freethinker* can be obtained at 225 Gooch Street, Birmingham, with other Secular literature.

TRUTH.—You forgot to enclose stamps.

J. H. U.—Preaching is effective against mental errors, though not against vices of physical origin. We simply stated a fact, and are not responsible for what others have said.

FAIR PLAY.—Your letter does not deal with the facts we adduced. We meant no harm, and are as anxious for reform as you. We wish our correspondents would write shorter letters.

W. CUNLIFFE.—The object of the Freethinkers' Benevolent Fund is to assist sick and aged Freethinkers. Mr. Forder, the secretary, 35 Alderney Road, Mile End, E., will give all information.

## TO OUR READERS.

THE *Freethinker* will henceforth be published at 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C. We have taken over the premises just vacated by the Freethought Publishing Company, where we intend to carry on an independent business. This will be no detriment to the old firm as the market is wide enough for all; and we beg to assure the enemy, as well as our friends, that the most harmonious spirit prevails among all the leaders of Freethought connected with the National Secular Society. The *Freethinker* is now beyond the malice of the bigots. We are securely settled in our new quarters, and we mean to put them to the utmost use by issuing a constant supply of new literature. This is our answer to Sir Henry Tyler and his persecuting crew.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

APROPOS of our last week's Cartoon a correspondent sends us the following conundrum: What was the difference between Jesus and the Jews? Answer; the latter sent the pigs to the devil and the former sent the devils to the pigs.

DR. ANDREW WILSON (of Edinburgh) is one of our most promising young scientists, and has already made a name for himself in the department of zoology. On Sunday evening last he gave a bold discourse on "Darwinism and Human Dignity," in South Place Chapel. We are glad to observe the chapel devoted to Secular services of this character.

AT the Watkins Freethinker's Convention the following-named individuals were appointed a committee to consider the feasibility of establishing a Liberal institute at some place in the United States, and to report upon the same at the Freethinkers' next Convention: Col-Robt. G. Ingersoll, Washington, D.C.; Courtland Palmer, New York; George Chainey, Massachusetts; J. H. Burnham, Michigan; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, New Jersey; Col. M. E. Billings, Iowa; Hon. C. B. Waite, Illinois; G. H. Walsler, Missouri; ex-Gov. Charles Robinson, Kansas; Hon. John F. Engles, North Carolina; Hon. A. B. Bradford, Pennsylvania. It is hoped that an institute will be founded that may take its place on a level with the best American Universities.

THE Rev. A. Sturge, Baptist minister at Dartford, Kent, refused to take the oath last Monday on the ground that swearing was unscriptural. The coroner for East Surrey declared that this plea was insufficient. Mr. Sturge must say that he considered the oath unlawful. This phrase was adopted by the rev. gentleman, who then made the affirmation.

"Yes, sir," said the Louisville man, "I argued with Ingersoll for four hours and made him admit that a man could be in hell." And the Louisville man didn't understand why the listeners laughed.—*Boston Post*.

PROFESSOR HÆCKEL, the author of "The Natural History of Creation," and certainly the boldest as well as the most eminent of German naturalists, is about to publish an exhaustive analysis of the Darwinian system. He will probably at the same time publish his interesting correspondence with Mr. Darwin, and also indicate the bearing of the theory of evolution on current theology and ethics.

THE *Philosophic Inquirer* of Madras has opened a subscription list for the *Freethinker* Defence Fund. This proof of the interest that is taken in our cause, so far away, is very gratifying. The number of the *P. I.* for September 3rd contains a well-written paper on Blasphemy.

A PHILOSOPHICAL class has been started at Baskerville Hall, Birmingham. It opens on Oct. 9th, when Mr. W. W. Collins will read a paper on Mind. Mr. Symes follows with a paper on the 16th.

COLONEL INGERSOLL'S lectures are being translated into Japanese by the Buddhist teachers as a counteractant to the Christian missionaries.

THE NOTTINGHAM BRANCH of the National Secular Society has, in the face of much opposition, engaged a handsome little hall at the corner of North Street and Shakespeare Street, which was opened by Mr. Foote yesterday week. Our friend Mr. R. Porter, of Beeston, has emerged from the leisure of his



old age to help on the work again. When the old veterans show so much spirit, the younger soldiers should fight with redoubled vigor.

### WHO ARE THE WICKED?

[Continued from p. 303.]

THE Arian controversy (a terrible dispute, by the way, respecting the composition of God) gave rise, says Jortin, to innumerable lies, slanders, forgeries, pretended miracles, persecutions, banishments, seditions, murders; many false and partial histories; and a multitude of councils which produced only confusion and discord (vol. I., pp. 347—8). The dispute is as far from settlement as ever. Whether God is one, two, or three, or nothing is still a doubtful matter, and no one knows whether he worships too much or too little. At the Nicene Council, held A.D. 325, and at which there were 318 bishops, their god himself being absent, the bishops opened the proceedings by mutual quarrels, mutual resentment, and mutual accusations against each other presented to Constantine the Emperor.

Of the Council of Constantinople Jortin says: "A Council of Gladiators held in an amphitheatre would be as venerable as that of the Constantinopolitan Fathers, if Gregory Nazianzen may be believed" (p. 354). Arius died about ten years after the Council of Nice; by the wonderful judgment of God, as the orthodox said. "But," says Jortin, "quarrels ran so high in those days, that there is no confiding in the reports of either party" (p. 360). Mosheim says: "When I consider all the circumstances of the case, I confess that to me it appears most probable that the unhappy man (Arius) lost his life by the machinations of his enemies, being destroyed by poison. An indiscreet and blind zeal in religion has in every age led on to many crimes worse than this" (Eccl. Hist., p. 164, note 2, ed. Tegg: London, 1878). Mark! These are testimonies and opinions of Christians respecting Christians.

In A.D. 341 the orthodox populace of Constantinople, full of the Holy Ghost, murdered Hermogenes, a prefect who tried to instal a bishop the people did not want (Jortin, p. 360—1). Referring to the Arian controversy during the first forty years of its continuance, Jortin says, "The Pagans, who were bystanders, could not be much edified, or much disposed to embrace Christianity, when they saw its professors at such implacable variance. This made Ammianus Marcellinus say, that no wild beast was so cruel an enemy to man, as most of the Christians were to each other" (p. 363). Jortin quotes Socrates (the church historian, not the philosopher), thus—"It is the custom with our spiritual rulers, when they depose a man, to load him with general accusations, and to call him irreligious and impious; but never to specify, and declare particularly, of what impiety he is guilty" (p. 380). The Jews and Christians, marvellous to relate, once lived in friendship together in Spain! The Council of Elvira (about 300 A.D.) forbade Christians to eat with Jews, on pain of excommunication! (p. 392.) St. Ambrose, a lover of celibacy, "affirms that Alexandria, Africa, and the East, where there was the greatest number of religious virgins, were therefore more populous than other countries" (p. 424). Here is a choice morsel—"The Christians "first deprived heretics of their places of worship; then they forbade them to assemble anywhere; and then they fined, imprisoned, banished, starved, whipped, and hanged them, for the advancement of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and for the honor of Christianity" (p. 426). What is Christianity, we may here ask? What has it ever been? A patent engine for manufacturing tyrants, rogues, and hypocrites. Constantine appointed burning alive for several crimes. "To burn men alive became thenceforward a very common punishment, to the disgrace of Christianity. At last it was thought too cruel for traitors, murderers, poisoners, parricides; and only fit for heretics" (p. 428). That is, crimes were punished mildly; heretics, or persons who had ideas and uttered them for the good of mankind, were, under the reign of that most pestilent and malicious of all religions, treated as the greatest of evil-doers—the saviors of society, who withstood the rotting influence of Christianity, were subjected to the cruellest of possible deaths—to please those who try to please him who lit hell-fire, whom Christians endeavor to imitate, as "dear children."

Christhs have been extremely plentiful during the reign of the Church. They have all been false Christs according

to their enemies, true only according to their friends. One appeared in France, 1137. He was, of course, murdered by Christians, and many Jews with him. The ancient Jews murdered *their* Christ; and the Catholics could not miss an opportunity of murdering any other that fell into their hands. Another appeared in Spain, 1138. He, too, was murdered, and nearly all the Jews in the kingdom, to show how much their Christian neighbors loved them. Another of God's sons was murdered in Moravia, 1176. Rabbi Salomo Malcho gave out, 1534, in Spain, that he was the Messiah. Charles V. burnt him. The Christians gagged him, lest he should utter some charm against them at the stake. He might have saved his life, on consenting to be a hypocrite. Christianity always honors the hypocrite—it is the honest man it fears, hates, and burns.

Christians have always hated Jews intensely, and infidels as well; but under Constantine, when they were divided and sub-divided into sects "they hated, calumniated and opposed each other more than they did the infidels; and in the fourth and fifth centuries it was safer to be a Jew or a Pagan, than to be a heretic, or a schismatic, or a Christian of this or that denomination" (p. 480). Yet "a thousand calumnies have been spread concerning them (the Jews). . . . and as many lying miracles (all miracles are lies, good Doctor) were reported to confirm those accusations; and then popular emotions (such is the word. *Commotions* I should think it ought to be) and massacres always ensued" (p. 488). "The account," says Jortin, "of the Jews who have been plundered, sent naked into banishment, starved, tortured, left to perish in prisons, hanged and burnt by Christians, would fill volumes" (p. 496).

Changing my author, I quote next a few lines from Ingoldsby's "Auto da Fe." Referring to the city of Seville in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, he says:—

"Yes! thou art wonderful!—but oh,  
'Tis sad to think, 'mid scenes so bright  
As thine, fair Seville, sounds of woe,  
And shrieks of pain and wild affright,  
And soul-wrung groans of deep despair,  
And blood and death should mingle there!

"Yes! thou art wonderful!—the flames  
That on thy towers reflected shine,  
While earth's proud lords and high-born dames,  
Descendants of a mighty line,  
With cold unaltered looks are by,  
To gaze with an unpitied eye,  
On wretches in their agony.

"All speak thee wonderful—the phrase  
Befits thee well—the fearful blaze  
Of you piled faggots' lurid light,  
Where writhing victims mock the sight—  
The scorch'd limb shrivelling in its chains,  
The hot blood parched in living veins—  
The crackling nerve—the fearful knell  
Rung out by that remorseless bell—  
Those shouts from human fiends that swell;  
That withering scream—that frantic yell—  
All, Seville—all too truly tell  
Thou art a MARVEL—and a Hell!  
God!—that the worm whom thou hast made  
Should thus his brother worm invade!  
Count deeds like these good service done,  
And deem thine eye looks smiling on!"

Hah! Ah! Rev. Ingoldsby—Barham! Where were thy wits when writing thus? Didst thou forget that thy God burnt Sodom and Gomorrah; looked on while the Israelites, at his command, stoned that ancient blasphemer and that ancient Sabbath-breaker; that he murdered by crucifixion his only Son; that he lit hell-fire for devils and unbelievers; that he will send his Son, in flaming fire, from heaven to take vengeance on all that know him not nor obey the Gospel? You complain, rev. sir, that men should burn their brother worms; your God set the example. You complain that lords and ladies should look on with "unpitied eye" to see Jews roasted alive; but did not your God do the same? And, think! Those Jews were deceived in that God's name by the prophets of their nation; else they would not be in that fire. Think, sir! Those brutal persecutors spoke and acted in your God's name—and he never interfered!! Did he know? If so, he is the villain, the fiend, for not stopping the transaction!

Bah! There is no God! The Christians seem to have set up theirs to blaspheme him. They make him the author and abettor of every crime; they say he told Moses how to



out Aaron's breeches, and yet looks on with perfect indifference while the worst of men are roasting Jews and heretics in his name!!! Still there are people blind enough to suppose Atheism to be worse than Theism! As if, forsooth, an infinite fiend were better than no god at all!

What I have said shows Christians to be the worst and most ill-disposed of men. Inspired by the Bible, they become infinitely worse than all wild beasts; they almost realise the malignity of their own God. For man's sake Christianity must be destroyed!

JOSEPH SYMES.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### ORGANISATION IN WALES.

(Circular.)

DEAR SIR,—We intend establishing a "West of England and South Wales District Secular Association," for the purpose of forming a more efficient organisation of the Freethought Party in the District, by means of obtaining consecutive visits of professional Freethought lecturers, utilising local lecturers to a greater extent, etc., etc.

Cardiff, Bristol, Aberdare, Newport (Mon.), Merthyr, Pontypool, etc., have already promised hearty co-operation, and the subject is of such vital importance to all those who have the welfare of the cause at heart, that we feel we may confidently rely upon your assistance, so far as it lies in your power.

Should you desire to form a branch of this "Association," we shall be most happy to send a delegate to the first meeting (upon payment of bare expenses), but if there be already a Secular Society in your district, we shall be glad if you will lay this letter before the members, and influence them to affiliate to the "Association."

We append a few notes for your consideration, and shall be glad to receive any suggestions, or afford you any additional information you may require.—Awaiting your reply (at your very earliest convenience), I am, dear Sir, for the "Organising Committee,"

FRAS. MORRIS,

Sec. and M.C., "Cardiff Branch, N. S. S.")

5 Southey Street, 1882.

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

CHRISTIANITY.—Never was there a creed making greater demands upon the credulity of mankind, or offered under circumstances more fraught with consequence to the interests of those to whom it is addressed. At the same time never has the array of facts, taking them as stated, upon which the integrity of this creed absolutely depends, been presented to the consideration of mankind upon grounds less capable of standing the test of examination, and less entitling what is asserted to command belief.—*Judge T. L. Strange*, "The Christian Evidences," p. 44.

AN ORTHODOX ADMISSION.—The very language in which our Blessed Lord uttered his divine discourses, no criticism has found out. If he spoke them in Greek, are we to suppose that the Galilæan multitudes who heard him, understood Greek? If he spoke to them in Hebrew, are the "original words" entirely lost? Or was that which he spoke to them in Hebrew, "brought to remembrance" thirty years afterwards, in Greek, and written down in Greek by the Evangelists?—*W. J. Irons, D.D.*, "The Bible and the Interpreters," p. 18.

THE BIBLE.—Whence the influence of our churches? By what agency have they awed the masses into silence, and even thrones into obedience? By what means have they succeeded in sowing sectarianism, setting man against his fellow, and threatening eternal infamy to all who would not kneel at their dark and dominant shrine? The Bible! Faith in the supernatural origin of that book is the secret source of priestly ascendancy throughout Christendom. While that delusion prevails there is no hope for freedom in Europe.—*Robert Cooper*, "The Bible and its Evidences," p. 7; 1858.

NATURAL versus SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.—As described here religion does not brood over a future life, but is intensely occupied with the present; it does not surmise something behind nature, but contemplates nature itself; it does not worship a Power which suspends natural laws, but the Power which is exhibited in those laws; it does not shrink from political organisation, but is itself the soul of all healthy political organisation: it does not damp enjoyment; but is itself the principle of all such enjoyment; it is not self-conscious or self-absorbed, and does not make us anxious about our own fate, but is the principle which destroys self and gives us strength to rise above personal anxieties.—*Prof. J. K. Seeley*, "Natural Religion," p. 259; 1882.

## PROFANE JOKES.

An ardent City missionary, going through his routine of house to house visitation, came across a crusty old woman, much opposed, by-the-by, to the system of hawking salvation. Having no desire to become the recipient of his ghastly hell and damnation mission, she bade him a kindly good-day. The sapient messenger, not to be daunted, parleyed at some length. Finally becoming exasperated at the persistent refusal of the woman, exclaimed vehemently: "You are damned to the place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." "How'd on, how'd on," laughed the old dame; "none o' that, none o' that. Aw cannot gnash my teeth, for aw've got none to gnash; aw lost them all years since." Exit C. M.

THERE was once an Irishman and a Jew fishing together on a boat in a deep river; all at once the Jew fell in. As he rose to the surface the Irishman caught hold of him by the hair and said, "Do yer believe in Jasus?" "No," said the Jew. The Irishman then pushed him down again. When he rose again to the surface the Irishman said, "Now do yer believe in Jasus?" "Yes," said the Jew. "Then" (pushing him down again) "yer can die saved," said the Irishman.

The late Dr. Wilberforce—when Bishop of Oxford—one day when expostulating with a fox-hunting rector who had a living in his diocese, said, "I am very sorry, sir, to observe you are in the habit of driving a pair of horses through the town more like a young spark than a clergyman of the Established Church." "Yes, my lord," replied the rector, "but so does your lordship drive a pair of horses." "That is true," replied the witty bishop, "but I drive mine like this," putting his hands together as if in prayer, "while you drive yours like that"—placing them with fingers extended from his nose *a la tandem*.

An old Scottish dame, rather too fond of the "mountain dew," was one day "unco' drouthie," and without funds wherewith to provide "a drappie." She thought there was a chance of getting it on credit from a public-house near; so summoning her little grand-daughter, she said, "Lassie, go round to Donald MacCullum and bring me a gill. Tell him I'll pay i' the morning." Back came the damsel with a refusal. Donald declined to part with his whisky without cash. Eager and irritated, the old woman cast about for some means of "raising the wind," and her eye fell upon the Family Bible. "Here, lassie," she said, "gie him this, and tell him to keep it until I bring the siller." Off went the little messenger, who soon returned, however, bearing the Bible. "He says he maun hae the 'bawbees' first, granny." With an angry snort the old grandmother threw up her arms and exclaimed, "Losh, did onybody ever hear the like o' that! The man will neither take my word nor the Word o' God for a gill o' whisky."

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