

PROSECUTED FOR BLASPHEMY. THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOZE.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.

“COMIC BIBLE” SKETCHES.—XLI.



THE ORIGINAL SALVATION ARMY.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.—MATTHEW x., 5.

THE COMING STRUGGLE.

THE Church Congress at Derby is going to discuss, among other subjects, the limitations of authority and Freethought. We shall soon have to discuss the same subject far more seriously. Ours will be no dilletante affair, but a struggle in deadly earnest. For us there is no withdrawing after a little mild excitement. We shall win or lose much in the encounter. Whatever the result may be, it will make a tremendous difference to the cause of Freethought.

In defending ourselves we are defending the freedom of every heretic in England. If bigotry succeeds in punishing us it will continue its evil work. Its appetite will be whetted instead of appeased; for all history shows us that it grows by what it feeds on. Every form of heresy will be attacked in turn, until at last the law is rigidly enforced, and all opposition to Christinity, and all dissent from it, is ruthlessly stamped out. Let not the amiable Secularists who purchase toleration at present by flattery of the foe, and nurse the vain fancy that contradictions can long live amicably together, imagine themselves perfectly safe. Their turn may come. The extreme form of heresy bears the first brunt of persecution, but when that is disposed of the next form becomes extreme, and so on till the most moderate form is reached; unless, indeed, it is treated with the indifference of contempt, and allowed to live on because it has no power of spreading itself, and is obviously harmless to the faith of man, woman, or child.

Some of these gentlemen, whose nerves are too superfine for aggressive Freethought here, although they rather like

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it when mellowed by a sea-voyage across the Atlantic, have simply no knowledge of the meaning of liberty, or of its transcendant importance. They do not know, or they have forgotten, how our present liberties were won, and how they are to be retained. Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom. They only have any rights who are prepared to defend them, and they best deserve them who feel that an attack on another man's liberty is an attack on their own. What is their little *ism* compared with the fundamental law of progress? Freedom is grander and loftier than all other things. It is like the soaring azure dome which over-arches the whole earth, and covers with equal ease a cottage or a pyramid, a verdant hill dotted with browsing sheep or an icy mountain-peak lifted in awful solitude into the silent sea of air.

A blasphemy prosecution strikes at the very life of the Freethought movement. If we cannot publish what we like in our own papers, we may as well cease fighting and evacuate the field. Freethought cannot say "I will yield here, I will fight there." Every point is vital. Wherever the attack is made there must be the defence. Let a single breach be once made and the tide of invasion will pour in and carry everything before it. We are like the Dutch, vulnerable all along the line. Every dyke must be guarded, or our cause will be overwhelmed and sunk like the lost cities of the Zuyder Zee.

We mean to fight with every possible weapon, going first to the armory of law, and afterwards, if need be, to the armory of reason. If our first move succeeds it will be all over with the prosecution, and Sir Henry Tyler will have to get a fresh power of attorney from Almighty God.



But if it fails we shall not be beaten, for we have better points in reserve. We shall exhaust every legal device before going to a Christian jury for a verdict. Yet if we have to appeal to them, there shall be no cowardice or subterfuge, and as Freethought is attacked in a court of law so it shall be defended there. If the jury acquit us, or fail to bring in a verdict, the Blasphemy Laws will be doomed to a speedy death. It will be something to succeed in breaking off the last fetter on the freedom of the press, and that is what we hope to achieve before the end of this struggle.

As it is highly necessary that the press should be well informed on the question, a copy of our "Blasphemy No Crime" has been sent to every newspaper in the United Kingdom. It contains a large amount of information as well as argument, and as it is specially designed for the general public, we trust that our friends will circulate it as widely as possible.

Mr. Bradlaugh has admirably conducted all the legal skirmishing in the judges' chambers up to the present, but the real battle will begin in a few weeks, and all our energies will be needed then. Mr. Ramsey will be defended by counsel, Mr. Bradlaugh will be better than a second lawyer, and I shall probably play the part of a third. In any case I must not be muzzled. An appeal may have to be made to the jury in court, and through them to the grander jury of public opinion, and I will not entrust that duty to any counsel.

G. W. FOOTE.

CONCERNING ASSES.

Among the many statements which reflect credit on the keen perception and logical mind of St. Augustine, we have one to the effect that he was personally acquainted with an old lady who possessed the power of turning men into asses. It may safely be concluded that St. Augustine, who argued against the idea that men could exist on the other side of the earth because the Scripture nowhere speaks of any such descendants of Adam, had himself been subjected to the old lady's influence. Indeed the readiness with which the human enters into an offensive and defensive union with the asinine appears to have appealed very forcibly to the ancients, who in addition to the Onoskelos, which was half man and half ass, had discovered a second species, the Leucrocotta, which, resembling the ass in shape, had a partiality for imitating the human voice. If one could legitimately allegorise the myths into a semblance of reasonableness by a display of that remarkable faculty for exegesis which is one of the characteristics of the modern Leucrocotta, they would make a very decent subject for a Secular sermon.

Dearly beloved brethren, the two distinguishing features of the ass are bray and heels. The latter dance to the tune of the former, with the characteristic difference that to bring the latter into offensive operation it is necessary to give to the most assailable and least strategic end an undesirable prominence, though the ass is usually the last to realise this. Take for instance your religious Leucrocotta. His methods of defiance to all rational persuasion consist mainly of the two—assertion and execration. Meno, the priestess of the temple of Agraulos, who refused to curse Aloibiades on the ground that she was a priestess for prayer and not for execration was an exception, but she was a heathen and lived before the diffusion of Christian charity. Now, the chorus runs otherwise.

Strophe:—This is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Antistrophe: It is a lie and I can prove it.

Catastrophe: You can't and you shan't, damn you! [Heels.]—This is the human comi-tragedy from the invention of God to the prosecution for blasphemy. Poor Leucrocotta! The Aristophanes of the Universe whom Heine posed behind the curtain where the puppet-strings end, has kept this pantomime donkey an interminable while on the stage, and the better part of the public is getting almost as weary of it as of Mr. Irving's strut and Du Maurier's "crambe recocta."

Perhaps the chief characteristic of the mental habit of the human ass is a strange faculty for inversion. Be the matter what it may, the bray is sure to be the inverse of correct statement if it have any application to the subject at all. For instance it is the beatitude of asininity that it

never writes itself down ass, but flatters itself with superior sagacity when its asinine characteristics are most oppressively prominent. "What do you see?" says the metamorphosed Bottom, "you see an ass-head of your own, do you?" and he soliloquises contentedly: "I see their knavery. This is to make an ass of me!" This is the mark of the beast, the vanity of stupidity, against which the gods war in vain. But the inversion is not confined to personal judgments. Your true ass must have a deity fashioned after the ideal perfection of an ass, and when the complicated monstrosity is complete the ass glories therein, saying "Lo, it is we who are fashioned after the verisimilitude of the Godhead." "Scoundrel," says Plautus in one of his comedies, "do you think the gods are like yourself?" "Have at thee, Atheist!" rejoins Asinus, lengthening out once more the hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray. Your ass hunts up passages in heathen writers parallel to some in the Bible, and calls them testimonies to the truth of Holy Writ, quite oblivious to the fact that they may equally be regarded as testimonies to its fiction. "See the Freethinker on his death bed," says the ass, "how he squirms under the eye of indignant Deity:" and he proceeds by some facetious arithmetical method to multiply the number of conversions, failing to perceive that his argument only proves that while the said Freethinkers were in full possession of their reasoning faculties and healthy senses they were inconvertible. "See how prayer is answered," says the ass. "See how it isn't," is the rejoinder. "Ah, we don't always know what is best for us," says Brunellus, with one eye on the thistle of this world and the other on that of the world to come. A convenient postponement of debate truly, and one flattering to the asinine vanity despite its surface humility. So the ass takes his tour of the universe, and brays his theory at every halting place with as great facility as that with which Wordsworth toured round Grasmere shedding sonnets. One can understand even the befooled Titania recovering sense enough to give the injunction—

"Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently."

But the ass of orthodoxy is at present a very unmanageable brute even amongst his friends, and will not be gagged. Bray he must, under the impression that he is glorifying himself and doing God service. As though any respectable god would require aid from him! What is the indictment but a bray in—Lord knows how many—folios? and the more human portion of the community, the Onoskeloi, feel it to be so, beholding in silent sorrow the proceedings of Sir Henry Leucrocotta and his associates. It would be well for them if they confined themselves to hee-haw, instead of endeavoring to use their heels, but they belong to the second division of Fuller's natural fools—"their heads so long that there is no wit for so much room," and it is doubtful if even disaster will teach them that discretion is the better part of valor. Peace be with ye, dullards, Christ will not ride to Jerusalem on your shoulders. Listening to their discordant noises, one is sometimes tempted to turn upon them with the words of bluff old Ben Jonson:—

"Leave me! There's something come into my thought
That must and shall be sung high and aloof
Safe from the wolf's black jaw and the dull ass's hoof."

SATAN.

GOD AND THE BIGOTS.

WHY are the bigots so concerned for the safety and well-being of God? Who constituted them the guardians of Deity? Is God too weak or too cowardly to defend his sacred person and interests, or do the Christian fanatics possess a fuller measure of omnipotence than the Lord himself?

These queries naturally arise in most reflective minds that ponder the meaning of the blasphemous Tylerian prosecution. For it is plainly obvious that unless Jehovah and Company are a Trinity of base poltroons, no explanation nor excuse can be found for the legal proceedings now being taken by the pious prosecutor of this paper, to vindicate the offended majesty of heaven. Time was when God could take care of himself, irrespective of creatures of the Tyler type; when by plague and pestilence, by bloody massacres and dire calamities, he revenged himself on heresy and unbelief. Alas for Deity! those happy days

are apparently gone, never more to return. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by—Sir Henry Tyler! Oh ye shades of Holy Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus Christ! What a falling off was there! And by the mouth of the pseudo-prophet, M.P., an incredulous world is admonished that the *Freethinker* has published certain blasphemous libels “to the great displeasure of Almighty God, to the scandal of the Christian religion and the Holy Bible or Scriptures, and against the peace of our Lady the Queen, her Crown and dignity.” Any ordinary mortal, on reading this gruesome lamentation would suggest that the best way out of the difficulty would be humbly to invite the Queen, as Defender of the Faith, to meet Mr. Foote and thoroughly demolish him in a six night’s debate on the truth of Christianity; or, in lieu of her Majesty, the Archbishop of Canterbury might be induced, by the help of the Holy Ghost and Dr. Carpenter, to undertake the rehabilitation of the faith once delivered to the saints. Failing these, the Lord himself should step into the arena of debate. But, alas! the powers that be (both those in heaven and those on earth) are far too prudently valorous to relish the idea of a fair stand-up fight with the advocates of Freethought. Persecution and prison, hell and damnation, are the weapons wherewith they prefer to convince the sceptic; and fire and brimstone, skilly and the treadmill, are the sole arguments or proofs which the sacred bigots of heaven and earth are able or willing to adduce in substantiation of their position.

It is no difficult task to discover the motive that inspires the persecuting zeal by which the high Tory pietists are now making themselves so odiously notorious. Despite their holy protestations, it is fear—cowardly, craven, childish fear—that goads the bigots on in their criminal career. They are afraid of being laughed at for their folly in professing to believe a stupid superstition, whose edifice is built up on a fragile foundation of force and fraud. They are afraid to meet their opponents in a fair and open encounter. Hence they take refuge behind musty statutes, from whence they emerge to entrap the Freethought advocate in the meshes of a quasi-obsolete law framed by pious knaves for the perpetuation of sacred fraud and the persecution of honest men. Their affectation of zeal on behalf of a God who, on their own affairs, without the assistance of Tories and bigots, does not succeed in deceiving those who are not fools nor dupes, as to the paltry selfishness and contemptible cowardice that prompt their proceedings. They know full well that the world is beginning to detect the hollow sham, to despise the rank imposture of that hideous spectre which, under the name of Christianity, terrorizes the mind and scares the intellect of the superstitious. They bemoan the fact that through all the classes of the community the subtle spirit of scepticism has so penetrated that society is honey-combed with doubt and unbelief. They see with tears in their eyes and terror in their hearts that Freethinkers, to-day, are more bold and aggressive than ever in their onslaughts upon the discredited dogmas of a sacred decaying Fetichism. It is the ever victorious progress of Freethought, and a deep sense of their inability to cope by fair means with the rising hope of humanity, that impel the bigots of to-day to tamely imitate the more thorough-going fanatics of a former time, by persecuting the men whose arguments they cannot refute, and whose fearless tongue and pen lash them to paroxysms of pious frenzy. They care nothing for God, but only for their own self-interest. Him, indeed, they traduce and blaspheme by representing him as a base coward, afraid to fight his own battles. If, forsooth, God were displeased at our conduct, depend upon it, he would not have chosen Tyler as the channel through which to communicate the fact. Nor would he stoop to take his chance of a favorable verdict, with damages and satisfaction, at the hands of twelve jurymen. Jehovah would settle the matter, as in the good old times, either by plaguing London with cholera or the small-pox, or by quietly slaying off the obnoxious blasphemers. The fact that nothing of this sort occurs ought to teach the fanatics one or more of the following useful lessons: (a) That Jehovah has probably given up the ghost, like the rest of the old-world deities; or (b) if alive, that he is too much amused at the blasphemy levelled at him to take it in bad part; or (c) if offended, that he is, determined to spend the rest of his time in preparing a

warm corner for his blasphemers in the infernal regions; and (d) that in the meantime he resents the presumptuous interference of the petty-minded bigots who insult him with their puny aid.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

ACID DROPS.

AN American author of a new book on Shakespeare has taken immense pains to prove that the myriad-minded king of literature was a Roman Catholic. The attempt is as futile as the efforts that have been made to prove him a lawyer, a statesman, and a Scotsman. His mind was too broad for any creed; he utilised religion like everything else. His comic characters continually jest with religious phrases. His tragic ones sound the depths of pessimism and materialism.

IN Shakespeare the supernatural elements are always part of the stage machinery, but the scepticism is from the man himself. Note his putting into the mouth of Isabella, the Catholic nun, such sayings as “Man, proud man, Most ignorant of what he is most assured. His glassy essence”—the soul; and “Great men may jest at saints; ’tis wit in them, But in the less foul profanation.” And in the mouth of the gentle Miranda the exclamation—

“Had I been any god of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and
The fraughting souls within her.”

TH. H. LANGE contributes a paper to the *Telephone* for September 30th with the startling title “Christ’s Tomb in Damietta.” He asserts that when in Egypt last year, a Coptic priest, a monk of the Coptic Christian Church, was induced for a consideration to show him the grave of Jesus Christ, and he states that he saw a slap with the inscription “here lies the veritable body of Jesus Christ.”

FOR another consideration the Copt informed him that Jesus Christ died at Damietta, over sixty years old. He said, “The Latin Church teaches that Christ returned to heaven forty days after his resurrection, but in reality it is quite different. Jesus Christ did not die on the cross; he was taken down by his friends the same evening, bleeding and insensible. The spear in his body did not hurt the heart or any vital organ. On the following night the Crucified One revived, and in order to protect him from the persecution of his enemies, he was taken direct to Damietta in Egypt. Here his wounds healed, and he once more journeyed to Jerusalem, visited his disciples, commanded them to preach the gospel to all nations, and again returned to Damietta.”

MR. LANGE very naturally expressed surprise that as yet nothing had been written on so curious a subject. “Oh, yes,” replied one of the monks, “about twenty years ago some professor from Naples published a long account of Christ’s tomb, but the book was soon suppressed and forbidden.”

ALL this tale may be only a priestly device to gain money by exhibiting a deception. But the curious part, which is not referred to by Mr. Lange, is that the Holy Sepulchre which is shown at Jerusalem is certainly a fraud. The Coptic story of Jesus not dying on the cross agrees with the Mohammedan legend given in No. 19 of the *Freethinker*. Moreover, St. Irenæus tells us that Jesus lived to be over fifty years of age.

THIS testimony of Irenæus in his second book against heresies (chap. xxii.) has never received the attention it deserves from the Christian world. Irenæus is the first writer who mentions the Four Gospels, and is said to have been a disciple of Polycarp, who was a hearer of the Apostle John. Now he argues that Jesus lived to be over fifty years of age, and he pretends to have the testimony of all the elders in Asia with him. Moreover, he refers to the Jews having said to Jesus “thou art not yet fifty years old,” as recorded in John viii., 57. Is it likely they would have said *fifty* instead of *forty* if Jesus had been only *thirty* years of age? It would thus seem that Irenæus is supported by the writer of of the Gospel according to John.

THE Rev. Robert Taylor, the Devil’s chaplain, used to argue from Revelation xi., 8, that our Lord was also crucified in Egypt. The Jews in their Talmud say Jesus was stoned and hanged on a tree in the city of Lud.

THE London Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* gives a disgraceful example of the Clerical warming-pan business. In a large town in the South-West of England a living worth upwards of £1,000 per annum became vacant; but the young man for whom it was destined was still at Cambridge. Consequently an old gentleman of 78, who had

never been anything but a curate, was appointed. This was four years ago. Now the youth is in priest's orders, and the vicar has applied for permission to resign, obtaining £350 per annum, "on account of increasing infirmities," whilst the newly fledged priest takes possession of the remaining revenues of a parish with a population of nearly 10,000 souls.

MR. WILSON, some time editor of the defunct *Twentieth Century*, delights in the title of "Comprehensionist." He has published parts of the "Book of Comprehensionism." Here is his definition of the "Deific Idea," which we trust his readers will comprehend: "It is the All-Enfoldment of the All-Inholdment of the All-Pervadement, which was rarefied etherealization before consolidation." We have consumed five bottles of Zedone in the vain effort to comprehend it, and as the author states that "the right of translation is reserved" we have concluded to await a translation before proceeding with our attempt. Doubtless its as clear to Mr. Wilson as the Athanasian Creed. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; and yet not three incomprehensibles but one incomprehensible.

WHAT ears the Salvationists must have! This is their latest "Salvation Solo."

"Now we're got the Eagle,
For which the money must be given;
Where once the Devil trained for Hell,
And the Army will train for Heaven.
Where once was heard the ribald song
Shall be heard the Salvation gun
Where once the Devil's drink was sold
Salvation streams shall run."

THERE are no such blasphemers as Christian priests. At the parish church of Sevenoaks, last Sunday, the Rev. A. W. H. Edwards, in the course of his sermon, took occasion to inform his congregation that the failure in the hop crop, under which the agriculturists of Kent and Sussex are smarting at the present time, is a visitation of Providence upon the iniquitous agitation against tithes, which he stigmatised as an attempt to commit a downright robbery of the Church. When a parson cannot get his own way he always pretends that God is offended.

ANOTHER sale under distraint for extraordinary tithes took place at Swanley Junction, on Thursday, under the authority of the Rev. W. J. Weeks, vicar. Sir. E. J. Reed took the chair at a public meeting held immediately after the sale protesting against the obnoxious impost.

THE Archangel Michael, who is generally thought to have enough to do in the upper regions, is the special patron of the parish of Holycross in Tipperary. So says Father Fennelly, and we take his word for the fact. Now if Michael is to be seen in those parts, we should be very glad of an introduction, as we are anxious to have a full account of his squabble with Old Nick over the corpse of Moses. Holy Scripture excites our curiosity without satisfying it. If Father Fennelly will procure us an interview with Michael, and promise to keep the "bhoys" from blowing us to Hades with guns or dynamite, we will pack up our portmanteau and make tracks for Tipperary.

FATHER FENNELLY is proud that no "infidel societies" have been established in Ireland. Quite so. They go in for "assassination societies" over there. Murder isn't half as bad as infidelity. Better beat out your neighbor's brains than believe that Jonah was not swallowed by a whale.

THE *Leamington Chronicle* is in love with Tracy Turnerelli, and probably hopes to get a golden wreath by and by. One result of Tracy's efforts in the cause of public morality, according to the *L. C.*, is that "that blasphemous periodical, the *Freethinker*, is no longer openly sold, but is only to be obtained in secret." This will be news indeed to our readers. We are always glad of a little out-of-the-way information.

WE learn from the same paper that the *Freethinker* got placed on the table of the free library, and had to be removed. A question was asked respecting it on committee, and the matter is to come up again. We hope it will come up once a month. Advertisement is all we want.

CHRISTIANITY in Leamington is the same article it is elsewhere. The Rev. W. S. O'Beirne, for instance, has been preaching that our guns in Egypt have burst open a door through which we may "send the gospel to benighted Egypt." That's the style. The Gospel of Blood is heralded by bloodshed, and the murderers then teach the survivors their moral and religious duties.

THE rowdy Christians continue their efforts to break up the Freethought meetings at Tottenham. Last Sunday Mr. Leman delivered a political lecture, but that did not mend matters, for an infidel acts on the godly like a red rag on a

bull. One muscular Christian was given into custody for assault, but we dare say he will go scot free. The local press is grossly unfair, and the Freethinkers are a handful against hundreds. But let them persevere. Pluck will win in the long run.

AN Anglo-Israelite maintains that Gladstone is the Beast of John's Nightmare, as his name (like scores more) makes up the mystic number 666. The interpreter is himself a beast, for he clearly belongs to the fraternity of asses. He may reply that he speaks, but we answer that Balaam's ass spoke just as sensibly.

THE *Dublin Daily Express* reports the case of a Catholic Priest who ordered some workmen of his church to desist from building a glebe-house for a Protestant parson. The minion of Rome acted in defiance of the law. It is a case of intimidation, and he deserves to be punished. What a happy family these Christians are!

THE comet which has just made its appearance is likely to go into the sun; but the astronomers tells us not to be alarmed. We must, says Professor Piazzzi Smith, be "calm, patient, philosophical and judicial." A few centuries ago, in the good old age of faith, they used to ring the church bells to frighten the comet away,

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—The careless and irreverent way in which an oath is administered by Commissioners for the administration of oaths in the High Court of Judicature in England, is shown in the following little incident which took place a few days ago in London. A friend had to swear to an affidavit, and the Commissioner—who seemed in a hurry to go to luncheon—uttered the following sentence in one breath:—"This is your handwriting—you swear—right hand, please—this to be the truth, whole truth and—take your hand out of your pocket—nothing but the truth—take your hat off, please—so help you God—eighteen-pence please—what's this, half-crown, must get change, haven't got it—kiss the book." My friend who had not been used to this sort of swearing, had scarcely recovered from his first surprise of having to take the book in his right hand, which, by the way, was full of dispatches, before the oath had been administered, and before he had kissed the book the man was off to get change.

IN a Deadwood church the other day the large congregation were devoutly kneeling in prayer, when an irreverent joker quite audibly whispered, "Here comes an Eastern detective." In seventeen seconds all of that congregation, including the chief elder, had slid through the windows.

"INVESTIGATOR" tells us of a spiritist séance he attended recently at the Spiritual Institute, 15 Southampton Row. The medium, a man named Towns, he describes as not guilty of too intimate an acquaintance with the principles of English grammar. As Mother Shipton used him as her means of communication, this is perhaps not to wondered at. The medium pretended to answer mental questions with raps, three for yes, two for doubtful, and one for no. "Investigator" observing the replies were mostly affirmative, tried the question, Is spiritism humbug, and the medium an impostor? This evoked three decisive raps. "Investigator" divulged his question, which brought a torrent of abuse,—“liar, impostor,” “rogue and vagabond,” being freely heaped upon his sceptical head.

THE Spiritists are evidently concerned about the many exposures of their mediums. The Central Association in London have issued a circular wherein it is affirmed that owing to the present method of investigating phenomena the movement has been damaged and derided by a scoffing world. The *Herald of Progress*, a spiritist organ, however does not hesitate to charge the Central Association with the public scandal which has befallen the movement. A great number of letters have appeared in *Light* upon the subject advocating no paid mediums and no dark cabinets. We will venture to prophecy that when these are dispensed with the movement may occasion less scandal, but the phenomena will be sadly deficient.

MISS WOOD it appears only got part of her travelling expenses, and a guinea a séance. Little enough too when it is considered that in order to produce Pocha the Spirit, she had to divest herself of all her garments except a little muslin.

A SUMMONS has been granted against the Rev. F. C. J. Bell, of Nottingham, for the affiliation of an illegitimate child. We will make no remarks until the case comes on for hearing. We have seen a copy of the circular issued by eight members of Fred Bells Committee. They charge him with using vile language, assaulting his colleagues, fleecing poor old women, appropriating moneys collected for the Sunday School, sticking to hospital funds, and bargaining for 25 per cent. of all the cash taken at charity entertainments. If this loud and brazen Bell doesn't answer these charges, he may as well be off to Yamkeeland as fast as possible.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures to-day (Sunday, Oct. 8th), morning, afternoon and evening, in the Lecture Hall, North Street, Leeds.—Thursday, the 12th, at the Hall of Science, Old Street, London, on "Thomas Carlyle."

MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

October 12th, Hall of Science; 15th, Halifax; 16th, Leicester; 19th, Hall of Science; 22nd, Manchester; 23rd, Staleybridge; 26th, Hall of Science; 29th, Portsmouth; October 30th, Southampton.

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

December 3rd, Huddersfield; 10th, Bradford; and 17th, Grimsby; 31st, Claremont Hall, London.

January 7th (1883), Claremont Hall, London; 14th, Manchester.

CORRESPONDENTS.

ALL business communications to be addressed to the Publisher, 28 Stonecutter Street, Farringdon Street, E.C.

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

R. WILSON.—There is no historical foundation for the legend of Pope Joan, who is said to have been a woman of English parentage, educated at Colonge, and who on account of her proficiency in learning was elected successor of Leo IV., 853 A.C. The tradition says she was seized with pains of child-labor while proceeding to the Lateran Basilica. The first chronicler who mentions the scandal was Marianus Scotus, a monk of Fulda, who died in 1086. Gibbon, however, says: "Until the Reformation the tale was repeated and believed without offence."

SOCIALIST.—Chas. Fourier was born at Besancon, France, in 1772, and died in Paris 1837.

J. PIPER.—The famous Catholic theologian Tillemont assures us that "all the illustrious Pagans are condemned to the torments of hell because they lived before the time of Jesus, and, therefore, could not be benefitted by the redemption."

R. WESTBROOK.—Josephus only states that the Jewish law was translated into Greek under Ptolemy. Justin Martyr makes the Septuagint to have been translated in the time of Herod the Great, but this is probably one of his many little mistakes.

W. D.—It will be some time ere your lines can appear. We are overwhelmed with verse.

T. R. POCKLINGTON.—We are pleased to hear from you again. A selection of the outtings will appear in due course.

INVESTIGATOR.—Your amusing account of the séance is somewhat too long for insertion.

YOUNG FREETHINKER.—The Rev. S. Headlam has a pamphlet on the Theatre, but we do not know the price. Try 63 Fleet Street.

F. M. C.—Your letter got mislaid, or it would have been answered before. Of course there was something before protoplasm, on this earth at least; and science has been for some time considering that question. There's plenty of time for all these things to be decided, and the universe won't collapse because this generation is unable to solve every problem. Fixing up a God just where your knowledge happens to terminate does not explain the beyond; and it is a very poor compliment to the deity, since he is constantly obliged to "move on" as knowledge advances. We do not mean to publish all the dirty passages of the Bible in a pamphlet. It would make the very horses in the streets hang down their heads with shame.

E. G. C. H.—See "Sugar Plums." Thanks.

F. GOULDING.—We are pleased with your cheering words. Hard fighting rather agrees with us.

S. B. B.—The analysis was made by Mr. Miall and published, we believe, at 1s. Our publisher could no doubt supply you. There is no pamphlet that we know of on the other question.

ANTI-BIGOT.—The trial will probably begin early in November. Mr. Bradlaugh is included in the prosecution. Freethought lectures are delivered in St. James's Hall, Plymouth, about once a month. Look out for the bills yourself.

C. J. ANDERSON.—We can only give you Abraham Lincoln's famous advice—keep pegging away.

J. WALLIS.—Numbers sent. Please remit.

H. BOLTON.—A Gnostic is one who knows; an Agnostic is one who does not know. The latter term is now widely used to signify one who has no knowledge, and therefore no positive belief, in theology. Popularly speaking, Agnosticism is a polite word for Atheism.

W. WATSON.—Leave them at our publisher's, addressed to Mr. Foote. The money will be paid on delivery.

J. RAWLINS.—It is a clumsy forgery.

A FREETHINKER.—The Charlevoix Freethinkers seem to have been very high handed in deposing their President for allowing his son to be buried with religious rites. We must, however, remember that there is too much accommodation to priests in these matters among those who reject their doctrines upon the Continent.

F. BRADLEY informs W. Jackson (Southport) that the *Freethinker* may be procured of Mr. W. Rowbotham, Botanic Road, Churchtown.

M. SHIFFMAN, newsagent, 51 Three Colt Lane, Cambridge Road, E., sells the *Freethinker* and all Secular publications.

T. W. GRAHAM.—1. Gen. xii., 4, surely implies that Abram departed at once when the Lord spoke to him. 2. To admit our ignorance as to the origin of motion and matter is more satisfactory than to pretend to knowledge we have not. 3. It is not to the advantage of the individual to play the hypocrite unless he values his character less than external possessions. 4. There is proof of Egypt and China having been inhabited by different races of men long before the time of Noah. 5. Matt. xii., 46; Mark iii., 31, and vi., 3; Luke viii., 19; John vii., 5; Gal. i., 19, and all show that Mary had other children. 6. Only the Revised Version of the New Testament is published. It alters many passages that have been criticised by Freethinkers. 7. The rite of circumcision was probably phallic in origin. 8. The stories of Cain and Jacob are evidently mythical; we should not attempt to explain them rationally.

DODO.—We shall always be glad to hear from you, and you may count on the strictest secrecy.

ALL subscriptions to the Defence Fund will be acknowledged next week. We shall be happy to forward collecting sheets to any friends who can use them.

SUGAR PLUMS.

THE *Freethinker* ran rapidly out of print last week. The demand exceeded the large extra supply by hundreds of copies, and our publisher had to turn away customers with tears in his eyes. This week we publish at 28 Stonecutter Street, where we hope not only to go on extending the circulation of the *Freethinker*, but to bring out a constant supply of new literature. We mean to show what can be done in that line.

THE *Republican* for October contains a portrait and biography of William Maccall, whose long career of usefulness has made his name known and respected by all Freethinkers.

MESSRS. KEGAN PAUL AND Co., publish this month a work on "Christian Eschatology; or, the Doctrine of Last Things, Compared with the Notions of the Jews, and the Statements of Church Creeds," by Dr. S. Davidson, whose "Introduction to the New Testament" is so destructive to the orthodox Christian position. The present work is likely to prove equally damaging.

IN Missouri there is a new township of above 300 inhabitants called Liberal. It was founded upon the idea of building up a secular community, with secular schools, where men and women would be respected for their moral and personal worth, and not for their faith. There is no church and no drinking saloon, they have no God and no Devil, no bigotry, and no drunkenness. Every Sunday there is an instruction-school, and a "liberal" orphan-home has been established.

THE *Peterborough Express* mentions the distribution of *Freethinker* tracts in that city, and inserts a letter from Mr. Millar notifying to the religious bodies of Peterborough that the principles of Freethought and Secularism will be scattered broadcast through the city with a view of undermining their superstitious creeds.

THE same paper has several letters anent the exposure of Miss Wood, the spiritist medium. One signed "An Agnostic," draws the conclusion from the controversy that if statements on such matters, taking place to-day, are so diverse, what reliance can be placed on those made eighteen hundred years ago.

THE evidence for the spiritist miracles are immensely superior to those for the Christian ones. They have for witnesses not a few dead men whom it is impossible to question, but hundreds of living witnesses. Not ignorant and superstitious fisherman only, but several men of science and culture. Thereupon the world concludes that the spiritist marvels are frauds and the Christian ones divine.

A WRITER in the *Nonconformist and Independent* says of the recently-published letters of Mr. Darwin, where he distinctly states, "Science and Christ have nothing to do with each other, except in as far as the habit of scientific investigation makes a man cautious about accepting any proofs. As far as I am concerned, I do not believe that any revelation has ever been made. With regard to a future life, everyone must draw his own conclusion from vague and contradictory probabilities." "It would be difficult for the blindest Agnostic to go beyond this confession made by an old man trembling on the verge of the grave."

AMONG the announcements of Messrs. Trübner and Co., which may interest our readers are "Emerson at Home and Abroad," by M. D. Conway; "The Bhagvat-gita," translated from the Sanscrit by J. Davies; a translation of Hartmann's "Philosophy of the Unconscious," by W. C. Coupland; and of

Schopenhauer's "World as Will and Idea," by Messrs. Haldane and Kemp.

MR. MATTHEW ARNOLD delivered an address to the students of the Liverpool University on September 30th. He pointed out, in the course of his speech, that the great fault of Englishmen is "want of lucidity," from which sprang so many of our fads and public nuisances. He referred to the Salvation Army and Puseyism, and urged that a tittle of lucidity would make both these movements impossible.

OUT in India the Boothites have received a check. The Indian law is just and founded on common sense. You may write what you like on the subject of religion, or say what you like to people who choose to listen, but you must not go out in the streets and force yourself on other people's attention. Here in England the law is exactly the reverse. If you are a Christian you may howl and beat the big drum in the busiest thoroughfares to the annoyance of everybody else; but if you are a Freethinker you may not express your thought in your own paper or in your own halls.

IN a paper about Voltaire, in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*, Alex. C. Knox devotes the following lines to the great wit's last hours:—"I confess I have not patience to give any discussion to the campaign of the priests round Voltaire's death-bed. The Abbé Gaultier and the Curé de St. Sulpice squabbled over the dying old man—who was to have the honor of his conversion? There were references to the Archbishop. Were the documents to which they had combined to extract his signature valid and binding? They were just like a parcel of sharp lawyers taking evidence upon commission. The poor old man's 'Let me die in peace,' could only elicit from the Curé of St. Sulpice, 'You see plainly, gentlemen, he has not his head.' If not, what was the curé doing there? He lingered till late in the evening of May 30, 1778. At eleven p.m. he said to his valet, 'Adieu, my dear Morand; I am dying'—and ten minutes afterwards he passed away peacefully, aged eighty-three years, six months, nine days. The priests hunted him dead as they had hunted him alive. It was only by a stratagem that his friends got him buried in the Abbey of Scellières in Champagne, more than a hundred miles from Paris."

C. KEGAN PAUL, contributed a paper on "Faith and Unfaith," to the October number of the *Nineteenth Century*,—wherein he says: "The disintegration of dogma has gone further than persons generally suppose. The adherents of all sects would be startled at the vast numbers of those who hold no form of religion at all, or who, if they attend worship, do so as an act of compliance, or for a season of rest, and not on any grounds of faith. There is no need to do more than assert that which is to some a common place, and which others can easily verify for themselves if the inquiry is not too painful. None who have marked the swift change and abandonment of faith during the last quarter of a century, the tolerance extended to those who but a few years ago would have been ostracized, the acceptance as common-places of criticisms of statements which would not long since have been counted as daring infidelity, can doubt that opinion is still changing with increasing swiftness."

It seems that it is quite compatible with Irish Romanism to believe in all the blatherumskate manipulations of the "praste," and nevertheless to entertain serious doubts regarding scripture "truths." The following conversation took place in the Wexford boat-house, in my presence, between a friend of mine and the caretaker, as good a Catholic as ever bolted his Maker whole:—

My Friend.—It would be a grand thing, Roche, to be able to walk over the river there.

Roche.—Bedad it would, sorr; but no man iver could do th' loike, or iver will.

My Friend.—But of course you are aware, Roche, that Christ walked on the water.

Roche.—Faith an' I'm damned sure he didn't, he nor no other body either; how could he?

My Friend.—But he was the Son of God, Roche.

Roche.—I don't care if he was the son of the Divil; he niver did that, unless, begorra, he had a few pigs blathers tied to the calves of his legs.

A MEETING will be held this day (Sunday) at the Old Quakers, Chapel, near the Ship and Castle, Strand, Swansea, to form a Secular Society. Swansea friends are earnestly invited.

ARCHBISHOP THUG'S THANKSGIVING.

O LORD God Almighty, "I bless and praise thy matchless might" that thou hast given us the victory in this Egyptian War. Thou knowest, good Lord, for the newspapers have been full of it—they make their fortunes out of war, O Lord—thou knowest, I say, that Arabi of Egypt

rose up against his master, like Jeroboam of old, the son of Nebat, and did mischief in Egypt, even to the threatening the safety of that vast empire, O Lord, over which thou hast given us, thy chosen people, to reign—that vast empire, on which thy sun never sets, I say, which by means of bloodshed and fraud and robbery—deeds most acceptable in thy sight—thou didst impart to us Britons; for is it not written in thy ancient word, Heavenly Father, that "the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom (that is, empire, O Lord) and shall possess the empire for ever and ever?" We, thy most worthy and most indispensable servants have taken that kingdom, O Lord, and possess it; nor will we give it up to any of our enemies.

But this Arabi, inspired by the Devil, and encouraged by Radicals and evil-disposed persons in England (even in thy own land of promise, my God) thou didst raise up, like another Pharaoh of old, in the same land, too, as thou wilt perhaps remember; thou, I say, didst raise up this barbarian, this murderer, this rebel, this enemy of us thy servants; thou didst even raise him up in order to show forth thy great glory by triumphing over him. Now, O Lord, the heathen shall hear of thee, the nations shall be afraid and melt away, when they shall hear that thou wast in our camp to do our fighting for us and to subdue our foes. As in days of old, thou didst gird on thy harness, thy coat of mail, thy breastplate and thy greaves, and thy glittering helmet; thou didst take up thy shield and sword and spear, "compared with which the tallest pine, hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast of some great admiral, were but a wand." Yea, thou didst even manufacture gunpowder and fire-arms, even Martini rifles, and great and terrible guns, wherewith to blow thine enemies to dust.

Thou didst raise an army and didst pay the soldiers out of British taxes. Thou didst build great ships, like Noah's arks, for transports and for ships of war. Thou didst even fit them with engines, all of which thou alone, Lord, didst make and create, in thy great mercy and thy love to us-ward. Those great guns thou didst fire upon Alexandria, that ancient city of heresies and confusion—thou didst by those new and improved ramshorns, as it were, level it with the dust, as thou didst Jericho in ancient days.

Then thou didst descend in thy spirit upon thy servant Garnet, just as upon David of old, and didst make him a man of war, and didst lead him to Tel-el-Kebir, and there thy great glory was displayed above all that the former times ever beheld. Thou didst fight on our side; thou didst bow the heavens and come down; thou rodest upon a cherub, and didst fly upon the wings of the wind, both at once! Thou utterdest thy voice of thunder; thy lightnings flashed, thou didst look from behind thy cloud and terrifiedst the Egyptians. Thy sword drank blood, thy spear smote down whole armies; they fell before thee like the leaves of autumn—millions upon millions didst thou slay in the twinkling of an eye!

Oh! great God, we are amazed at thy power. We thought thy old age had bereft thee of might. But, glory to thy name, thou art strong and valiant as ever! The rebels cannot frighten thee! They laughed when it was said unto them, "Behold, the Lord cometh." "Who is the Lord?" replied those who scorned thee. But when they saw thee in the fight, with hills about thee skipping like lambs, and the mountains leaping like rams that are frightened, then did they call upon thee for mercy; but thine eye pitied them not; thou didst trample them down as the mire of the streets, thou didst scatter them as the sand is blown by a mighty wind.

Hallelujah! Glory to God! The whole earth shall know what great things thou hast done in the land of Ham and in the field of Zoan!

We praise thee for all the blood spilt, and regret it was not more. Had it flowed to the horse-bridles for fourteen hundred furlongs, thy praise should have been a hundred times greater. Still, we heartily thank thee for all the Egyptians killed and damned for thy glory. Accept our thanks for all their well-merited sufferings. And if thou wouldest kindly repeat the ten plagues of the days of Moses, we would give thee extra glory.

We desire, O Lord, also to thank thee for the sufferings of our own troops. "It is good to be afflicted." We, thy best and most respectable servants, do wonderfully enjoy thy means of grace which pain and suffering give—when others are enduring them. We thank thee for the means

of grace granted to our soldiers in that thou didst confuse the commissariat arrangements, and didst hide the medicines and chloroform at the bottom of the transport-ships many miles from where the wounded lay. Thy ways are not the ways of men. Thou dost send pain and inflict wounds for thy own glory; and if men could get relief by medicine, thy gracious designs would be frustrated, and they would but ease their bodies and damn their souls. But in this great and glorious campaign thou hast done all things well; thou hast smitten the enemy hip and thigh; and thou didst (as in Bible days when there were no doctors to oppose thee) leave the dead for food for fowl and beast, and the wounded to die in the anguish which thou hadst inflicted.

Lord God, hear my prayer. I delight in blood, even as thou dost. I would have followed thee to the war, all fearless of consequences, had not imperative duty kept me at home; for, O God, it must be glorious work to stab, and shoot, and disembowel our enemies! How glorious to see their arms, legs and heads flying at the discharge of the great guns! Or to see their fragments flying upwards when a powder magazine explodes! For spear and sword, for great guns and powder, for torpedo-boats and mines, for gun-cotton and rifles, good Lord, we desire to thank thee! For all that gives misery to man or shortens his days, we glorify thee! Ride on, oh Lord, and conquer. Trample down thy foes and mine. Kill them, and damn them!

“ But Lord, remember me and mine,
Wi’ blessings temporal and divine,
That we for gear and grace may shine,
Excelsed by nane;
And a’ the glory shall be thine.
Amen. Amen.”

(*The Archbishop solus, soliloquises*): “I think I have soaped over the old fogey to his heart’s content. We must keep up appearances. Of course, Wolsey understands that this sort of humbug does not reflect upon him. God? tush! What’s that? I had rather be an Archbishop than the whole Trinity. It was lucky, though, that Archie was out of the way. Capital chance for me to show off. If Archie should shuffle off, etc., Gladstone will, of course, pop me into his place. Who wouldn’t blarney God, and ail the saints to boot, for an extra £5,000 per annum? John! Bring a bottle of Old Port. I’ll take the Sacrament.”

JOSEPH SYMES.

CHRISTIAN CAROLS.

PAUL THE 'POSTLE.

[*His reputation.*]

Oh! among the blatant bigots that the ancient Christians knew
Was the original of Newdigate, a mad fanatic Jew.
He was domiciled in Tarsus, and created many a fuss,
And had won the reputation of a most “amoosin’ cuss.”

[*He persecuteth.*]

Now this Saul regarded Christians with a most vindictive hate,
And to castigate a specimen would often lie in wait,
For 'tis stated on the Record that he so enjoyed the fun
As to lend a hand to manufacture martyr number one.

[*But is miraculously checked.*]

But we know that when his wonders Great Jehovah would display,
He prefers to go about it in a most mysterious way,
And that's the reason Saul one day was stupified with fright,
And completely flabbergasted by the Lord's Electric Light.

[*Ye ghost of Jesus appeareth.*]

He was on a little journey, and the time was one o'clock,
When his bones were roughly shaken by a great galvanic shock,
And the ghost of Mr. Jesus came, and hov'ring o'er his head,
It addressed him in sepulchral tones, and this is what it said:

[*And converteth Paul.*]

“What the deuce, sir, is the meaning of these queer fantastic tricks,
You must know it's d—d ridiculous to kick against the pricks.
Oh! I've had my eye upon you when you fancied I had not,
And I've formed a resolution to convert you on the spot.”

[*He holdeth forth.*]

It was done, and Saul, repenting of the things he used to do,
He became a useful member of the devil-dodging crew,
And the fame of his conversion, and the wonders that he wrought,
Soon discomfited the enemy and crowds of converts brought.

[*His escape.*]

But the rulers, be it spoken to their everlasting shame,
They resolved to put a stopper on the convert's little game;
But Saint Paul escape effected, though surrounded by his foes—
Like Saint Falstaff in a basket, covered o'er with dirty clothes.

[*His introduction to ye Brethren.*]

Then Barney introduced him to the 'postles, and declared
How he'd tried to preach the gospel, but had very badly fared.
And Paul announced his readiness, he didn't care a dem,
But was going in for glory in the New Jerusalem.

[*His peculiar style.*]

Yet although he used to “kuock 'em,” from the humble to the proud,
His orations didn't draw so many pieces from the crowd;
He was rather lengthy winded, and when drawing to a close,
He would find his congregation all indulging in a doze.

[*He worketh miracles.*]

Now Paul was like his rival, Simon Peter, in a way,
A compound of the virtues of De Jongh and Holloway;
So much that if a cripple begged his skill he would bestow,
He'd place a shapely member where there'd been a timber toe.

[*His arrest.*]

At last they caught and flogged him, and they placed him in the stocks,
But the Lord in great displeasure dealt some subterranean shocks;
And he sent his winged messenger to open all the doors,
And to kindly drop a little healing balm upon his sores.

[*His miraculous rags.*]

Then, released again, he started forth, and travelled round the coast,
And dispensed to all who needed it, a draught of Holy Ghost,
Till the Devil—that old serpent—fled in terror from his frown,
And a dirty shirt of Paul's would serve to disinfect a town.

[*He is nicked.*]

But a second time they captured him, and then 'twas all U P,
For they sent him in a vessel on a journey o'er the sea;
The ship was lost, but not the lives—they suffered but from fright;
And Paul, by serpent-charming, filled the people with delight.

[*And scooped out.*]

I fancy Paul eventually was landed safe in Rome,
And many a time he wistfully would wish himself at home;
Till came a certain carnival when Paul went on the spree,
And in the great arena joined the great majoritee.

Moody is trotting out at Plymouth that rotten old story of how he vanquished a drunken group of “Atheists, Deists, Pantheists, and Infidels,” out in Chicago. Mr. W. F. Adamson wrote to him for a little more *particular* information as to the exploit, but he very wisely keeps silent. If Mr. Adamson knew Moody as well as we do he would have saved his time and postage.

F. J. S. FOLJAMBE, M.P., did a lot of gush over the Bible at Worksop last Monday. He pointed out that we are so much better than the Egyptians because we have a Bible and they haven't. But they have a Koran, which isn't half as sanguinary, cruel, immoral and filthy as the Bible.

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