

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.
Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

Vol. VII.—No. 36.]

SEPTEMBER 4, 1887.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 214.



GOSPEL BABES.

Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.—MATTHEW XI, 25.

DISSOLVING VIEWS.

MR. COTTER MORISON, in his remarkable book *The Service of Man*, points out that Christianity is giving place to the spirit of Humanity in a thousand ways; and he instanced the lull of late years in religious controversy, and the unanimity with which the clergy cry up charity, or rather almsgiving, instead of insisting on the beliefs necessary to salvation. So far has this process been carried out that the *Christian World* openly rejoices at it. Yet, at the same time, it ventures to differ from "illogical" Mr. Morison as to the meaning of this phenomenon. So far from its being a sign of the decadence of Christianity, the *Christian World* considers it a sign of increasing vitality. While hailing with deep satisfaction the fact that "the energy which in former days went out to controversy is now devoted to the work of benevolence," our pious contemporary maintains that this is real Christianity. Defending the faith is a wretched mistake; the business of the Church is to "devise plans for the alleviation of human woe."

No doubt this is very pretty; but, after all, is it quite satisfactory? Does the *Christian World* seriously mean to say that Christianity strengthens by relinquishing, one by one, all its doctrines, and cultivating the "enthusiasm of humanity" which is a natural product of the human

heart? Does it mean to say that the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Atonement, and Salvation by Faith, may be believed or disbelieved at pleasure, and that both those who accept and those who reject them are excellent Christians? If that is what our contemporary means, we can only admire its wonderful flexibility. For our part, we always thought that Christianity asserted something definite as to things that have happened in the past and things that will happen in the future. But if Christianity involves nothing of the kind; if it simply means approval of any benevolent project that happens to engage the attention of orthodox philanthropists or sentimentalists; surely it is scarcely worth five minutes thought by any earnest mind. Not thus did Augustine, Luther and Pascal understand and Christianity; not thus is it understood by Cardinal Newman. Those great minds could not embrace, like theological Ixions, the rosy cloud which fascinates such washy souls as the anything-arian Christians who write and read the *Christian World*. They would agree with Mr. Morison that Christianity is chiefly concerned with the next life, and only at all with this life as it is a preparation for the next; and that Christianity is perishing when the Church occupies itself with the care of mortal bodies instead of the care of immortal souls. Either Heaven and Hell exist or they do not. If they do, the *Christian World* is trifling with its readers' eternal interests; if they do not, its levities are still an impertinence. For, if the alleviation of human woe is the great aim of thought and action—as we allow it is—

are the clergy the persons to take the lead in the business? Are they, who have deceived and abused us for so many centuries, to be our leaders in a new departure? Surely not. The idea is utterly absurd. New social ideas, new scientific discoveries, do not spring from inside the Church; they always spring from outside, and we may be sure they will continue to do so.

Christian ministers may give themselves airs, but the world no longer takes them at their own estimate. The real fact is, their outward assurance covers a great deal of inward cowardice. They will do anything, and preach anything, rather than relinquish the loaves and fishes; and what they call adapting Christianity to the necessities of the age, means nothing but sailing under false colors. Bit by bit the Christian flag is mended, and as the old material is worked out fresh material is worked in. But not only is the material fresh, the device is fresh; yet when the ship of religion floats under a flag in which none of the original colors remain, the officers and crew will stoutly maintain that nothing has been changed.

Much, however, as we detest hypocrisy we are gratified at the change which is taking place. Only with reasonable people will the doctrines of Christianity die by argument; with the great mass of unreasonable people they will die by gradual indifference and neglect. When Christian editors praise up humanity, and tell us that charity is the thing not faith, we understand that the creed is slowly perishing. Of course we shall be scolded for saying so, but what of that? When Mohammed lay dying, and the fatal news was whispered abroad, Omar rushed among the people with a drawn sword, declaring that he would slay anyone so impious as to assert that the prophet could die. Still, Mohammed did die; and so Christianity will die, although a thousand Omars denounce the universal rumors of its approaching end.

G. W. FOOTE.

HOSPITALS NOT OF CHRISTIAN ORIGIN.

A FAVORITE weapon in the hands of Christian controversialists is the assertion that but for the Christian religion there would be no hospitals for the care of the sick or destitute, and that prior to the establishment of that religion the unfortunate invalids were left to languish and die neglected. In his pretentious but popular life of Christ the ever rhetorical Archdeacon Farrar makes the statement that "amidst all the boasted civilisation of antiquity there existed no hospitals," and the statement, false as it is, is repeated *ad nauseam* by the Christian evidence-mongers, who cannot be expected to know any better. With the same breath they assure us that the divine teachings of Jesus built up a faith from which hospitals, insane asylums, and similar institutions are met with on every side. Because certain fiction-writers in the second century of our era tell us of some wonderful works of healing, such as driving insanity (represented as devils) out of a man into a herd of swine, they infer that about that time began the noble work of establishing hospitals. They omit to notice that not one single word is represented as spoken in the New Testament in favor of the medical art, and that not a single hint is given as to the necessity for establishing such institutions. The only reference to the sick, beyond that of their miraculous cure, is the instruction given by James that when one is sick he is to be anointed with oil, and the elders sent for to pray over him, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick. For following this divine prescription one of the Peculiar People, whose peculiarity consists in really believing what all Christians pretend to believe, was recently sentenced to one month's imprisonment. In row physic to the dogs is virtually the teaching of the New Testament. To our mind it would have been far more worthy of a divine instructor, instead of calling one man from the dead, to have given instructions how to avert disease and render all life healthful. But no remedy for a single disease is given in the New Testament. It countenances instead the most pernicious theory that disease means devils, that lunacy, epilepsy, lameness, and dumbness, are the work of evil spirits. This theory, against which the Greek physician, Hippocrates, wrote in the fourth century B.C., has been a fruitful source, not only of blunders and brutal treatment, but of direct insanity among those by whom it has been held.

Hospitals were not called suddenly into existence at the bidding of Christianity. They existed long before it, and were a development from the public dispensaries which existed in almost all the ancient pagan civilisations, where medical officers were appointed by the State for the relief of the sick poor. In Egypt these officers were instituted from a remarkable antiquity, for in the eleventh century B.C. there was a College of Physicians in the receipt of public pay.¹ Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians were renowned for their medical skill. Some were oculists, some dentists, some skilled in diseases of the brain, some in those of the bowels, etc. Women officiated as midwives. The physicians were probably a sub-division of the sacerdotal caste. Their early medical works were ascribed to kings and gods. The antiquity of the art in Egypt may be inferred from the fact that the medical papyrus at Berlin, which belongs to the fourteenth century B.C., contains a copy of a treatise on inflammation, which it says was found written in *ancient* writing. This papyrus contains a treatise on midwifery, and no less than 170 prescriptions for the cure of disease of which the diagnosis was carefully recorded. Very ancient mummies have been found with their teeth stopped with gold, and it is certain the Egyptians had regular *post-mortem* examinations, although these were for a long while denounced as a sacrilege in Christian Europe. From the fact that the medical officers were State-paid, there can be no doubt the Egyptian physicians had to attend the poor gratuitously. The temples were virtually hospitals, and in them, as in those of Carthage and Greece, have been found votive tablets recording the cures that had been effected.

To suppose that piety and benevolence only came into the world with Christianity bespeaks ignorance alike of human nature and human history. A painting portraying a naval victory of Rameses III. at Medinet Abri, depicts some of the triumphant Egyptians attempting to rescue the crew of a sinking enemy's vessel—an act in strong contrast with the action of "God's chosen people," who, acting under divine instructions, "left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded" (Josh. x. 40).

Whether India was indebted to Egypt or not for its early science is still somewhat obscure, but certain it is that in very early times the Brahmins exhibited considerable knowledge of medicine. They prescribed for the village communities, and if they had no hospitals the shade of a tree served the same purpose in the treatment of the sick. Doubtless some superstitions were mingled with their treatment, but that it was not altogether foolish we may judge from the statement of Megasthenes, a Greek ambassador, who resided for many years in India early in the third century before the Christian era, and who says "they cure diseases by diet rather than by medical remedies."

J. M. WHEELER.

(To be concluded.)

BLOOD AND FIRE.

BLOOD and fire, blood and fire! marching onward through the land.
By the Army's wild fanatics, see the blaze is fiercely fanned;
Mark them in the street or corner, how they thus the people tell:
"If you don't get saved, my brother, you'll be damned and go to hell;
There to burn in fires eternal, there for ever gnash your teeth,
Ne'er to have one drop of water brought to you for your relief.
Oh, my sister, come to Jesus, he is waiting here for you;
Also, when you start about it, you might bring some money too.
Not for us, oh no, my sister, we have that by God supplied,
For, you see, what he gets we get; we're with him identified.
Now's the time for the collection; here's the box and round it goes:
Give to God, now quick, my comrades, ere he pawn his Sunday
clothes.
Hoist the banner now, my brother; to the barracks off we go,
There to worship our great idol, and to hold our puppy show.
Lift the banner higher, comrade, so that all the people see
Blood and fire in those great letters—fire for them and blood for me."
Through the street the Army rushes; hark! they beat upon the
drum;
Hear the hallelujah sisters crying to the people, "Come,
Come, and give your hearts to Jesus, he will give you due reward—
Come and lift your voice in praises, unto Jesus Christ our Lord."
Then they jaw the poor old Devil, swear he's always on the lurk;
They forget that if they lost him they might go in search of work.
How their "General" must chuckle at the poor weak-minded fools,
Whom by fear he thus coerces into willing humble tools.

¹ See M. F. Chabas, "La Médecine des anciens Egyptiens," 1862, and Brugsch, "Histoire d'Égypte," c. ix.

ACID DROPS.

It is now conceded that theology has been laboring under a mistake, and that a man is not damned in the other world for wrong belief, but in *this*. We have every day evidence which strongly confirms the theory of present damnation for the sin of indulgence in wrong belief; and it is no god that does the damning either.

A VIRGINIA preacher who believes in prayer met a bear in the woods the other day, and instead of putting his remedy into effect he jumped from a bluff into Cheat River and swam half a mile. He had never tried prayers for bear, and was a little afraid they'd skip a cog somewhere.

AT Belfast, the scene of so much Christian love in the shape of deadly riots, John Spence and his wife have beaten their infant child in a most barbarous manner and finally killed it by plunging it into a vessel of boiling water. The child died in terrible agony, and the screams were heard by the neighbors. Perhaps the prisoners thought they were only imitating God, who plunges his children into fire, and does worse still by keeping them alive for ever so that their agonies may never end.

THE cholera is spreading in Italy. The panic-stricken peasants of Sicily, who have suffered for many centuries from a superabundance of priest and a scarcity of schoolmaster, are so ignorant and so fanatical that they have risen in arms against the measures of sanitation adopted by the authorities. They broke into a hospital and murdered the only cholera patient there, on the charge of being paid by the government to spread the disease. They have had several sanguinary encounters with the troops and seem to be in a state of complete revolt.

A SALVATION ARMY "captain" at Kingston-on-Thames was summoned by a working man for annoying him by singing and preaching outside his house and refusing to leave off. The defendant thought he was justified in annoying the man because "only the police could order them to keep quiet." The magistrate fined him £1 and 12s. 6d. costs. As he declined to pay he was sent to prison for three days.

SALVATIONISTS are a great trouble to the authorities in many parts of the country. By questions asked in Parliament it seems there are three members of the Salvation Army in prison for obstructing the highway at Warwick, and that five more were arrested at Stamford. They persist in using markets for their religious services in defiance of the decision of the magistrates.

THE deadlock at Great Harwood Cemetery still continues. The cemetery is not consecrated, and the Vicar refuses to officiate at funerals or allow the Vicar of Rushton to officiate either, although the cemetery is for the two parishes. Consequently only Nonconformist services can be held at the grave, and Church of England people must either employ a Dissenting minister or go without a funeral service over their deceased relatives.

THE Rev. W. V. Williams, Vicar of Llandrillo, Denbighshire, attempts to connect the Nonconformists of his parish with the burning of St. Paul's Church, Colwyn Bay. He says he has evidence identifying the incendiary. He refuses, however, to give the police any clue. Evidently he hates his less orthodox fellow Christians and he thinks they hate him. Christianity seems to be a religion of mutual hatred rather than of mutual love.

PAUL recommended being all things to all men in order to gain some, and Christians have not been slow to profit by the advice. Any expedient is held to be legitimate in order to raise money for a pious object, and swindles are countenanced at a church bazaar which would be scouted on a racecourse. "Ally Sloper" is all the go with a certain section of London lads, and an "Ally Sloper Bazaar" was recently held in connection with a well-known Established Church in the East of London. "Ally Sloper and Tootsie" were advertised among the chief attractions, while a footnote to the programme stated that, owing to the illness of Mrs. Sloper, the baby would not appear. Evidently the Army is infecting the Church with its methods, and negro minstrel evangelists will yet be followed by pious pantomimes.

"MAJOR" TUCKER, of the "S.A." in India, doesn't think much of previous missionary efforts in that country. On the other hand, the missionaries don't think much of Mr. Tucker and the "S.A." James Smith, late of Delhi, hints in the *Christian* that "Christian begging is in great danger of bringing into existence another army of useless loafers. To send out evangelists, unattached to any society, and leave them to wander about getting all the money they can, or to dabble in land and speculate, is likely to inflict terrible evils on India." He suggests that the officers of the "Army" may throw off the reins, and add to the number of English loafers whom Government is obliged to ship to England at a great cost to the country.

IT appears from the *Indian Witness* that there is a decrease of medical missionaries in Hindustan. For some time past there

has been less interest and enthusiasm manifested in this department. The Baptist Society has now but one medical missionary in all its fields, and he is stationed among the English Government officials at Simla. The truth is the societies find the medical missionaries do not bring them converts. They want to save the souls of the natives, not their bodies, and they would much rather hear of one baptism than of a hundred successful surgical operations.

BISHOP MOORHOUSE, of Manchester, recently declared that "curates have no business to marry when they are young. Churchmen are not called upon to establish a fund for encouraging improvidence." The duty of Churchmen is to give Bishop Moorhouse a stipend equal to that of a hundred curates, and to let him and the other bishops do all the breeding.

MORE bishops are wanted. My Lord of Rochester, who is away in Norway, finds his duties in South London too onerous, and a Bishop of Southwark is suggested, with sufficient funds to reconvert St. Saviour's into a cathedral.

THE *Christian* thinks that if all the Old Testament critics are agreed as to the late authorship of the Biblical books, they must be yielded to. Oh no, says the *British Weekly*. "There lies before us a communication from an eminent Christian philosopher [name not given], in which he says that the vast majority of living naturalists are materialists. Are we therefore to become materialists?" It must be very comforting for the orthodox to know that the majority of those who are competent to judge do not come to their conclusions. But wait awhile, and God will soon confound the wisdom of the wise and set at nought the vain learning of the ungodly.

HAVING by its discussion of "The Second Advent: Will it be before the Millennium?" left in a complete fog a question which is as clear as daylight to those who see that the Second Advent ought to have happened over eighteen hundred years ago, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, the *British Weekly* proposed to follow it up with a discussion on Holiness. Arrangements have been made with several peculiarly holy men to contribute to the discussion.

AMONG the many people whom the God of the Christian imagination has killed with his lightnings lately, a bootmaker named Atkinson, of 3 Commercial Place, Leyton, has presented the most pitiable features. The flash from heaven paralysed his jaw and left side while he was at his work on Wednesday evening, Aug. 17. Unable to take food, the poor fellow lingered for nine or ten days in great suffering before death released him. He leaves a widow and large family. Clearly the verdict of a Christian community is that he died by the "act of God." God is guilty of a cruel homicide. Is such a God worthy of being worshipped?

SIX persons were struck by lightning near Buxton on Saturday, and the house in which they were wrecked by the flash. A boy was killed on the spot and the remaining victims lie in a precarious condition. On Monday Mary Joyce was slain by lightning at Bolton. God doeth all things well. Murder is well when God perpetrates it.

THE correspondence between the Bishop of London and the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam is instructive. The bishop prohibits Mr. Headlam, although duly ordained, from officiating in his diocese on the ground that he will not give Mr. Headlam facilities for doing mischief. Asked the meaning of this vague accusation, Mr. Headlam is told that his course has a tendency to encourage ballet-dancing, which "is a very grievous temptation." Mr. Headlam replies that he does, indeed, maintain that a dancer's calling is an honorable one, that dancing should be treated as an art, and that the ladies of the ballet should be treated with respect, and not isolated by religious people. This *F. London* thinks, or pretends to think, a sufficient reason for debarring Mr. Headlam from earning his living in his diocese. Probably Mr. Headlam's expressed sympathy with other objects besides those of the Church and State Guild has something to do with the matter.

COMMENTING on the correspondence, the *Daily Telegraph* says Mr. Headlam was very much to the point in citing to the bishop the text "To the pure all things are pure." But it adds: "Holy Writ abounds in what may be respectfully defined as controversial texts; that is, as texts which, literally interpreted, are directly contradictory of one another." A very nice state of things for Holy Writ.

THAT model minister, the Rev. Frederick Clark, *alias* P. F. Duffey, has at last been sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labor for obtaining sums of money fraudulently. In 1873 he was curate at Chelmsford and was discharged for misconduct. Subsequently he was dismissed from the post of chaplain of the Strand Union at Edmonton for "misconduct." As curate of an iron church at Stoke Newington he collected funds for a church and misappropriated some £300 of the amount. He held a curacy at Greenwich, but was found drunk and the bishop got rid of him. In 1884 he was curate of St. Helen's parish church and was again dismissed for misconduct.

One would think the Church would be particular not to employ so disgraceful a character again. But no; he obtained a curacy in Ireland, and was found to be living with a woman who was not his wife. We wonder whether he will get another curacy as soon as he leaves prison? As all his sins are washed away by the blood of Christ of course his immoral character cannot count against him in the eyes of true believers.

THE *British Weekly* exhibits its dissatisfaction at Mr. Gerald Massey having received any addition to his small pension from the civil list. Probably the editor feels that his own eminent services to English literature during his first year's conduct of the pious *B. W.* better entitles him to a pension than all the poems of the infidel author of *Babe Christabel*.

THE Rev. D. Seymore, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church at Janesville, Wisconsin, has eloped with Mrs. Henry, wife of the editor of the *Argus*. Both were prominent in religious matters. Mrs. Henry acted as organist, and was a leading member of the church. She leaves two children. The minister leaves a wife and five children entirely destitute. He carried off with him 120 dollars out of the church funds. This is his third offence, his first victim having been a girl of fourteen.

AT Mount Olivet, Lebanon, Tennessee, the lightning struck a Baptist Church. Of a hundred persons in the church, every one was knocked senseless.

THE Rev. Dr. Bevan, of Melbourne, tells his congregation that the virtues of Queen Victoria have done more for the morals of Englishmen than all the homilies preached since her accession. This doesn't say much for the clergy. If fifty years of sermons from scores of thousands of godly ministers have done less than the example of one very commonplace kind of lady, the clergy must have so little influence for good that they had better be disestablished altogether, and the money spent on schools.

DR. PARKER has left England for America, where he is going to star on a lecturing tour. Among the passengers on board the steamer he sailed in was the Duke of Marlborough. What a fine opportunity for trying the power of the gospel on an aristocratic scapegrace! If the Duke of Marlborough were converted on board the *Umbria* there would be an immense success awaiting Dr. Parker in America, especially if he brought his Grace on the platform with him as the missionaries often bring on a converted heathen at Exeter Hall meetings.

DR. PARKER'S first successor at the City Temple preached from the text "And they accompanied him unto the ship." This is very much like making Dr. Parker a second St. Paul, when the only point of resemblance between them is physical insignificance. Louis Blanc was a very little man, and he used to pride himself in Louis Phillipe's time on being like Thiers, who was also of dwarfish proportions. "Yes," said Heine, in his sarcastic style, "you do resemble Thiers, as a shilling resembles a sovereign." That is very much how Dr. Parker resembles St. Paul.

A MR. HOWARD LIVESEY complains in the *Christian World* of the profane language he hears in the streets, and cries out for a stringent law to put it down. But why all this pother on the part of the Christian? Nearly every oath is derived from religion, and there are more damns in the Bible than in any other book we are acquainted with. Besides, there is this difference between ordinary cursing and church cursing. When a rough fellow in the street damns your eyes, he doesn't mean you any harm, and probably if you tumbled down he would help you up again; but when a theologian damns you to all eternity for daring to differ from his infallible little brain, he really means it, and looks forward with considerable pleasure to your champion swim on the billows of hell. Let Mr. Livesey turn his pious indignation against the cursing pulpits first, and leave bus-drivers and costermongers till the last.

THE *Hertfordshire Express* advertises a residence to let in Hitchin. The landlord announces "Dissenters not eligible." How these Christians love one another!

SOME colored people, preparing for mission work in America, have been giving concerts at Walsall; and the Rev. E. M. Fitzgerald has denied them the use of the Church schoolroom because they "had been singing in Dissenting places." More Christian love!

PROFESSOR FAIRBAIRN is telling the Americans that he is an Evolutionist. At this rate a Christian will soon be a miraculous species, combining all sorts of contradictory growths; and, like Joseph's coat, he will be of many colors.

PROFESSOR FAIRBAIRN does not say how he reconciles Evolution with the Rib Story, or Darwin with Moses. Hadn't we better have a first-rate, real Revised Version of the Bible, especially as the present Revised Version slumbers on booksellers' shelves? Professor Fairbairn and his theological colleagues should put their heads together, and tell us what God Almighty really meant

to say. Left to himself he seems to have got into a terrible fog, and it is high time his friends came to his relief.

A RELIGIOUS contemporary tells a story of a Plymouth Brethren minister in the north of Devon. Meeting one day a gentleman with whom he differed, he refused to shake hands with him; and when expostulated with on his want of courtesy, he exclaimed, "I would as soon have shaken hands with the Devil as with him." Our contemporary disapproves such narrowness, but if the Bible is of any authority, that Devonshire bigot is quite right. He is simply obeying the injunction, "Hold no fellowship with unbelievers."

ACCORDING to the *Christian*, Dr. Chamberlain, a medical missionary in India, says that a Brahmin priest came to him secretly one night and acknowledged that he was convinced of the truth of Christianity. "But," he added, "we mean to hold on to our highly endowed heathen temples. We Brahmins cannot afford to let you succeed. We have got to fight you." The *Christian* chuckles over this little story, which is probably apocryphal. But, even if true, it is no great cause for rejoicing, for the very same reason assigned by the Brahmin priest for sticking to his wealthy profession in India, induces the clergy to stick to their wealthy profession in England. Were it not for the loaves and fishes, most religions would fail to find champions. Of course clergymen do not labor for the meal that perisheth, but they are very good customers to the butchers all the same.

THE Margate magistrates have fined "several earnest evangelists for delivering the Gospel message on the spacious Parade." So says a pious print. But worse remains. The Eastbourne authorities have "actually refused to allow colporteurs to vend Bibles and good books on the beach." How dreadful to be sure! The fact is, the Christians have been so accustomed to have all their own way, that when they are curbed a little they feel as though the universe were turning topsy-turvy.

By the way, "Bibles and good books" is really rich. It implies that the Bible is *not* a good book, an implication with which we have the honor to agree.

NOW that the clergy are beginning to hang their heads at the mention of everlasting flames it is quite refreshing to find the Rev. Thomas Kelly, of Philadelphia, saying that "even to smooth the matter of eternal punishment is to treat the inspiration of the scriptures as an unsettled question." Hear, hear! This is the right sort of attitude. You can fight with a man who will stand up.

"CHRIST," we see in a Christian paper, "wants not the cheap, glib speech of the advocate, but the deep, earnest words of the witness." True, that is just what Christ does want, and what he is likely to want.

SAM JONES, the Yankee revivalist, has been reproached for taking five hundred dollars for three days' preaching. But a Methodist friend says that Sam is a very self-sacrificing man, as he has been offered a good deal more to go lecturing. Still a thousand dollars a week is rather high pay for preaching "Blessed be ye poor." Probably, however, that is a text which Sam Jones "lets slide."

THE Rev. Thomas Fullerton is out on bail to the amount of £4,000. The charge of forgery on which he was arrested is evidently a very serious matter in the opinion of the magistrates. Besides the forged cheque variously stated as for £370 or £324, he is now charged with forging another for £500.

GHOSTS are not so successful nowadays as they were in the biblical times when Samuel's ghost conversed with Saul and the saints arose from their graves and walked about Jerusalem. A foolish ghost at Baltimore, refusing to answer or to stop when challenged, was shot at and fell dead. This practical joker had been keeping the neighborhood in a state of alarm for some time by appearing in lonely roads. It is not in the least probable that the man who shot the ghost will be found guilty of any offence by the jury who will try him. We wonder how the Jerusalem ghosts would have stood the bullet test? Evidently a revolver is better than holy water for laying ghosts nowadays, whatever may have been the case in bygone times.

If the ghost had been a holy ghost and had only worn a Bible over his heart, he would probably still be alive, for all good Christians know the remarkable property that this book has of stopping bullets. Other sacred books also have this valuable property. Church of England Prayer-books have stopped bullets almost as frequently as the old-fashioned tobacco boxes. The latest instance of this sort of protection by religious books is that of the pious bandit leader Landi, of Cetica, near Florence. In a conflict with the troops he was hit by a ball, which lodged in a volume of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*. Although he was really unharmed, the force of the blow was so great that, believing himself fatally wounded, he surrendered to his pursuers. A semi-inspired book about Jerusalem is evidently good against bullets, but of course not so good as a genuine Bible.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, September 4, Ram's Horn Assembly Room, Ingram Street, Glasgow; at 11.30, "Is Christianity True?" At 2.30, "Comic Aspects of the Bible." At 6.30, "Good God."

SEPT. 11, Manchester; 18, Leeds; 25, Milton Hall.

OCT. 2 and 9, London Hall of Science; 16, South Shields; 23, Portsmouth; 30, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LITERARY communications to be addressed to the Editor, 14 Clerkenwell Green, London, E.C. All business communications to Mr. R. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, London, E.C.

THE *Freethinker* will be forwarded, direct from the office, post free to any part of Europe, America, Canada and Egypt, at the following rates, prepaid:—One Year, 6s. 6d.; Half Year, 3s. 3d.; Three Months, 1s. 7½d.

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—J. M. S.

A LOVER OF TRUTH.—We simply dealt with the Coventry murder case as it appeared in all the daily papers. We note that the *War Cry* says the murderer "has never been a soldier of the Army," and give publicity in these columns to Booth's disclaimer. The rest of your letter calls for no special comment. Your view of Booth's pecuniary relations to the Army differ from ours, and we really don't see what the published balance-sheet has to do with the matter. Our simplicity is perhaps more limited than yours.

C. WARD.—Thanks. Dealt with last week.

F. J. HALSEY.—We are much obliged. The blunder is obviously a printer's error. It shall be corrected in a future edition. Mistakes are sure to occur in the best printed book.

A. LAWSON.—We looked for the lady among the audience, but did not notice her.

GREY-HEADED ATHEIST.—Already dealt with.

SEVERAL Correspondents remain unanswered owing to the absence of the Editor and the Sub-Editor in Scotland.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—La Semaine Anticléricale—Boston Investigator (two numbers)—Northern Echo—Hope (three numbers)—New York Truthseeker—Port Elizabeth Telegraph—South Manchester Chronicle—Newcastle Daily Leader—Chicago Times—Independent Pulpit—Leeds Evening Express—Liberty—Freidenker—Natal Witness—Lucifer—Jus—Stories for the People—Leeds Mercury—Western Figaro.

CORRESPONDENCE should reach us not later than Tuesday, if a reply is desired in the current issue. Otherwise the reply stands over till the following week.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. LABOUCHERE pressed the Government to throw open the British and South Kensington Museums on Sundays. A man might go to church and museum too, insinuated the ironical Henry; adding, in his most caustic vein, "He may perhaps learn something in both places, and at the museum he certainly will."

FREETHOUGHT is spreading in South Africa. The *Port Elizabeth Telegraph* notices that in that "much bechurched and bechapeled town there is a society of Freethinkers." It adds: "The Society, it is true, is only about twenty-five strong, but it is daily adding to its number."

MR. FISHER, secretary of the Leeds Branch of the N. S. S., has a letter in the *Leeds Evening Express* correcting the statements and arguments of "Zozimos" against the Secularists of the district. He also has another letter in the *Leeds Mercury* against the Sunday persecution of small traders. He points out that the hawkers of water-cress, milk, newspapers, etc., must supply a felt want, or else they would not be supported.

DR. CAMERON LEES, a well-known Presbyterian, writing from Melbourne to the *Scotsman*, is alarmed at the progress of secular education in the colonies. In Victoria he admits they have well-equipped schools, even in thinly-populated districts, and a well-organised university, but "it has come to this, that elementary education knows nothing of God or Christ, and a race is growing up in sheer paganism." We earnestly trust that the efforts to counteract this will prove abortive. The less children are made into worshippers of God, the more workers there will be for Humanity.

THE Rev. Richard James Plater, late curate of Penrath, announces that he will henceforth "work for the Master outside the pale of the Establishment, untrammelled by the fetters of priestcraft and dogmatism." We don't exactly know what Mr. Plater means, but he appears to be on the move, and if he goes along brisk enough he may find he has left the old Master as well as the old Establishment.

IS PAIN A PROOF OF GOD'S LOVE?

THE *Rock* thinks it is. In a leading article entitled "Pain a Proof of God's Love" it endeavors to maintain the point. The argument is that "the purpose of pain is doubtless protective." The burnt child learns to fear the fire, and so avoids destruction. If no pain resulted from burning, the child would perish unwarned. So men might comfortably die of starvation if no painful hunger interfered as a warning and as a stimulus. Considerations of this kind show us that "pain is sent as a protective measure, and is a strong proof of the loving nature of our God, who puts it as a warning notice against wrong-doing, and uses it as a means of instruction."

That pain is protective is only partly true. What is the use of the pain in child-birth, or in teething, or in cancer, or in passing gall-stones? What was the use of pain to the man tortured on a Christian rack, or to the bird or animal torn to pieces by carnivora? What is the use of pain to the innumerable living creatures who die helplessly, or to the innumerable species or races that die out in the struggle for existence? Taking all nature broadly, the most that can be said is that there is probably a *balance* of good outweighing the evil and suffering. As the deliberate contrivance of an omnipotent being, as the balance-sheet presented by Infinite Wisdom, so imperfect a result is inexcusable. A pagan god, bound by the laws of destiny and nature, might plead that he did the best he could, but the Christian God can make no such excuses without forfeiting his claim to omnipotence.

Nature, not being a person, cannot be held morally responsible for the cruel processes of natural evolution and the cruel and unjust means of securing a balance of benefit at the expense of a vast amount of suffering. But a God who works by so relentless a decree is responsible. He neglects his duty to his children and leaves an iron law as his unbending substitute. He is both lazy and cruel.

The *Rock* excuses "much of the pain that we now suffer" as being due to "enfeebled constitutions inherited from ancestors who set Nature's laws at defiance" and thus "transmitted" pain to succeeding generations. But is this just? Is it not wicked of a moral Being to rule the universe by such a law of inherited punishment? Why should children be punished for the father's sins? Why should whole nations or races suffer for the fault of some ancestor committed ten thousand or ten million years ago? Is it because God cannot help himself? because Omnipotence is not omnipotent?

Much of the pain we suffer gives no warning, for it does not occur till *after* the offence or cause. A God who meant pain to be a warning should make it precede or at least accompany the folly or vice which it is to prevent. Remorse should not be delayed till *after* the murder. The very thought of the crime should cause such pain as would prevent its actual perpetration. As it is, our sins generally attract us by the bait of temporary pleasure, and our most sterling virtues often repel us by the temporary pain, sometimes by the lifelong pain, which their practice demands. Pain thus warns men from virtue, from the strait and narrow way that leadeth to moral salvation. For it is the path of virtue which is notoriously difficult and painful. It is the downward path that leadeth to destruction which is temptingly broad and easy. An omnipotent Being who meant pain to be protective should not so arrange matters that the alleged means of protection continually drives men from probity and honor into the attractive paths of temptation and folly.

If pain is to be protective and moral why do poor invalids and weak women suffer so much, while great hulking blackguards enjoy the best of health? Why do the over-sensitive consciences of many good and tender-hearted people continually torment them for trivial or imaginary faults, while hoary ruffians and cruel bigots enjoy an apparent immunity from such forms of moral suffering?

Is hell protective? Is eternal torment a protection against itself? If the pain is to warn us against evil conduct, why is the pain delayed till after death, when the emphatic warning will be too late? Why are no witnesses or actual sufferers allowed to return to earth and warn us, seeing that no warning foretaste or sight of hell is allowed to be included in our own personal experience? It cannot be pretended that the torments of hell are benevolent in intention without a gross abuse of language. How will

all the sufferings of mankind on earth or in hell warn Adam and Eve not to eat the fatal apple six thousand years ago? How will the endless pangs of eternity warn sufferers to alter their conduct in the irrevocable past?

The plea that pain is protective is a plea that pain protects from pain, a lesser pain we may suppose from a greater one. This is intrinsically the same plea as that fire protects from fire by warning us to take due precautions; that theft protects from theft by compelling us to guard our property securely; that murder protects us from murder by enforcing social union and civil protection. Undoubtedly all evil has this protective influence, by compelling us, more or less, to resist and overcome it. But this is no excuse for an omnipotent God who could have constructed a universe without pain, or could have made evil-doing and pain identical at the very root, instead of making, as he so constantly does, enjoyment the lot of evil-doers, whilst the pain falls upon the innocent victims of selfishness or brutality.

The *Rock* holds that sickness is a good thing because the Prince of Wales's illness caused more attention to be paid to the sanitary condition of the people's houses. This is but saying that sickness is good because it prevents sickness—that evil is good because it prevents more of itself. Surely if partial prevention is good total prevention must be better still? If a murder is good because it forces us to prevent a long series of murders by hanging the original murderer, this is but a confession that murder is bad and that therefore no murder at all would be better than even one.

The *Rock* confesses that there are "some" cases of suffering for which we cannot account. We are to be full of gratitude for such partial explanations as we can see or manufacture, and we are to "rest assured that some day the whole mystery of pain and suffering in this life will be fully made clear." So that after all this pious explanation pain is still a "mystery"—which simply means that it cannot possibly be made to harmonise with the Christian idea of God as Omnipotent Benevolence. Where pain proves anything favorable to God it furnishes a convincing argument. Where it proves the contrary the Christian thinker denies all logical validity to the proof and puts it aside as "mystery"—as something he cannot explain on his own theistic hypothesis. Why should proof one way count and proof the other way be dismissed?

If pain is protective, then it is foolish as well as impious to resist the will of God by using anæsthetics, and the Christians should agitate for a law to prevent the sale of "pain-killer," chlorodyne, laudanum and so forth. Many Christians have been strongly opposed to the use of anæsthetics on theological grounds. God causes the pain in childbirth and in surgical operations for his own wise purposes, and therefore they think it daringly presumptuous to remove or deaden that suffering. If pain is "one of the strongest proofs of the loving nature of our God" then these pain-loving Christians are of course in the right.

But if pain is so beneficial, or so preventive of pain, so conducive to happiness, why does "St. John the Divine" promise us that God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes "and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. xxi., 4)? If God thinks it good to abolish pain in the future, surely he could abolish it in the present. The very fact that the abolition is regarded as a supreme blessing is an admission that pain is a great evil. The contention that pain is intrinsically a blessing and a proof of beneficence is a hollow one. It is superbly ridiculous in its reversion of first principles. That the moral enormity of systematic pain is in some sort palliated by its frequent usefulness in preventing greater pain and in training us to the habit of enduring or overcoming pain and evil,¹ is true; but this, as I have already shown, is not an argument that can exculpate an almighty and supremely benevolent Designer and Ruler of the universe. Such an excuse is like that of a savage father who should plead that by murdering two of his children and flogging the rest he was enabled to prevent himself from inflicting still greater enormities. The *Rock* of course regards such ill-adjusted slayings and scourgings as the strongest possible proof of a father's love. To such desperate arguments are theologians driven. To an im-

partial mind, however, the plea that God created pain in order to prevent pain is absurd on the face of it.

W. P. BALL.

AN ANGRY CURATE.

THE Rev. R. A. Morgan, Curate of Winterbourne Gunner, has just furnished an example of the way in which our pastors and ministers resist not evil and turn the other cheek also. As he was walking along the country road a stone fell. There was no one in sight, but he rushed up the embankment and there saw the culprit, a little boy named Charles Sutton, eight years old, who was playing with some other little boys, and had thrown the stone over the hedge without the slightest idea that so grand and terrible a being as an ambassador of the Almighty, was taking the air on the other side.

The wrathful ecclesiastic was not satisfied with a word of reproof or of kindly caution, as less pious people might have been. He showed the children and the parishioners how Christians should forgive their enemies. He wrote to the father a letter in which he said: "Unless within seven days you send a full public apology, and an undertaking to prevent any repetition of a like offence, to my lawyer through your own—Messrs. Cobb and Smith—such apology and undertaking to be approved by my lawyer, I shall cause a summons to be issued."

The farmer was further informed of his inferior position and that he must pay the lawyer's fee. The conclusion of the letter ran thus: "You should bear in mind that there is a great gulf between your position and mine, and, if you do not teach your children how to conduct themselves properly, you must, like other parents similarly situated, take the consequences. If you elect to give apology, etc., please to notify your intention of doing so before the hour of 5.30 this evening, in which case you will of course pay my lawyer's fee for approval of same, otherwise I shall conclude that you prefer to have the matter decided in court, and I shall refer it to Mr. Warner by this evening's post.—Yours truly, R. A. Morgan, Clerk."

The farmer let the matter go into court. One of the boy's companions testified that the stone was thrown over the hedge in complete ignorance of the presence of the curate and with no evil intent. As the stone was not thrown at anyone and did not hit anyone, the magistrates dismissed the case. The enraged curate then had to pay £1 6s. 6d. costs, which included the fee of a guinea to the farmer's lawyer. Perhaps the lesson will teach him to be a little more reasonable in future.

ANOTHER SAINT DEFEATED.

In Osage City, Kansas, a sanctimonious Christian, named George H. Dale, prosecuted Thomas J. Beets for violation of the Sunday law by working on that day. The defendant asked for a trial by jury, which was granted. The jury brought in a verdict of not guilty. The saint has to pay all the costs, amounting to 39 dollars 60 cents. The payment of \$10 is well calculated to moderate the zeal of this persecuting Sabbatarian in the future.

FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN.

J. BUCKLEY, the Academy, Winsford, advertises that he gives "Christian training and training for South Kensington." We suppose his pupils' parents pay their money and take their choice.

THE *Church Times* has of late been congratulating its readers upon the decadence of dissent. It seems that at the late meeting of the Wesleyan Conference there was an admitted falling off in membership. The Nonconformist journals now remind the organ that if religion wanes in the dissenting chapels it will also wane in the Established Church. It is amusing to notice the rival Christian bodies gloating over each other's presumed weakness. We feel inclined to echo Voltaire, who, when he heard two shrews violently abusing each other, said: "I believe them both."

THE *Natal Witness* gives further particulars of the rumpus in St. Peter's Cathedral, Pietermaritzburg. The Archdeacon resisted the interdict of the Supreme Court, and a severe struggle took place with the popular churchwardens and their friends. Cries for help being heard from within, the outer public stormed the cathedral doors, which had been closed against them. They found the churchwarden, Mr. Sherron, on the floor, writhing under the firm grip of Archdeacon Cotley and Mr. Gardiner. Sherron was rescued after a sharp tussle, and emerged from the conflict with bruised and blood-bespattered face. The Archdeacon then tried to put the people in darkness—the old policy of his Church. But while he was on a pair of steps, which he had mounted to extinguish the lights, the people upset the steps, and the Archdeacon was precipitated among the pew-seats. He vehemently protested, but the crowd forced him to read aloud the interdict of the Supreme Court before they allowed him to depart. With the law and the elected churchwardens and the people dead against him, the baffled ecclesiastic must feel in a somewhat humiliating position.

¹ It must not be forgotten that if pain and evil had not been created, the warlike habits and thoughts necessitated by the painful battle of life would be entirely out of place, and would not need cultivation and strengthening as now.

WHY AM I A HEATHEN? BY A CHINAMAN.

(Continued from p. 279.)

APPLYING this dogma, I began to think of my own prospects on the other side of Jordan. Suppose Dennis Kearney, the Californian sand lotter, should slip in and meet me there, would he not be likely to forget his heavenly songs, and howl once more: "The Chinese must go!" and organise a heavenly crusade to have me and others immediately cast out into the other place?

And then the murderers, cut-throats, and thieves whose very souls had become thoroughly impregnated with their life-long crimes—these were to become "pure as new-born babes"—all within a few short hours of a death-preparation—while I, the good heathen (supposing the case), who had done naught but good to my fellow-heathen, who had spent most of my hard earnings regularly in feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, and succoring the distressed, and had died of yellow fever, contracted from a deserted fellow-being stricken with the disease, whom no Christian would nurse, I was unmercifully consigned to hell's everlasting fire, simply because I had not heard of the glorious saving power of the Lord Jesus, or because the construction of my mind would not permit me to believe in the peculiar redeeming powers of Christ!

But, then, it was gently insinuated: "Oh, no! You heathen who had not heard of Christ will not be punished quite so severely when you die as those 'who heard the gospel and believed it not.'"

The more I read the Bible the more afraid I was to become a Christian. The idea of coming into daily or hourly contact with cold-blooded murderers, cut-throats, and other human scourges, who had had but a few moments of repentance before roaming around heaven, was abhorrent. And suppose, to this horde of shrewd, "civilised" criminals should be added the fanatic Thugs of India, the pirates of China, the slavers, the cannibals, *et al.* Well, this was enough to shock and dismay any mild, decent soul not schooled in eccentric Christianity.

It is not only because I want to be honest and to be sure of a heavenly home, that I choose to sign myself "Your Heathen," but because I want to be as happy as I can, in order to live longer; and I believe I can live longer here by being sincere and practical in my faith.

In the first place, my faith does not teach me predestination, nor that my life is what the gods have long fore-ordained, but is what I make it myself; and naturally much of this depends on the way I live.

Unlike Christianity, "our" church is not eager for converts; but, like Free Masonry, we think our religious doctrine strong enough to attract the seekers after light and truth to offer themselves without urging, or proselytising efforts. It pre-eminently teaches me to mind my own business, to be contented with what I have, to possess a mind that is tranquil, and a body at ease at all times—in a word it says: "Whatsoever ye would not that others should do unto you do ye not even so unto them." We believe that if we are not able to do anybody any good, we should do nothing at all to harm them. This is better than the restless Christian doctrine of ceaseless action. Idleness is no wrong when actions fail to bring forth fruits of merit. It is these fruitless trials of one thing and another that produce so much trouble and misery in Christian society.

If my shoe factory employs 500 men, and gives me an annual profit of 10,000 dollars, why should I substitute therein machinery by the use of which I need only 100 men, thus not only throwing 400 contented, industrious men into misery, but making myself more miserable by heavier responsibilities, with possibly less profit?

We heathen believe in the happiness of a common humanity, while the Christian's only practical belief appears to be money-making (golden calf worshipping); and there is more money to be made by being "in the swim" as a Christian than by being a heathen. Even a Christian minister makes more money in one year than a heathen banker does in two. I do not blame them for their money-making, but for their way of making it.

How many eminent Christian preachers sincerely believe in all the Christian mysteries they preach? And yet it is policy to be apparently in earnest; in fact, some are in real earnest rather from force of habit than otherwise—like a Bowery auctioneer who, to make trade, provides customers too—to keep up the appearance of rushing business. The more converts made, the more profit to the church, and the more wealth in the pocket of the dominie.

How would the hundreds of thousands of these Christian ministers in the United States make their living if they did not bulldoze it out of the pockets of the credulous by making the "pows" believe what the "pulpit" does not?

Nor do we heathen believe in a machine way of doing good. If we find a man starving in the streets we do not wait until we find the overseer of the poor, nor for the unwinding of other civilised red tape before relieving the man's hunger. If a heathen sees a man fall from a tree-top, and seriously injure himself, he does not first run to a hospital for an ambulance, nor does the ambulance-man first want to know what precinct the injured man belongs to; but forthwith he is cared for and taken to the nearest shelter for other needed treatment, and when the danger is over then red tape may come in—the Christian machinery.

If we do anything charitable we do not advertise it like the Christian, nor do we suppress knowledge of the meritorious acts of others to humor our vanity or gratify our spleen. An instance of this was conspicuous during the Memphis yellow fever epidemic a few years ago, and when the Chinese were virulently persecuted all over the United States. Chinese merchants in China donated 40,000 dollars at that time to the relief of plague-stricken Memphis, but the Christians quietly swallowed the sweet morsel without even a "thank you." But they did advertise it, heavily and strongly, all over the world, when they paid 137,000 dollars to the Chinese government as petty compensation for the massacre of 23 Chinamen by civilised American Christians, and for robbing these and other poor heathen of their earthly possessions.

In matters of charity Christians invariably let their right hand know what the left is doing, and cry it out from the house-tops. The heathen is too dignified for such childish vainness.

Of course, we decline to admit all the advantages of your boasted civilisation, or that the white race is the only civilised one. Its civilisation is borrowed, adapted, and shaped from our older form.

China has a national history of at least 4,000 years, and had a printed history 3,500 years before a European discovered the art of type-printing. In the course of our national existence our race has passed, like others, through mythology, superstition, witchcraft, established religion, to philosophical religion. We have been "blest" with at least a half dozen religions more than any other nation. None of them were rational enough to become the abiding faith of an intelligent people; but when we began to reason we succeeded in making society better, and its government more protective, and our great Reasoner, Confucius, reduced our various social and religious ideas into book form, and so perpetuated them.

China, with its teeming population of 400,000,000, is demonstration enough of the satisfactory results of this religious evolution. Where else can it be paralleled?

Call us heathen, if you will, the Chinese are still superior in social administration and social order. Among 400,000,000 of Chinese there are fewer murders and robberies in a year than there are in New York State.

True, China supports a luxurious monarch—whose every whim must be gratified; yet, withal, its people are the most lightly taxed in the world, having nothing to pay but from tilled soil, rice, and salt; and yet she has not a single dollar of national debt.

(To be continued.)

PRIESTLY POLICY.

LE COMTE has related some ludicrous instances of the manner in which the Bonzes turned Metempsychosis to their own profit. "Two of them happening to espy a pair of fat ducks in a farm yard, were seized with an earnest desire to feast upon them. They therefore drew near, weeping bitterly. The good (though religious) woman who owned the fowls, on inquiring the cause of their affliction, was informed that the ducks were their deceased parents, whose assured destiny of being sold, killed, and eaten, they were deploring. She tried to console them by saying the ducks would be well treated, but no! she had at length to present the avine parents to their long-lost sons. Profusely thanking the goose (or rather 'good woman') and bowing to their relatives, they carried them home, when those revered ancestors were immediately plucked, put to the spit, and afforded a hearty meal to their ingenious offspring." Again: "A prince of the blood royal had lost a dearly-loved son. The bonzes (priests of Fō, Buddha or Lā) said his soul had passed into a boy who was then in Tartary, adding that if a large sum of money were placed at their disposal they would undertake to trace him out and bring him back to his father. The father supplied them amply, and, without expense or trouble of so distant a journey, a child was soon provided in the place of the one whose loss he bewailed." It is said that Fō (the Chinese name for Buddha) passed through 800 different transmigrations before disclosing his grand doctrine to the world. Du Halde relates that thieves, on being apprehended in the act of robbery, have been found covered with papers, written for them by priests, as amulets to secure success in their nefarious undertaking.² This may well be compared to the Roman Catholic system of "indulgences." A certain pensioner was induced to change his religion for the following reason: The Bonzes asserted that in return for the good things of this life, he must be prepared to spend the next as one of the post-horses which convey dispatches from province to province; but he had this consolation—that, if he ran well and consumed little provender, his subsequent birth would be in a more elevated station. The poor man was nearly mad with the thought of his equine existence. Although he did not feel any decided preference for the doctrine of the foreigners, he had determined rather to be a Christian than a beast. "The holy fathers could not be greatly pleased by a conversion upon such motives; but considering that God might make use of men's ignorance and folly to bring them to himself, they admitted him to instruction," and afterwards to Christianity.³ Readers of the Apocrypha will remember how Daniel exposed the priests of Bel, which god (by means of a trap-door for his priests to enter his holy chamber) had a whim of consuming food given by worshippers.

Such have been some of the methods used in other countries for the promotion of priestly interest, and there is reason to believe that similar tricks have been played by the priests of the Most High יהוה. Yet this class are our spiritual leaders!

AGNOSCO.

PROFANE JOKES.

CONNOISSEUR: "I tell you what it is, Mr. Daub, those buzzards are simply superb. You shouldn't paint anything but birds." Artist (disgusted)—"Those are not buzzards; they are angels."

LITTLE DOT: "I heard your mamma tell my mamma you were getting to be a awful good boy." Little Dick: "Yes, I am." "She said she know now what you wanted for Christmas, 'cause she heard you a-prayin' for them." "Yes, I prayed real loud so she would."

PARSON SQUIRE: "I understand, deacon, that the church carpet is being ruined by the water from dripping umbrellas." Deacon Goode: "It is so, parson, and something has got to be done." "Why not have a rack in the vestibule, and leave the umbrellas there instead of carrying them to the seats?" "I'm afraid it would spoil the solemnity of the benediction." "You think so?" "Yes; everybody would want to be first out to get the best ones."

¹ Le Comte, vol. ii., pp. 111, 112. ² Du Halde, vol. iii., pp. 272—274.

³ Le Comte, vol. ii., 109.

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