

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 218.



PROFESSOR JOSEPH.

*And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years. . . . And the seven thin and ill favored kine that came up after them are seven years. . . . of famine.—
GEN. XLI, 25-27.*

IS MR. BRADLAUGH RIGHT?

(Concluded from p. 306.)

BESIDES, as society is constituted, you do not leave the child free if you try to. You cannot isolate it as you might a plant in a hot-house. It comes into contact with religion, in doctrine or in practice, at every turn when it leaves the hollow of your hand. The very atmosphere its mind breathes is saturated with religion. Laws, customs, and language, all betray its presence. Your noble "impartiality" will, therefore, simply mean leaving the child to imbibe everybody's opinion but your own. Religion is to entangle it in a thousand subtle meshes, and you are to stand by inactive in the interest of fair-play! According to Mr. Bradlaugh's canon, it would be a sin against the child's independence to take it to a Freethought lecture. Surely I do well to hope I misunderstand our President; and I trust I may say without impertinence that I do not believe it was thus he brought up his own children.

Again, it is easy to say that children should be enabled to "consider the questions of one religion as they do another," nor am I astonished that such a fair-spoken sen-

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tence, delivered in Mr. Bradlaugh's best manner, elicited applause. But let us look into it a little. One's child can wait for an opinion of Buddhism or Mohammedanism. Those creeds are remote in every sense of the word. They do not press upon us in our daily life, and to the majority of Englishmen they remain to the very last little more than names. But can one's children wait in the same way for an opinion of Christianity? Does it not palpitate around them in a myriad living forms? Does it not smile and frown, almost as incessantly as the sky overhead? Does it not beckon and repel, entreat and command, like an omnipresent personality? Does it not bless and curse, confer rewards and inflict punishments? Must not those who wish to achieve what the world calls success, either profess to believe it, or conceal or silence their disbelief? Surely, while these questions must be answered in the affirmative, it is idle to talk of treating Christianity with the same indifference as foreign faiths.

Mr. Bradlaugh's idyllic picture of the peaceful cradle is very pretty. It appeals to the domestic sentiments in all of us. But there is something higher than current domesticities. There are such things as truth and duty, and every man who has ever followed either knows that the pursuit is not always pleasant; although, in the long run,

nothing is serviceable, and everything corrupts, without them. I might also observe that Mr. Bradlaugh's picture is an anachronism. The struggle for a child's mind does not really begin while it slumbers in the cradle, but some years later; so that there is, after all, no fear of disturbing the baby's repose while it is lapt in down and fed on milk and kisses.

We are not to "raise questions of dogma for children." Indeed! But religion will, whether we do or not. Directly your child is old enough to feel curiosity and ask questions, you find the problem of religion raised despite you. You must give some answer to these juvenile inquiries; for, if you postpone answering, other people will not, and by the time you are ready to teach, your child will have learnt other lessons. Littré deliberately abstained from interfering with his daughter's education in religious matters until she arrived at the "age of reason." But, alas, he was too late then. She had become so sincerely and profoundly religious, that to correct the mischief would have meant a convulsion of her being, and he shrank from such a task as a surgeon might shrink from performing a painful and dangerous operation on a beloved form. Procrastination, therefore, is perilous to the child; and perhaps, on examination, it may turn out that your reticence is due to your own cowardice and sloth. You cannot, in any case, avoid saying *something*. What then *should* you say? I answer, what you believe to be the truth. You must, of course, accommodate it to the child's mind. You cannot be expected to tell *all* the truth at once, but you are bound to tell nothing *but* the truth. At the same time, I allow it is right to say that other people think differently, and to refrain from dogmatizing. Done judiciously, this will both stimulate the child's reason and school it in the rare virtue of tolerance.

When I am told that it is "unjust to the child to begin by placing it in a hostile attitude to any creed," I am obliged to ask whether those who believe the said creed will equally refrain from prejudicing the child's mind in its favor; and I must also say that to refrain thoroughly they must be absolutely silent. If my child never hears of Christianity till it is old enough to judge, there is no need for me to interfere; for without the poison the antidote is unnecessary; and I am convinced, as the efforts of the priests to control education show that *they* are convinced, that few persons who had arrived at the age of discretion, after a passable education, would ever accept Christianity on its merits. But *will* the other side leave my child absolutely alone? Of course not. The question is on the face of it absurd. Some kind of "injustice" then is unavoidable, and of two evils I prefer the lesser. I would rather bias my child's mind, if it must be biassed, in favor of what I hold as true, than see it biassed in favor of what I consider false.

For instance, my child comes to me bursting with a big question. A nurse, a relative, a teacher, or a schoolfellow, has talked about the Devil or about ghosts, and the little one, thinking that father knows everything, asks me whether there are such things, where they live, and why they appear in the night. Is it "unjust" if I explode this superstitious gabble on the spot, and tell him that devils and ghosts are mere fancies? By-and-bye he hears of the Bible in which these fancies are found. Am I "unjust" if I tell him that the Bible is an old book, written by men of limited knowledge and morality, and containing many things that are false and wicked. Assuredly I should tell him so, and I venture to say that any Freethinker who acted otherwise would be a recreant and a traitor; false to his manhood, false to his child, false to truth, and false to humanity.

Let there be no paltering. We do not live in an ideal world, but in a world of strife, of conquest and defeat. There is war of ideas as well as of men and the prize of victory is possession of the human mind. Theology and Freethought cannot sign a treaty, and if they did the irresistible logic of thought would rend and scatter it. Our children will swell the ranks of one party or the other, and we have to say which it shall be. True, our best endeavors may fail; we cannot command success; but we have our choice of direction, and it must be made at the parting of the ways.

Let me now address myself to another important point. According to the *Freethinker* report, Mr. Bradlaugh said that "the battle of Freethought was to be fought, not in lectures, pamphlets and books, but by the education of children in science." The *National Reformer* report is

somewhat different. It makes Mr. Bradlaugh say that "the battle of Freethought was to be fought *best*, not by attacking the churches and their teachings in lectures from the platform, in pamphlets and books, but by giving such education to children in science as would enable them to form a more correct judgment." The word *best* is a serious modification. Perhaps it was inserted in the revision of the speech. Our reporter failed to hear it, and I fancy that the ordinary press conveyed the same meaning as the sentence in the *Freethinker*. Still, I allow that Mr. Bradlaugh should be judged by what he meant to say, and thought he did say. The word *best*, therefore, must stand in the text.

Allowing it to stand, however, the sentence is either a truism or a reflection on Freethought propaganda. If Mr. Bradlaugh means that educating a child in what is irreconcilable with Christianity will indispose it to believe in Christianity, every person outside an asylum will agree with him. But if he means that such a smattering of physical science as children obtain at school is certain, or nearly certain, to make them Freethinkers, a good many persons who are not lunatics will beg to differ from him. I should be one of the last to depreciate the value of science. I regard it as the vital principle of modern civilisation. But I feel that its philosophical importance may be overrated. The higher ideas of evolution are, to my mind, incompatible with any form of theology; though I am bound to admit that some real scientists think otherwise. It is not, however, the higher ideas of evolution that children learn at school, but merely a few ordinary facts, most of which were commonplace knowledge before evolution was heard of. How many of the children that leave our Board schools become Freethinkers? Is the number so large as to make us enamored of Mr. Bradlaugh's panacea? On the other hand, is it not a fact that scientists may be found who regard faith as an excellent guide in religious matters? Mr. St. George Mivart, for instance, knows immensely more of science than Mr. Bradlaugh, yet he remains a Roman Catholic. The fact is, a great deal more than physical science is requisite to the proper criticism of Christianity. There is Biblical scholarship, comparative religion, the history of ideas, and the vast and intricate science of anthropology. Nor must we forget the moral sense and common sense, both of which play a very important part in our Freethought criticism of the Bible. Colenso's Kaffir, who revolted at the notion of God teaching slavery, and Livingstone's negro, who went into the grass and roared with laughter at the stories from the white man's Bible, show us that a terrific scientific equipment is not absolutely necessary to scepticism. Ingersoll is the most powerful Freethought orator in the world, but he is not a scientist, nor in the full sense of the word a scholar. What he chiefly does is this. He invites his audience to a free play of the mind on Christianity, and his own passionate sincerity stimulates their latent courage. His appeal is to common sense and the moral sense, and his influence is more potent than that of a hundred pedants.

Mr. Bradlaugh's words have, not unnaturally, been construed by many as a reflection on Freethought "lectures, pamphlets, and books." I cannot think he really means this, for it would be a condemnation of three-fourths of his own life. I hope Mr. Bradlaugh still retains the position he defended in his debate with Mr. Holyoake. With Mr. Holyoake, I have always held that Secularism does *not* necessarily mean Atheism, although I am an Atheist; but with Mr. Bradlaugh, I have always held that Secularism *does* necessitate hostility to all practical theology. And such, I may add, are the positions stated in the principles of the National Secular Society, of which Mr. Bradlaugh is the honored President.

That Mr. Bradlaugh should take his old active interest in destructive criticism is not to be expected. His parliamentary duties occupy so much of his time, and he has fought such a long and gallant battle against superstition in the past, that he may well enjoy a partial rest from the strife of religious controversy. But it would be a calamity if any words of his should be generally taken as reflecting on the wisdom of those who continue in the thick of the struggle; and I am sure he will not resent my effort to obviate such an evil. He will admit, I think, that lectures, pamphlets and books, devoted to the destruction of baneful superstitions, have still their use; nay, that they are urgently required. So sober a writer as Mr. Tylor, in concluding his magnificent work on *Primitive Culture*, after dwell-

ing on the *positive* advantages of such studies, expresses his view of their *negative* advantages also.

"It is a harsher, and at times even painful, office of ethnography to expose the remains of crude old culture which have passed into harmful superstition, and to mark these out for destruction. Yet this work, if less genial, is not less urgently needed for the good of mankind."

Destructive Freethought, which is engaged in this very work, may rest satisfied with the shelter of so great a name. And if it seeks another high authority for its "extreme" methods, it may find one in Winwood Reade, who wrote thus in his *Martyrdom of Man*, a book as noble and profound as any published in our generation. After his powerful impeachment of Christianity, he says:

"Such a religion is blasphemous and foul. Let those admire it who are able. I, for my part, feel it my duty to set free from its chains as many as I can. Upon this point my conscience speaks clearly, and it shall be obeyed. With respect to manners and means, I shall use the arguments and the style best suited for my purpose. There has been enough of writing by implication and by innuendo; I do not believe in its utility, and I do not approve of its disguise. There should be no deceit in matters of religion. In my future assaults on Christianity I shall use the clearest language I am able to command. Ridicule is a destructive instrument, and it is my intention to destroy. If a man is cutting down a tree, it is useless asking him not to strike so hard."

Let me say this in conclusion. Mr. Bradlaugh is a politician, he is growing into a statesman, and we all look forward with pride and pleasure to his future career. But for my part, though I am not indifferent to politics, I regard them as superficial in comparison with Freethought. What the world stands chiefly in need of is more thinking. Religion is the citadel of credulity, and therefore of mental timidity and sluggishness. Carry that, and the whole territory is open to the free play of mind.

G. W. FOOTE.

JESUS AND A PAGAN SLAVE.

How often do we hear the sayings of Jesus extolled by persons who never read a sentence of Gautama (Buddha's), or of Confucius or Plato? Yet for every fine moral maxim that may be quoted as the undoubted utterance of Jesus a dozen may be found of equal beauty, force, and truth from either of the above-named philosophers of antiquity. Of the wise Marcus Aurelius Antonius, whose noble maxims have won universal admiration, it may be said that he had advantages of education and position to which the Nazarene carpenter could not lay claim. But no such statement could be made with truth respecting Epictetus. He was a poor Roman philosopher, a stoic and a slave. Yet who that has read any of his discourses can fail to admire him? A short time ago I made a few extracts from his numerous sayings and I think some of them are worth quoting for the benefit of those persons who cling unreasonably to the maxims of Jesus as containing the essence of wisdom, and the highest morality to which the human mind can aspire. Let me then give a few sample-fragments from this Roman slave Epictetus.

To begin with, he does not say "Blessed be ye poor," nor "Woe unto you rich"; but he affirms that "Riches ought to be used as the materials of some good action, but not upon every occasion alike"; for "Good fortune, like ripe fruit, ought to be enjoyed while it is present."

Nor does Epictetus say "Take no thought for your life, etc. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" but he says, seriously, "Deliberate much before you do anything, for it will not be in your power to recall what has been said and done." He goes on—"Crows peck out the eyes of the dead when they are no longer of any use, but flatterers destroy the soul of the living and blind its eyes." He also holds in common with most reformers (including Jesus) that virtue is the supreme good, though Jesus sometimes put "belief in him" before all else. "All men," says Epictetus, "should rather wish for virtue than wealth." "What ought not to be done, be not suspected of doing." "A bad man loses all in death—virtue is eternal." "Choose rather to leave your children well instructed than rich; for the hopes of the learned are better than the riches of the ignorant." "Let him not think he is loved by any who loves none." "Choose not the most agreeable but the most useful." "Be exempt from grief, not like irrational creatures from insensibility, nor from inconsiderateness like fools, but like a man of virtue making reason the remedy of grief."

Again, Epictetus knew from hard experience how to judge the value of a friend. He says: "Necessitous circumstances prove friends and detect enemies."

On the drink question Epictetus says: "The vine bears three clusters. The first, of pleasure; the second, of intoxication; the third, of outrage." "He is a drunkard who takes more than three glasses; and though he be not drunk he hath exceeded moderation."

Some of these sayings, perhaps, will neither meet with the approval of Freethinkers nor Christians; but whether one agrees with them in their entirety or not, no one can doubt the wisdom and high-mindedness of the Roman slave, from whose mind they emanated.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

ACID DROPS.

MISS FAY, the well-known Spiritist medium, who has, we believe, been in similar escapades before, has just been "detected" at Blackburn. During a *séance*, held in semi-darkness, while Miss Fay was supposed to be floating over the heads of the audiences, an impious sceptic struck a light, and revealed that the floating figure was a dummy worked by wires. Of course there was a pretty row, and the police had to be called in.

MISS FAY, however, will probably go on flourishing, for there is a very large number of born dupes whom no exposure can undeceive. Several years ago there was a Spiritist rogue at Paris, who brought up the "materialised spirit" of the dead relatives of many persons with more cash than brains. Finally the fellow was detected and obliged to appear before the magistrate. When in court he made a clean breast of the swindle, and showed how he manipulated his puppets in the *séances*. Despite this exposure, however, some of his dupes continued to believe in him. One of these was an old Colonel, who had, through the charlatan's agency, enjoyed many interviews with the spirit of his deceased wife. He saw the trickery repeated in court, he heard the trickster's confession, yet he protested that, although everybody else had been imposed upon, his own experience was genuine. He was sure he had seen his lost wife, and not an imitation, and nothing would ever convince him to the contrary.

FROM some figures bearing on the subject of Glebe Lands, recently laid before Parliament, it appears that throughout England and Wales glebes amount to no less than 659,548 acres having a gross total rental value of over £908,000. This would be a nice amount to devote to agricultural holdings.

A WRITER in *Chambers' Journal* says: "The story was wont to be told by Bishop Wilberforce that he had asked a child in Sunday-school why the angels ascended and descended on Jacob's ladder, whereupon the child replied that they did so because they were moulting and could not fly." The recent issue of an English translation reveals the fact that this anecdote is included in a book of table talk collected by Hans Sachs, the Nuremburgh cobbler and master singer, in the year 1517.

OF course Christians love each other. The Spanish Christians show how dearly they love Protestant Christians in the Caroline Island by closing their schools (fifteen in number) as well as their churches, and by threatening, fining and imprisoning the native preachers and American missionaries. They also prove their pious love by stealing native Christian girls and by seizing the land belonging to the Protestant societies. Who can say that Christianity does not make its adherents kind and honest to each other?

A NICE specimen of Christian courtesy has come under our notice this week. Mrs. Ernestine L. Rose, the able and courageous Freethought lectress, whose age and ill-health has kept her from public life for many years past, recently received a letter of fifteen pages from an unknown medical student, exhorting her to turn to the beautiful consolations of the Christian religion. Too unwell to reply to the young man in writing, Mrs. Rose acknowledged his courtesy by sending him copies of two of her lectures, one on *Woman's Rights* and one entitled *A Defence of Atheism*. The Christian, apparently full of kindness while lecturing one by far his senior, low displayed the true inwardness of his piety. He sent back the pamphlets torn up, with an insulting letter, saying he would not read them and asking Mrs. Rose where her bravery would be on her death-bed. This is Christian kindness. Fair and outspoken as long as it hopes to have all its own way, bigoted and unmannerly whenever others dare to think in opposition.

THOSE who know anything of Mrs. Rose will be quite sure that the kind Christian student received a lady-like rebuke, which if he has anything of the feelings of a gentleman must make him thoroughly ashamed of himself. As to her bravery on her death-bed, Mrs. Rose has suffered worse than death for many years without seeking the consolation of Christianity. A woman who ventured to speak against slavery in the slave states is little likely to quail on her death-bed before the bogey pictures of Christian god or Christian devil.

THE *Rock* says "there are few stronger testimonies to truth"—by which of course it means Christianity—"than those which can be drawn from unbelief." This is quite correct. The Christian evidences are indeed so flimsy, that they are very little stronger as proofs of Christianity than are the very arguments which overthrow it. The *Rock* also holds that "Christianity must necessarily be the handiwork of God, since all the skill,

the force, and the fraud of its enemies fail to find a flaw or a weakness in its structure." What is to be said to such matchless blindness, or to such matchless impudence?

THE *Rock* says that the weakness of scepticism is plainly evidenced by its want of unity. But Christianity itself has the same lack of unity. The *Rock* quarrels bitterly with the Catholic and the Ritualist. It complains of "the insidious errors and distortions of truth which creep into our midst under various religious guises, and which, even from the pulpit, spread seeds of doubt whose fruits are terrible indeed." Are differences of opinion among Freethinkers proof that religion, which equally includes differences of opinion, must be true? If so, why may not the argument be reversed? Why may we not say that religion is false because religious views differ so widely? Seeing that religion claims an infallible God as its revealer and guide, the argument is really valid as against Christians, while it proves nothing as against those who reject revelation and rely solely on fallible human reason.

THE *Rock* asks triumphantly, "Why has not scepticism, or disbelief in any revelation, its own Bible, antagonistic to ours?" Can we not oppose a swindle, then, without putting another swindle in its place? May we not oppose alchemy without advocating some equally attractive delusion in its place? And if we are to substitute something in the place of a delusion, must all the assailants first agree what the substitute shall be? Surely we may warn people from a promised El Dorado, or a South Sea bubble, without giving other dreams or frauds in their place, or without being perfectly agreed as to our politics or schemes of life and progress.

THE *Rock* gives a proposed Catechism by the Rev. E. V. Bligh. The following is a sample:—"Q. Dare we question the account given to us in the Holy Scriptures concerning anything? A. By no means; for by faith all and everything is to be received." This is the way the clerical intellect would train our children to prove all things that they may hold fast that which is good.

THE Army of the Lord have started another "Glory Hole" at Maidstone, but are meeting with much opposition. Mr. Johnson, who prosecuted them at Brighton, visited their place of meeting the other night. "Brother Jonah," who was conducting the services, shouted at him and pointed him out to the faithful. A scene of great confusion then ensued, the female members of the Army extinguishing the lights, and a general stampede being made for the door. An out-door meeting was then held, and it was resolved that these servants of Jehovah should be driven from the town. Serious disturbances have since occurred. On the crowd attempting to enter to attend the services announced, people were violently ejected and roughly handled by the sacred Army. The crowd in return threatened to destroy the premises. A strong force of police, however, succeeded in preventing anything more serious than three hours' of great confusion and occasional horseplay.

THE Army would probably have been a great success as an early Christian community, and its martyrs would have been duly chronicled and revered by succeeding generations of ignorant Christians. But it is out of date by some eighteen hundred years. English Christians cannot stand primitive Christianity in the light of modern civilisation.

A GENTLEMAN applied for advice at Westminster police-court. He had been swindled to the extent of £100 by a clergyman, who had also victimised many other tradesmen in different parts of London and the country.

A CHAPEL at Wakefield fell down just as the roof had been put on. Evidently God wasn't particularly anxious for the success of that particular place of worship. The projectors must use stronger prayers and better mortar in future.

THE Rev. W. Eliot, vicar of Aston, Birmingham, is distraining on a number of people for tithes. He has put in a bailiff at the Smallheath Liberal Club for £3 0s. 3d. The chairman refuses to pay and threatens legal proceedings if the bailiff removes any of the property of the club. Christians rob people of their goods and talk sanctimoniously the while of universal love and charity.

THE Vicar of Cropredy complains of the unseemly manner in which churches are decorated with fruit and garden produce at harvest festivals. He doesn't like to see the sacred edifice turned into a greengrocer's shop or a county flower show. Altars and pulpits and columns, it seems, are hung with carrots, turnips, potatoes, pumpkins, tomatoes, parsnips, etc. Even fruit is objected to by the vicar, as leading the juvenile mind astray during divine service by the superior attractions and dangerous temptations of luscious plums and pears and rosy pippins. We wish Christians never did anything worse than this kind of thing, and we think the vicar might easily find greater evils to attack.

THE *Church Times* is much disgusted because in some churches a fat pig has been introduced among the decorations at harvest

festivals. It is all very good to offer to the Lord butter, chickens and pumpkins, but he never could stand the sight of the unclean animal that cuts up for sausages.

A LADY fainted in a church at Sheffield last Sunday. She was carried to the porch but died in three minutes. Christianity calls this the "act of God." Science calls it heart disease.

MR. ELLAWAY, formerly an alderman in the Birmingham Town Council, was preaching last Sunday night at the Circus Chapel, Bradford Street, and was just concluding his discourse, when he staggered forward in the pulpit and fell. He was taken home in a cab unconscious, and died a couple of hours afterwards. Of course, the occurrence is purely natural; but had it taken place in a Secular Hall, what a hubbub there would have been.

NAPLES is still suffering from cholera. Five hundred deaths are reported at Messina. These are proofs of God's mercy and loving kindness unto men.

THE Rev. Dr. Gray, whose assault on a former churchwarden we recently noticed, has been fined 5s. for the offence.

THE Rev. R. T. Howell, Congregationalist minister of Cardiff, has been placed in the dock for assaulting and kicking his wife. The assault was the effect of drink, and as the wife did not wish to prosecute, the prisoner upon signing a temperance pledge was bound over to keep the peace for twelve months.

UNDER the heading "End of Noted French Infidels" the *Church Evangelist* extracts from Sir Walter Scott's "Life of Bonaparte," the account of the tragic deaths of the two Robespierres, Couthon and Saint Just. But have not plenty of Christians come to tragic ends? Robespierre and his comrades moreover were Deists, not Atheists as they are often represented.

THE Alien Labor Law in the United States forbids the importation of laborers under contract of hire. A decent Scotchman was recently forbidden to land on this account, and possibly by way of revenge the enforcement of the law is demanded against the Rev. E. W. Warren, formerly of Holy Trinity, London, who has been imported as the rector of Holy Trinity, New York.

IN Georgia it is a common practice for prisoners in their hour of exercise to tramp up and down, their feet keeping time to a camp-meeting song. "And am I only born to die?" and "The Lord will provide" are sung with native energy and hearty fervor by the thieves and vagabonds.

THE SENSATIONAL PREACHER.

FROM the ancient, quaint phrase of the Bible
He carelessly chooses a text,
And then drifts away in a lecture
That leaves the true question unvetted;
But he catches the ear of his hearers,
Which often is longer than fine,
With a bric-a-brac sermon a layman
Might preach "o'er the walnuts and wine."

To-day he slings mud at officials,
To-morrow he'll handle the press,
In the hope of a free advertisement,
Be it either a kick or caress;
And he mixes the slang of elections
With a patter of tea-table talk:
And instead of the milk of the Scriptures,
Is profuse with his water and chalk.

THE *Sidcup Parish Magazine* warns its readers against the awful consequences which may attend taking the Communion with a tall bonnet. It says it is most difficult when there is but a little wine in a large chalice to guide the precious fluid to the lips of a lady communicant without some dreadful disaster. A little while ago a lady with a big ostrich feather, bowing immediately after taking the sacrament, dipped the feather in the Redeemer's Blood. The vicar "felt it his duty to seize" the feather "and burn it forthwith in the vestry fire."

THE *Rock* gives prominence to a quotation from the *City Press*, in which the International Freethought Congress is congratulated on its resolution that teaching should not be hostile to religion, but neutral. But both the *Rock* and the *City Press* forget that this refers only to public teaching in State-supported schools.

THE writer goes on to say that "This is better than the coarse, illiberal, discourteous, and ill-advised attacks on Christianity in a scandalous publication which, being left alone, has become insipid, and palls upon its supporters." Here be truths! The *Freethinker* is insipid, is it? Then so is salt. As for its supporters being tired of it, we shall be happy to compare our circulation with that of any Freethought journal in England.

"DOGBERRY" is the *nom de plume* of this *City Press* writer. The original Dogberry desired to be written down an ass, but this Dogberry does not leave other people to do it for him.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, October 2, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, London, E.C., at 11.15, "Cromwell in Ireland;" at 7, "Thus Saith the Lord."

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

NOV. 6, Birmingham; 13, Liverpool; 20, Camberwell; 27, Sunderland.

DEC. 4, Nottingham; 11 and 18, Hall of Science, London.

JAN. 1, Milton, Hall, 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.—F. M.

C. B.—We do not care to advertise the masquerading Christian Jew whose bill of performance you are good enough to send us.

WALTHAMSTOW.—W. Allen, 10 Boston Road, sells the *Freethinker*, and all Freethought publications.

HAPPY THOUGHT.—The Church of England claims the title of Holy Catholic Church, as well as the Romanists. In truth no Christian Church has ever been catholic or universal. There has never been a time when there have not been heresies and divisions within the Church itself, as well as a heathen population who repudiate Christianity entirely.

T. H. PINDER.—Your antiquarian friend should not be so cock-sure. It is always rash for the most learned library bug to say that, because he does not know a work, it does not exist. Leo Allatius's tractate on the Savior's prepuce, referred to in *Crimes of Christianity*, p. 94, is not in the British Museum, but there is a copy in the Mazarin Library, at Paris. We have by us, also, a catalogue of Leo Allatius's works, printed at Rome, and the tractate on the Savior's prepuce, *De præputio Domini nostri Jesu Christi diatriba* is number thirty. Your antiquarian friend next says that the Rev. Dr. Giles was "a notoriously inaccurate writer." We beg to differ. His great fault was want of enthusiasm, not want of accuracy. But, in any case, the very few references to him, which are all contained in one chapter, might be eliminated without invalidating one of our statements, or weakening a single argument. Pray ask your friend what a Freethinking historian is to do. If a sceptical authority is quoted, the Christians cry out, "He's an infidel;" and if an orthodox authority is quoted, they cry out, "He's inaccurate." We await the discovery of further mare's-nests in our work.

NOAH'S ARK.—L'Union Democratique, 150 Rue Montmartre, Paris. Le Journal du Peuple, 2 Avenue d'Orleans, Paris. La Semaine Anticlericale, 2 Quai de Loire, Nevers, France. Most of the French Republican papers also advocate Freethought.

E. BINKS.—The forbidden fruit is generally called an apple, because "apple" comes pat. Perhaps also something is due to the fact that apple orchards are most robbed. At any rate, the forbidden fruit has been called an apple by Bishop Latimer, Milton, De Foe, and Byron; and it may as well be called an apple as anything else.

G. L.—"Dr" Kinns is hardly worth powder and shot. Surely his notion that the Bible is true because it mentions the Assyrians and there were Assyrians, is worthy of a village natural.

J. GOULD.—It is a good suggestion and we may see our way to carrying it out.

G. PHILLIP, as an old Dundee Freethinker, says he did not attend the first meeting called to form a branch of the N. S. S., because he had not heard of it.

G. WEIR (Edinburgh), reports that the police have again ordered him to desist from lecturing at the Mound, but they did not arrest him, and his meeting was a great success. More literature is being sold than ever. Our correspondent asks whether he may reprint some of our articles as tracts. Yes, if he tells us which articles he wants, and if he acknowledges them as a reprint.

R. FOX.—Glad to hear you have read the first volume of *Crimes of Christianity* "with great satisfaction." We cannot say whether the book you mention would be useful without seeing it. Mr. Foote's portrait is not on sale at present.

H. HENDERSON.—It is gratifying to hear that the *Freethinker* is eagerly read in some of the West End drapery houses. We are also pleased to hear you took three boys to Mr. Foote's lecture in Regent's Park. Freethinkers should bring their children to Freethought lectures more frequently.

THOMAS & Co., 21 Great Marylebone Street, High Street, Marylebone, supply the *Freethinker* and all Secular literature.

J. GURNEY, 100 Seymour Place, W., has begun to sell this journal.

HENRY PORTER, an ardent admirer of the *Freethinker* and an active promoter of its circulation, feels it his duty to join the N. S. S. The nearest branch is at Grimbsy, and meets at the Hall of Science, Freeman Street.

ANTI-HUMBUG.—Henry Nixon received your letter with the *Freethinker* and stamps, but had to open it in presence of the governor, who confiscated the paper. We are seeing what can be done in the matter.

C. E. ANDREWS.—Morison's *Service of Man* is published at 12s., and *Supernatural Religion* at 36s. Any good bookseller could supply you. You might drop a line to Mr. Forder.

C. LANKER informs us that the "New Free Religious Sunday Paper" (Magdeburg), pointing to the vote of the International Freethought Congress on Education exclaims, "These, then, are the famous Freethinkers whose literary representative in Germany reproached us Free Religious people with still carrying the religious egg-shells on our bodies." It is a great pity the resolution was not more clearly worded.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Exeter Daily Gazette—Postal Service Gazette—L'Union Democratique—Journal du Peuple—Western Figaro—Froidenker—Liberty—Lucifer—Jus—Fun and Gossip—Noah's Ark—Open Court—Surrey Advertiser—Boston Investigator—Church Evangelist—Truthseeker—Devon Gazette—Echo—Devon Evening Express—Western Mail—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt.

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.

DESPITE an annoying influenza, Mr. Foote lectured in Regent's Park last Sunday morning to a big audience. Several ladies were in the crowd, and some were seated near the platform. There was only one critic, a very courteous gentleman who admitted that there were several blunders in the Bible, only he thought it very unfair of the lecturer to be always exposing them. In the evening Mr. Foote lectured to a large audience in Milton Hall, where the N.W. London Branch has resumed its indoor meetings. We understand that the Branch, owing to various causes, is much in want of new working members; and we trust it will soon be reinforced. Every Freethinker in the district who desires the spread of our cause, should join at once.

This morning (October 2) Mr. Foote begins the Sunday morning lectures at the London Hall of Science. Being there three Sundays in October he has arranged to give a course of lectures on Ireland. The three morning lectures will therefore be entitled "Cromwell in Ireland," "Dean Swift's Irish Writings," and "Parnell's Triumph." This will include the whole marrow of the Irish Question, without reference to mere party politics of the hour. The three evening lectures will be anti-theological, and entitled "Thus Saith the Lord," "Great Christ is Dead," and "The Cooling of Hell."

THE current number of *Progress*, which should now be in the hands of all who desire to support a Freethinkers' magazine, contains many articles of interest. Mr. Foote continues his notice of and translations from what is perhaps the most noteworthy book issued from the French press of late years, M. Guyau's *Irreligion de l'Avenir*. Mr. Leatham reviews the Phases of Current Thought, dealing chiefly this month with transcendental theism. A new writer contributes an appreciative notice of the late Richard Jefferies, especially dealing with his autobiography entitled *The Story of my Heart*, in which his Freethought is most manifest. Mr. Ball contends that the elimination of the unfit is the harsh but necessary means to insure the progress of the species. Mr. Wheeler writes on the Early Opponents of Christianity, dealing at length with Celsus and more briefly with Fronto, Porphyry and Hierocles. One of James Thomson's most exquisite poems is also given in the present number of *Progress*.

MR. WHEELER'S instalment of Freethought Biographies deserves special mention. A large number of lives are given, comprising names from Edmund Halley, the astronomer, to Thomas Holcroft. Some of the names are of world-wide fame, as those of Helvetius, Heine, Hobbes, and D'Holbach, but many—such as Matthew Hamont, C. C. Hennell, Henry Hetherington, Karl Heinzen, J. S. Hittell, Godfrey Higgins, and Julian Hibbert—are Freethought worthies whose lives have never found their way into biographical dictionaries, and whom Mr. Wheeler is doing his best to preserve from oblivion.

THE New South Wales Legislature has passed a measure giving greater facilities for divorce, which will henceforth be permitted on the ground of continued drunkenness, desertion for three years or imprisonment for two years, always provided the petitioner has not contributed to the offence. The bill which was brought forward by Sir Alfred Stephen was opposed tooth and nail by all the high Churchmen in the colony, but it has been carried with increasing majorities at every division.

THE Roman Catholic *Tablet* is much enraged because Signor Adrian Lemmi has elicited from the Italian Prime Minister, Signor Crespi, that the desired site on the Campo dei Fiori at Rome will be granted for the statue to Giordano Bruno. It calls Bruno "the apostle and precursor of modern anarchists and dynamitards," and declares it is a Masonic plot to defy the Papacy in the glorification of the heretic ex-Dominican Friar of Nola. The *Tablet* declares that "Italy may well tremble for her future, when the head of the Government joins in the impious scheme to raise, in hatred of the Pope and of Christianity, a statue in Rome to the turbulent apostle who trampled down every basis of social order, and breathed forth his soul with rage in his heart and blasphemy on his lips." The *Tablet* may foam and rage as it will. It will not have the slightest effect on Signor

Crespi or on the Italians who have erected the statue and who we trust will make its inauguration the occasion for a great Freethought demonstration.

THE October number of the *Contemporary Review* contains an article on "The Date of the Pentateuch" by Prof. Robertson Smith in reply to Mr. Stanley Poole.

IBSEN, Bjornson, and Kielland, the three greatest writers in Norway, are all Freethinkers. Two years ago, when the Storting was asked to grant Kielland a "poet's salary," to compensate him for his losses through the imperfections of the International Copyright Law, a large number of members refused to favor the measure, because Kielland had attacked the clergy, and might therefore be supposed to be hostile to Christianity. This debate grieved Bjornson, and last year he and Ibsen sent a petition to the Storting, requesting that Kielland should be granted a stipend equal to their own. Bjornson declared that if such stipends were granted with the implied condition that the recipient must be an orthodox Liberal Christian, then he was in exactly the same position as Kielland, and should regard the vote on the petition as indicating the Storting's attitude towards himself. If he were to continue to draw his "poet's salary" it must be without any condition restricting his spiritual liberty. Kielland's salary was then granted, but its renewal has since been rejected by a narrow majority. Thereupon Bjornson telegraphed from Paris, renouncing his own salary, although in doing so he deprived himself of his chief means of subsistence. It is a miserable reflection that the Conservatives first granted this salary, and that the Liberals have brought it to an end. But the high spirit of true Liberals—Liberals in thought, and not merely in current politics—like Bjornson and Ibsen, will stir the grateful sympathies of every Freethinker in the world.

RELIGION IN FRANCE.

CONSULT an ordinary school-book or manual as to the religion of France, and you get a short and easy answer, France is a Roman Catholic country. Travel in France or inquire of intelligent French people and you will probably come to a very different conclusion. The average Frenchman is indifferent to religion. Even if for the sake of domestic peace he outwardly conforms to his wife's religion, even if he would be indignant if his Christianity is impeached, he makes it evident that he has no real belief in the dogmas of Rome or any real regard for Christianity. The chances are he will own himself to be a Freethinker. In the towns the churches are attended, not with the object of religious worship, save by a few simple folk who go early in the morning, but much as a concert is attended, from love of amusement, curiosity, and to see the women. Every true Catholic is bound to go to confession and receive the sacrament at Easter. Judged by such a test as this it is safe to say that not one Frenchman in twenty is a Catholic. Even in Celtic Brittany, which is considered the stronghold of Catholicism, and which nevertheless produced Rénan, not one in ten takes the Easter sacrament. Of those who call themselves Catholics, few laymen will defend the infallibility of the Pope or the dogmas of the Church. The Orleanists and Bonapartists affect respect for the Church. As reactionaries their cause is identical with that of religion, but their real devotion to it is about as genuine as that of Napoleon I. Even the Comte de Paris in his recent bid for the restoration of the monarchy did not venture to enter upon the question of the restoration of religion. It is true the Comte de Nun appeals to Catholic working men to substitute the rights of God for the rights of man, but the Comte de Nun is looked on as a curious specimen of the antediluvian age, and the Catholic working men in the large towns are a good deal like the members of the Church of England Working Men's Society, either shopkeepers or persons in want of employment.

The French working men, almost without exception, are anti-clerical. With Gambetta, they see that clericalism is the enemy. Republican deputies always seek the suffrages of the anti-clerical societies. A candidate for a seat on the Municipal Council makes it known not only that he is in favor of keeping the rates down, but that he is strong for secular education without any admixture of religion. One of the most popular men in Paris is M. Abel Hovelacque, who is not only one of the municipality and a distinguished *savant*, but also a pronounced Atheist. From the President downward, every Republican Ministry has numbered a good share of Freethinkers and Protestants, who in France are far more liberal than in this country. Protestantism indeed appears to be on the increase in France. In

the south—the country of the Albigenses and the Camisards—it has long been strong. But it is often, as the Catholics truly declare, only the halfway house to infidelity. We are credibly assured that so anxious are Protestants for converts in Paris, and so liberal are their funds—possibly supplied in part from England—that a couple have only to be married in the Protestant church to have all their wedding expenses paid, and some furniture for their home provided into the bargain. In the district of Belleville the Protestants take much credit for having improved the locality—which credit may be more justly ascribed to the opening of a new street.

The Salvation Army makes little impression on the Parisians. They see the girls marching in their queer bonnets, and with their tambourines, trying to sell "*En Avant*," the French *War Cry*, and they shrug their shoulders and say: "The English are an eccentric people. That is English religion." It looks well in the *War Cry* to talk of converting "infidel France"; but at the present rate of progress the conversion will not happen before the millenium. Indeed, *La Marechale* Booth drew far better audiences some years ago than she does at present.

In France the advent of the Republic meant the triumph of free education, and this, in the long run, means the triumph of Secularism. As religion falls into deeper and deeper discredit, religionists beat their drum-ecclesiastic, and cry out that they are persecuted. Catholics borrow the phrases of Freethought and plead for tolerance, though they mean supremacy. A great outcry has been made and taken up by the English papers because the Municipal Council of Paris has cut out of the school-books all passages in which the name of God occurs. But why should children be taught in the schools anything beyond verifiable facts? Why should the limited time of public schools deal with any statements that may have to be unlearned? If the parents of children were hindered from teaching them whatever they please at home, they might indeed complain of persecution; but as it is, the charge is ridiculous.

The Catholics, who no sooner were restored to power under Charles X. than they passed a law punishing all sacrilege with death, preceded by mutilation, call it persecution because the emblems of religion are taken away from the national schools; they cry out against intolerance because priests are not allowed to prowl at will in the hospitals and molest the last moments of the dying. Their feelings are outraged because cheap Republican and Freethought literature is finding its way into the rural districts, and they find their rights of conscience infringed because Freethinkers hold banquets on Good Friday. Let them howl. Ever since the Republic has been established the clericals have vainly done their worst to destroy it. The French mind is too vivacious, and accessible to ideas to pass back into the region of theological dogmas. The French are too devoted to liberty to again submit to sacerdotal tyranny. Republicanism, free education, and true religious liberty are obtaining firmer footing year by year, and to France, soon to celebrate the centenary of her great Revolution, turn the eyes of the liberty-loving of all the nations of the earth.

J. M. WHEELER.

HOLY INTOXICANTS.

THE *Rock* contains a long and earnest letter on the evils resulting from the use of "Alcoholic Communion Wine." This letter has been addressed to all the bishops in order to obtain their aid in suppressing the evil. The *Rock* also gives a leading article on the same subject.

The writer of the letter has found by long experience in temperance work that "one of the most serious difficulties in the way of permanent reclamation of the drunkard is the presence of alcoholic wine upon the Lord's Table." People are thus taught to drink, and reclaimed drunkards are again led into temptation with the most disastrous results. The late Bishop Fraser, of Manchester, it seems inquired into the matter and "was perfectly appalled at the magnitude of the evil." Canon Ellison and many others also support this view. The alcohol stirs up the craving for drink, and weak members of the Church are again subjected to the almost irresistible sway of the fiend from whom they had escaped by total abstinence, but who again becomes their merciless master through the Christian ceremony of drinking wine at the communion. A number of cases are given

illustrating the ruinous results of Christian custom in thus forcing teetotallers to put an insidious enemy into their mouths to steal away their brains. I will condense some of these cases, as a Christian list of the disastrous results of the chief Christian ceremony ordained by Christ.

1. An officer in the army saved himself from his drunkenness by taking the pledge. He became an earnest Christian. His clergyman, whose esteem he had won, "observed with pain that he never presented himself at the Lord's Table." The clergyman, after several refusals, pleaded so urgently that the officer yielded, and tasted the holy intoxicant at the communion. "In three days he was dead, a victim to delirium tremens."

2. A reclaimed drunkard seeking the religious help of the communion, was overcome by the taste and smell of the wine and eagerly drank the whole of it, lapsing again into his former state.

3. A communicant when he has the holy cup at his lips is afraid of his old temptation and seems to hear the voice of the Evil One hissing in his ears, "Take a little more! Just a little more! Only a little more!"

4. A reclaimed drunkard, unaware of his danger and seeking the solace and support of religious ordinances, came to the Lord's Table and partook of the alcoholic means of grace. The old desire for drink was revived in irresistible force. "Before night he was mad drunk," and his friends are still unable to reform him again.

5. A member of a Good Templar lodge who had kept the pledge for six months and was doing well, was urged to partake of the holy communion. He did so, and left the church with his old appetite still raging. He drank heavily for several days, and then, in a state of delirium, threw himself in front of a train, and was cut to pieces.

6. A member of a Christian Church, after keeping the pledge for a long time, partook of the intoxicating wine at "the Lord's Table." This revived his old craving and he again took to drink. He had *delirium tremens* and "was expelled from the church which had tempted him back to his sin and his degradation." Soon after he committed some offence for which he was imprisoned. When last heard of he was separated from his wife and family and was an out-cast and a wanderer.

7. William Hole, a master bargeman, of Bristol, was a kindly and genial man, much loved and respected by those who knew him. He had kept the pledge for seven years, until he joined a congregation, and was induced to go to communion on the authoritative assurance that the grace of God would keep him from falling. The grace of God, however, did not keep him from falling. The taste of the communion wine roused in him the irresistible desire for drink, "and the end was that he was hanged for the murder of his wife."

It is thus shown on Christian evidence that a Christian ceremony has brought about instances of drunkenness, suicide, murder, and death by *delirium tremens*, to say nothing of such smaller evils as personal misery and degradation. What would Christians say of a similar list of evils resulting from attendance at the Hall of Science? They would hold that it at once condemned "Infidelity" as an evil thing to be shuddered at and avoided like the plague itself. But a similar argument against Christianity has no validity whatever in their eyes; and in fact if put forth by a Freethinker it would be scouted as mere gutter abuse. As the little list I have given is from a Christian source, and as I refrain from adding any outside testimony to the evil effects of Christianity in other directions, the cases cannot so easily be repudiated as scurrilous falsehoods. They are put forth in deep sorrow by an earnest Christian, who for ten long years has "pleaded that this cause of reproach be removed from the House of God."

What does the *Rock* say to this pleading? It mildly finds fault with the bishops for not being bold enough, and then follows almost the same time-serving, milk-and-water policy itself. It says:

"Some of the answers which have been received [from the bishops] are very satisfactory, but many of them are characteristic of English prelates in that the writers carefully avoid committing themselves to anything definite. In other words, those who are appointed to be leaders of the Church are waiting to hear what public opinion has to say on the subject."

If the temperance movement can command success, the bishops will be willing to patronise it, and even perhaps may allow the occasional intrusion of its principles into the sacred mysteries. And whenever their salaries are at stake they will soon admit that so blasphemous an innovation as lemonade colored red will represent the blood of Christ quite as accurately and efficaciously as the best old port. Meanwhile the *Rock* acknowledges the gravity of the question, but, after discussing the merits of the case from a Scriptural point of view, decides that it will not condemn the use of alcoholic wine, or say one word against it. Nevertheless, where found to be necessary for a weak brother, "it seems," to that bold Christian paper, that the use of non-intoxicating wine should be "openly tolerated." Some High Churchmen, it seems, have made repeated attempts to commit the House of Convocation to oppose any such toleration. In their eyes the true Christian cannot be allowed to be a teetotaller. He must break his

pledge (or his custom), or else he must be excluded from the great ceremony ordained by his Lord and Master. What a pity Christ did not settle this liquor question. Why did he leave it, like so many other questions, for his followers to fight over, when a few words from him, either then or now, would so easily decide the case at issue? The Mohammedan religion is distinct enough on the matter, and sobriety follows the Crescent as surely as drunkenness follows the Cross.

The arguments on which the *Rock* founds its half-hearted conclusion are weak. It acknowledges that if the use of alcoholic wine is divinely enjoined, no Church can set aside that command, although the use of intoxicants "seemed" to be attended with danger. But it claims that it was possible, if not probable, that the wine Christ used, and meant to be used, was unfermented juice of the grape—a highly convenient view, which will necessarily be held more strongly by politic Christians in proportion as the temperance movement grows in power. But the *Rock* goes so far as to say that "the fact remains that the Bible nowhere enjoins the use of intoxicants." This is untrue. God tells us to "Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts." The poor man is to drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more (Proverbs xxxi., 6, 7). Only alcoholic liquor could have the necessary strength for such purposes. The idea that the wine used by Christ was non-intoxicating is pure assumption, undreamt of in ancient times, and only invented in modern days to evade the formidable objections of teetotallers. As the Lord's Supper took place in the spring of the year, the wine Christ employed must have been the juice of the grapes of a previous autumn, preserved by having undergone alcoholic fermentation.

Taken on its own grounds, the *Rock* is weak and inconsistent in its recommendations. Either the Scriptural wine—or it will be better to narrow the question to the wine used by Christ at the last supper—was intoxicating or non-intoxicating. It could not be both. It either contained alcohol or it did not. If it were alcoholic, then the *Rock*, by its own admission, is bound to insist on the use of alcoholic wine as employed by Christ, however disastrous the results may be. If not alcoholic, then the *Rock* should strongly condemn the introduction of so unnecessary and in some cases so mischievous a stimulant into the means of grace held out to teetotal Christians and non-teetotal Christians alike. If Christians are really anxious that the stronger members should put no stumbling-block in the path of the weaker brethren, they should thoroughly dissociate religion from alcohol, and not merely give an invidious permission to abstain where wrung from them by special weakness duly certified and pleaded for. Who is to know the weakness beforehand, and why are teetotal Christians only to be allowed to abstain on such insulting terms as a duly acknowledged plea of personal incapacity to withstand the temptation to drunkenness?

W. P. BALL.

REVIEWS.

Free from the Chain. By H. C. JACQUES. Burton-on-Trent: 24 Shoebill Street (2d.).—A bold and spirited statement of the reasons which induced the writer to discard the Bible as the Word of God. It might be lent with advantage to Christians.

Petroleum. Valuable Hints to Those Who Use It. London: White and Pike, 402 Strand.—The contents justify the title. People who use oil lamps might read this with advantage.

PROFANE JOKES.

"WHY did Adam bite the apple?" said a school-master to a country lad. "Because he had no knife," replied the urchin.

REDEMPTION—A would-be prophet in Yankeeland said lately, in one of his open-air sermons, that he was "sent to redeem the world and all things therein;" whereupon a native pulled out two five-dollar bills on a broken bank and asked him to redeem them by forking over the specie at once.

"MAMMA," said a small boy the other day; "do little angels wear shoes and stockings in summer time?" "No, my son." "Do they go barefoot?" "Yes." "And do they stay out after sunset?" "I presume so." "Well, don't the stars tickle their feet when they twinkle?" The fond mother was nonplussed.

"POMPEY, I hear you are a great preacher?" "Yes, massa, sometimes." "Well, Pompey, don't you think the niggers steal little things on the plantation?" "I see mighty 'fraid they does, massa." "Then Pompey, I want you to preach a sermon to the negroes against stealing." After a brief reflection, Pompey replied: "You see, massa, that wouldn't never do, 'cause 'twould trow such a coolness over de meetin'."

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