

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.
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THE PLAGUE OF FROGS.

“And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading troughs.”—EXODUS VIII., 3.

ALMOST A CHRISTIAN.

WHO is almost a Christian? Why, Colonel Ingersoll. Such at any rate is the conclusion of the *Christian World* after reading his splendid reply to Dr. Field. Ingersoll has been converted several times already, but this cool method of converting him by implication, instead of by a downright brazen lie, takes the prize for audacity. The position of the *Christian World* is this—Ingersoll is almost a Christian without knowing it; in other words—for that is all such a plea comes to—he is a remarkably good fellow, but at bottom a fool. No doubt the compliment is a delicate one, but there is just a possibility that Ingersoll and his admirers will regard it as “too delicate for anything.”

Let us, however, be understood. We do not wish to imply that the *Christian World* means to be offensive; on the contrary, its article bears every indication of the best intentions. But there is a fatal lack of logic, which gives it a sinister squint. Certain Christians, whom our contemporary represents, seem to think that while a heart is an excellent thing in religion, a head is a nuisance or an encumbrance. They are therefore always minimising the difference between

themselves and persons of opposite principles; and although Christianity has been preaching for eighteen centuries that right belief is primary and right conduct subordinate, they maintain—not in direct language, but inferentially—that right action is everything and right belief nothing at all. But they will find that the sceptic is not to be caught in this way. His head is not as soft as their hearts. He knows that the difference between true and false principles is infinite, and that loose, illogical thought can only degrade instead of elevating character. He recognises that there is intellectual as well as moral honesty, and he is not prepared to sink the distinction between straight and crooked ideas for the sake of a paltry compromise with his opponents. He is averse to the jugglery of “interpretation”; he takes words in their natural sense; when he sees a false statement he rejects it, and he feels something like scorn for those who urge that if you turn it inside out, or upside down, it looks remarkably true.

Ingersoll has many moral objections to the Bible, but he has mental objections too. “Surely,” he exclaims, “the book should satisfy the brain.” Yes, says the *Christian World*, wise Christians will assent to this; but it omits to tell us how many wise Christians there are in existence. What it does tell us is, that “large parts of it do yield this satisfaction.” We might ask whether these large parts

include witchcraft, demoniacal possession, faith-healing, miracles, and such stories as the Creation and the Flood; but we waive these, and simply ask whether *all* of the Bible, instead of "large parts," should not satisfy the brain. What God inspires should be true throughout, and if we find it contains nonsense, at which Kaffirs and negroes have laughed till they were sore, are we not justified in treating it as a purely human production, reflecting the knowledge and ignorance, the culture and barbarism, of the times when it was written?

The *Christian World* derives great consolation from the fact that Ingersoll feels "entire respect" for those who believe in God, though of course he only means if they deserve respect on other grounds. Next it finds comfort in his recognition of the eternal consequences of acts, although he fiercely opposes the doctrine of retribution; as if these two ideas had anything in common! Further comfort is derived from his believing in self-sacrifice, although he impugns the philosophy and morality of the Atonement; just as if there was not all the difference in the world between suffering for the sake of others and making another person's sufferings atone for your own misdeeds! Still more comfort is derived from his belief in reformation of character, although he repudiates the dogma of regeneration; for this, says the *Christian World*, is "believing it in a sense." Ingersoll explains the distinction; he points out that there is no analogy between the Holy Ghost getting inside a young man and turning him round, and a young man's being arrested in the midst of temptation by the thought of his mother at home; but all this is lost on our contemporary, which speaks of him as "advancing along the line of Christian convictions," and prophesies that the Church will "ultimately enrol him among her adherents."

Never was there a greater mistake. It is not Ingersoll who is approaching the *Christian World*, but the *Christian World* that is approaching Ingersoll. *His* attitude towards Christianity is unchanged, but *its* attitude alters every year. Dogma after dogma is cast aside; the inspiration of the Bible, original sin, eternal punishment, and substitutionary atonement, are gone already; and in a few years the *Christian World's* theological outfit will probably consist of "a sort of a something" called God. Yet it flatters itself that Liberal Christianity is converting Ingersoll! Our contemporary is like a man in a moving train, who fancies things are coming to him when he is going to them.

We agree with the *Christian World*, however, when it says that Ingersoll's answer to Dr. Field "deserves careful consideration at the hands of Christian people." But we dare not hope that Christian people will buy it for that purpose, and therefore we trust that Freethinkers will make a point of circulating it among their orthodox friends.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

If it was true, as alleged in Matthew, that Jesus selected twelve apostles to whom he promised that they should reign over the twelve tribes of Israel, no step could be more calculated to show that he had political objects in view or to draw down punishment from the Roman Government. But it is quite possible that the story of the twelve apostles is a myth; authentic history knows nothing whatever of them, any more than of the Seven Champions of Christendom or the Knights of the Round Table.

That there were so-called Apostles of Christ in the first century cannot be denied, but they cannot be identified with the chosen twelve of the gospels. Paul mentions Cephas, James, and John as apostles. He calls Epaphroditus "your apostle" (Phil. ii., 25), though our translators have rendered it *messenger*, as they make into "messengers of the churches" the apostles mentioned in 2 Cor. viii., 23. Paul also seems to include Apollos among the apostles (see 1 Cor. iv., 6, 9).

Justin Martyr, in the middle of the second century, speaks of the twelve apostles, whose Memorabilia he cites; but Justin only knows the name of one, namely, Peter—and that in a passage thought to be an interpolation. The

world swarmed before his time with a body of Christian propagandists known as saints and apostles. Yet Justin finds there must have been twelve original ones to correspond to the twelve bells of the high priest. As he does not supply their names, it is pretty evident that up to his time they had not been fitted with names. The Talmud gives the names of only five—Matthai, Nakai, Nezer, Boni, and Thoda. Those given in the gospels do not entirely agree. John mentions Nathanael, who is unknown to the first three gospels, and who, entirely upon conjecture, apologists seek to identify with Bartholomew, although they are made distinct in the early *Epitome of Rules of the Apostles*. According to John, Andrew and another were disciples of John the Baptist. Matthew names a Lebbeus or Thaddeus where Luke names a Judas, brother of James—distinct from Judas Iscariot, of whom Paul and the author of the Apocalypse appear to know nothing, since they speak of "the twelve" as though nothing had happened. Nor can the various accounts of the calling of the apostles be reconciled. In the first gospel Matthew is called from the receipt of custom. In Mark and Luke it is Levi. That in all three instances we have the same tale related there can be no doubt, but it is not certain that the same person is denoted by the name of Levi and Matthew. The lists of apostles in Mark and Luke contain the name of Matthew, but they do not call him a tax-gatherer, nor do they mention that he also bore the name of Levi.

But what is more noteworthy is that in the Gospel according to Luke (chap. x.) the instructions, which in the first gospel are given to the twelve, are given to seventy disciples. Mr. R. W. Mackay says:

"Luke's gospel manifests, like John's, a strong tendency to depreciate the twelve; and a comparison of the ninth and tenth chapters, especially shows a marked intention to place them in a position of inferiority, in comparison with the missionary seventy representing the apostleship of the Gentiles. Thus they are shown to be spiritually dull and unprolific (ix., 32, 45), faithless and perverse, insensible even to the glory of the transfiguration, moreover as childishly ambitious (46), jealous (49), revengeful, and ignorant of the true spirit of the gospel (51); while all expressions of triumphant success and congratulation, as well as the special instructions, are here reserved for the seventy."

How is it possible to consider the mission of the seventy historical, when no other writer in the New Testament takes the slightest notice of so important a transaction? This absence of corroboration has induced some to think that the seventy in Luke are founded on the seventy members of the Jewish Sanhedrim. But it is evident the same argument applies to the twelve. The Sanhedrim appointed twelve officers to regulate the religious affairs of the Jews of the dispersion. These twelve would certainly assume more importance after the fall of Jerusalem. The *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* published by Byrennios in 1875, and which has excited so much attention on account of its evident antiquity, and which may be dated 130—150, gives no particulars of the alleged teachers and only mentions Simon Cephas by name. Indeed it is probable that the nucleus of the Teaching is purely Judaic and even pre-Christian. Neither the nativity, the miracles, the parables, the passion nor the resurrection form part of the Teaching. The *Teaching of the Apostles*, classed by Eusebius (Ec. Hist. iii., 25) as spurious, may be a different work, but the absence of endorsement of historic Christianity was probably the reason of the long suppression of the Teaching. Our so-called Acts of the Apostles briefly records the preaching and some adventures of Peter, whom it suddenly leaves with the intimation that, being delivered from prison by an angel, he departed and went into another place. It tells how Philip baptised an eunuch and vanished into thin air, and it then passes on to Paul and Barnabas, two apostles unknown to the Evangelists. Of the Acts of the other apostles it gives no record.

Of three only of the apostles—Peter, James and John—are there anything like early traditions. All the rest are of little or no account—merely dummies to fill up the sacred number. Around Mr. Simon Cephas Peter so many myths are clustered that I must reserve an examination of them for a separate article. Paul only knows one James, viz., an apostle, the Lord's brother. The Synoptics, however, give us as apostles two other Jameses—James, the son of Zebedee, and James, the son of Alphaeus. In Matt. xiii., 55, and Mark vi., 3, we read that Jesus had four brothers—James, Josés, Simon and Judas; but according

to John vii., 3, his brethren did not believe on him. Now Hegesippus, in the second century, wrote concerning James, the Lord's brother: "This apostle was consecrated from his mother's womb. He drank neither wine nor fermented liquors, and abstained from animal food. A razor never came upon his head. He never anointed with oil and never used a bath." Jesus, however, said, "When thou fastest, anoint thy head." The Lord's brother does not seem to have been much of a Christian.

If the Gospel according to John was written by that apostle, it is curious that he never mentions his brother James, the companion "son of thunder." He quite forgets how he and his brother desired to call down fire from heaven to consume a certain village, and omits to explain whether it was James and himself, as Mark reports, or their mother on their behalf, as the first Gospel puts it, who petitioned to sit on the right and left hand of the Lord in the kingdom. He seems to have quite forgotten that he once had a brother in the fishing business. John is said to have lived to a very old age, but he hardly lived long enough to write the fourth gospel, which certainly was not in existence before the third quarter of the second century. A writer of that time is reported by Eusebius as describing John as a priest at Ephesus wearing the *petalon* or sacerdotal plate. Possibly it was a Jewish priest of the Essene sect who wrote the Revelation, and warned the churches in Asia Minor against false apostles, and consigned to the synagogue of Satan those "who say they are Jews but are not, and do lie." It was expected John would live till the second coming of Christ, and according to Tertullian, he survived being thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. When he did retire to his long home, the earth above his grave kept heaving up and down to show that he was not dead but sleeping. Upon such legends as these rests all that Christianity knows of its twelve apostles.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

THE bowl out of which Jonathan Edwards used to eat his bread and milk is still preserved in America. We should like to have seen the grim old predestinarian eating his bread and milk. Probably that was the only time when he ceased feeling the claws of the Almighty tiger.

A PIOUS contemporary prints a number of "unanswerable" questions for Freethinkers. They are something in this style. Has Atheism ever produced a greater scientist than Newton? a greater poet than Milton? and so on *ad nauseum*. Then the querist poises his pen, as who should say, "we pause for a reply."

Now suppose a Pagan had struck up this attitude towards a Christian in the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or any other century before Dante had written his *Divina Commedia*, and Copernicus had revealed the true astronomy. Suppose he had asked—Has Christianity ever produced as great a scientist as Archimedes, as great a poet as Homer, as great a geometer as Euclid, as great an historian as Tacitus or Thucydides, as great an artist as Phidias or Praxiteles? Would not the poor Christian have had to hide his diminished head? The fact is, every system that has had a long innings can always put these "posers" to fresh systems that seek to supplant it. But Christian logic was always rickety, and we need not be surprised at its continued wobbings.

THE Rev. C. A. Berry's congregation press him not to accept the invitation to succeed Ward Beecher at Plymouth Church; but on the other hand the Plymouth Church Committee press him to "come over and help us." How on earth is Mr. Berry to decide which is the call of the Holy Ghost? Generally the chink of the coin is held to be the Paraclete's voice. Mr. Berry is "going, going," but not yet "gone."

By the way, Plymouth Church is discussing whether it shall accept as members, all who "desire and will strive to know and follow the will of the Heavenly Father, as found stated and implied in the sayings and teachings of Christ." There is to be "no other limitation," not even if every member has a Mrs. Tilton at his heels. Did not even J. C. have a friend in Mary Magdalene, to say nothing of the rich women who ministered unto him of their substance?

DR. DONALD FRASER told the congregation of Marylebone Presbyterian Church that he had never seen an unbeliever who lived consistently with his principles, and he never wished to—in fact, he would as soon see the Devil. This remark caused a lady in the gallery to exclaim, "Oh!" Perhaps that lady had an unbelieving relative, and knew from experience that Donald was talking nonsense.

DR. FRASER would as soon meet the Devil as a real unbeliever! Would he? We suspect that if he had to choose to-morrow morning between breakfasting with Bradlaugh or Old Nick, he would certainly be seen at St. John's Wood Station.

DON'T talk about the Devil too much, Donald. Talk about the Devil, and you'll—you know the rest. Besides, if your theory of salvation be true, it is a hundred to one, according to the law of averages, that you will see the Devil quite soon enough for your own comfort.

THE *Christian World* is "sorry to find the Rev. H. R. Haweis among the defenders of the ballet." Well, we have seen a good many ballets—though not so many as some Church-and-Stage parsons—and we protest that we never saw anything so corrupting as the story of Lot and his daughters. Besides, the ballet doesn't pretend to be a moral teacher, and the Bible does.

DR. PARKER took seven hundred dollars for eulogising his "dear friend" Ward Beecher, and the Beecherites are wild at learning that so much was subtracted from the Memorial Fund. Evidently they didn't know Dr. Parker. They do now.

PREPARE to meet thy God! According to the recent Second Advent Conference at Exeter Hall, Jesus Christ is coming again in thirteen years' time. This will be a capital thing for the Insurance Companies, if they can carry on their profits into the millenium. Prophet Baxter is the genius of this movement, and a rival Christian editor asks if he is prepared to take a thirteen years' purchase of his investments. Baxter is not so green as that.

AFTER eighteen centuries of Christian "charity" the Rev. Hugh Price-Hughes startles his fellow Protestants by asking, "Why should we not recognise goodness in a Roman Catholic?" Could there be a greater proof that religion sets men against each other for no earthly reason? Swift said that most men had just enough religion to make them hate each other; though he might have added that the stronger the dose the stronger was their hatred.

MORE Christian charity! The Rev. W. P. Carey, of Burnley, is so shocked at Mr. Spurgeon's attitude on the "down grade" controversy that he says he would rather see him dead. How these Christians love one another!

THE Lowestoft fishermen report having seen the "Star of Bethlehem." All my eye, sirs, all my eye! We wonder how much beer went to the production of that star.

MR. STEAD, of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, is a very fervent religionist, and he makes the mistake of supposing that the London Radicals share his pious enthusiasm. Accordingly he announced that the Bishop of London was to be asked to "read the service" at the grave of Alfred Linnell, who died in consequence of the injuries he received in one of the police charges at Trafalgar Square on November 20. The Bishop's services were needed, it appears, in order to give "religious expression to the deep and intense sentiments of the masses of London." No doubt the masses of London have deep and intense sentiments about many things, but we very much doubt if religion is one of them. Poor Stewart Headlam always puts in a word for Christianity—his species of it—whenever he gets a chance, and that is nearly every time he speaks; but his religious ejaculations fall perfectly flat, being simply tolerated as one of the weaknesses of "a very good fellow."

It is reported that a detachment of the Salvation Army has got to Jerusalem, and that they intend shouting hallelujah on the Mount of Olives and jingling their tamborines in face of the Mohammedan soldiers who have to preserve peace among the Christians at the Holy Sepulchre.

"GENERAL" Booth says that Abraham is becoming much more popular than the Grand Old Man. The statement is so absurd that his own fanatics laughed at it.

THE West-End Wesleyan Mission announces a "drunkards' dinner" for Christmas. Christian candidates should set about qualifying as soon as possible, as the time is short.

PRESBYTERIAN ministers at Pittsburgh have denounced Sunday newspapers and the readers thereof by a unanimous vote. But who cares a fig for their votes? Newspaper readers will go on just the same in spite of all the impertinent denunciations put forth by the poor persecuted saints who can no longer give effect to their unanimous votes by fire and sword.

WE are not bloodthirsty as a rule, but we think it only just if the heathen retaliate on the missionaries by boiling them. The missionaries, by a vote of the home board, go to the savages with the avowed intention of initiating them into the mysteries of Sheol, and if the savages hoist them with their own petard, who is to blame?—*Life*.

Mr. GEE, the editor of the Welsh *Baner*, vehemently complains of the difficulty of getting land for Nonconformist chapels. He writes: "An urgent petition was sent to a large landowner by a respected Baptist church in Carmarthenshire asking for a little land to build a new chapel, the old one being out of repair; but the curt answer of the great churchman was: 'I beg to acknowledge the receipt of the memorial asking me to grant a site for a Baptist chapel, which I decline doing. You must get the accommodation from others.'"

THE *Christian Herald*, which is probably the silliest paper in the world, gives an account of the achievements of a certain Mr. Picton, an anti-infidel lecturer from Australia, who has recently been holding forth in London "under the auspices of the Christian Evidence Society, with much success." What Mr. Picton's "much success" is like in orthodox eyes we don't know, but we do know that the London Freethinkers generally regard this boastful lecturer as a shade or two worse than the native discourers of sweet music—to say nothing of Christian charity—who perform *al fresco* on the C. E. S. platforms.

EVIDENTLY the noble Picton has furnished the *Christian Herald* with the story of his exploits. According to his own account, he went to Sydney and discomfited Mr. W. W. Collins; in fact, he drove him out of the place. Now it is true that Mr. Collins has left Sydney, but his absence has no more relation to Mr. Picton than it has to the man in the moon. The fact is, the Sydney Freethinkers were deprived of the use of their Sunday meeting place by the arbitrary act of the pious Prime Minister. Decency would suggest silence on such a subject, but Mr. Picton has read the Bible too long to retain much of that virtue.

It is said that a dignitary of the English Church, after delivering from the pulpit an eloquent and even fiery harangue against the enemy of mankind, was accosted in the precincts of his cathedral by a person of small consideration, popularly supposed to be a harmless lunatic. "A very fine sermon, Mr. Dean," said this simple creature; "but no Devil, no Dean, you know."

THE German Crown Prince says "The good God will decide what course my illness is to take." What does Sir Morell Mackenzie say to this? If the thing is in God's hands the doctors may as well be dismissed. Evidently the Crown Prince likes two strings to his bow, the one divine and the other human; but if he had to make a choice between the two he would probably follow the impious example of King Asa.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND has been addressing the General Christian Conference at Washington. He told them that "the applying of Christian rules of conduct to the problems and exigencies of social and political life could not fail to produce most valuable results." We agree with President Cleveland; and the most valuable result would be a demonstration of the utter impracticability, and even the imbecility, of those "Christian rules of conduct." Let President Cleveland appeal to the country on the lines of the Sermon on the Mount, and the most fanatical Christians would desert him and vote for another candidate.

TALMAGE has discovered that Solomon knew all about the circulation of the blood, but it does not occur to the Jabbernacle preacher that it was a great pity Solomon recorded his discovery so obscurely that nobody ever dreamt of it before Talmage. This pulpit mountebank goes on to say that Solomon's "silver cord" means the spinal marrow, and his "pitcher" the three "canals leading from the heart." Talmage also thinks that Solomon was well up in vivisection. Would he were alive now and brandishing his scalpel at Talmage!

PROFESSOR MAX MULLER has a curious way of disposing of Canon Taylor. It is perfectly true that Mohammedanism converts a thousand Africans for every one converted by Christianity; but, says Professor Max Müller, "Don't let us count heads, but simply go on preaching." Is not this simply the tactics of the pursued ostrich? Professor Max Müller may think it dignified, but other people may think it ridiculous.

THE Rev. James Dann, preaching at Oxford, said "It was the duty of professing Christians to demonstrate that poverty has no friend, humanity no bond of brotherhood and equality like those which the love of Christ can give." But when will the duty be performed? Do not the Christians still go to church on Sunday and tell God that they have left undone those things which they ought to have done? Mr. Dann may protest till he is tired that Christianity is not an agency for the enslavement of the poor, but fifteen centuries of Christian history belie his asseveration.

Great Thoughts gives an extract from the Rev. Newman Smyth, headed "Evolutionists Differ." Of course they do. Many of the facts of science are capable of different interpretations, and the nature, extent and methods of evolution may still be discussed by those who see there *is* evolution. But Christians also differ. Yet they pretend to have a divine and supernatural revelation to guide them into all truth, but which has led to more strife and diversity of opinion than any other book.

"EXPLAIN the meaning of the Canonical Books, the LXX, the Vulgate, the Authorised Version, the Vatican Codex, the Synoptics, the Evangelical Prophet." These questions were put to the candidates for scholarships at Marlborough College. One parent at least is vexed at his boy's time being wasted on such matters. Candidates for holy orders might be left to study Christian antiquities, but lads who have to make their way in the world should devote their time to acquiring more useful knowledge.

How piety is mixed up with charity, the former in large proportion, and the latter in small, may be seen from the following account of the daily routine at a certain institution in the neighborhood of Soho. 6 a.m., rising bell; 7.30, bell for service—High Church; 8, bell for breakfast, with a long-winded grace before and after; 1, dinner bell; 4.30, bell for service; 6, tea bell; 9, supper bell; 9.30, bell for service. There are two special extra services on Sunday. Most of the inmates who succeed in finding work and leave the establishment feel they have had enough religion to last for a lifetime.

THE damage done by God's earthquake at Bisagnano is estimated at a million francs. Nine hundred houses have fallen. The streets are uninhabitable, the houses which remain being ready to fall at any minute. The people pass the night in the open air sitting round fires, afraid of fresh earthquakes, and exclaiming, "It is the judgment day." They are very pious and very thankful to the Virgin Mother, as they chant their prayers and count their rosaries. "The Madonna was merciful," said one old woman; "she sent us a first shock to warn us to run out, else we should all have been dead." Close by the church front, where the priest was killed, six bodies were found buried. They had been looking at a great iron cross which had fallen from the bell-tower, and, by a strange accident, had remained hanging on the ruined wall. They had seen in that cross a miracle, a sign that the anger of God was appeased, and while absorbed in devotional feeling had been overwhelmed by the falling ruins precipitated by the second shock."

DOES anyone know anything of "Grainey the leading infidel?" The Rev. S. D. Scammell, Pastor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Chatham, in a sermon in reply to Mr. Bradlaugh, says he knew Grainey well, and that he "was well known in London." On his death-bed this hitherto unknown infidel leader sent for Mr. Scammell. "'Fool that I am!' exclaimed the dying sceptic, 'I have been fighting against God, and now he will have his revenge.' Then came a series of the most terrific struggles with some foe whom he could not see. The dying sceptic cursed the friends who had applauded him as a leader among them and now had left him to die alone." This "struggle with the fiend," according to Mr. Scammell, lasted a quarter of an hour. Why Mr. Scammell calls it a "struggle with a fiend" is not clear, for it is evident from what he reports that Grainey thought it was God who was going to "have his revenge." The distinction between Mr. Scammell's God and a fiend is not easily made out. If the story is true at all, and we incline to class it with Whitmore's lying reports of the sixteen converted infidel leaders, which Mr. Scammell introduced in addition to his own horrible tale, it is evident the dying man had a most insane conception of his all-mighty, all-good Father in heaven. Was it Mr. Scammell who disordered the dying man's intellect?

THE Rev. C. Gutch, of St. Cyprians, wants the Bishops to inquire after all non-communicants and then publicly censure or even excommunicate them. He would thus "restore the discipline of the laity." But the Bishops would soon raise a hornet's nest about their ears if they tried this plan, and the public agitation and the libel suits which would result would not be over agreeable to poor Bishops who themselves stand in dread of the rod of Disestablishment. The Bishops, we may be sure, will decline such a dangerous task.

THE *Liberator* for December calls special attention to the fact that the Earl of Lonsdale, the Marquis of Ailesbury, and the Duke of Marlborough, whose names have of late been prominent before the public in connection with certain cases in the law courts and elsewhere, are each of them large owners of patronage in the Church of England. The Earl of Lonsdale is stated to be the patron of no fewer than forty-three livings, being, in fact, the largest lay and unofficial patron in the country. The Marquis of Ailesbury, it seems, is the patron of eleven livings, and the Duke of Marlborough of nine.

THE *Church Times* calls modern Wesleyanism "an elaborate fraud, seeing that it makes use of the Society, the reputation, and the property of the Wesleys to bring about a result against which they vehemently protested." In justification of this Christian language it cites the admission of the *Methodist Times* that John Wesley did his utmost to keep Methodism as a private society inside the Church of England, and subject to Church authority.

It is said that a certain religious society consoled itself for sending out a distinguished man of science on an exploring expedition, by the reflection that at least a dozen of its own agents would counteract the evil tendencies of his teachings.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, December 18, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, London, E.C.; at 11.15, "The New French President;" at 7, "A Real Christmas Sermon."

JAN. 1, Milton Hall, London; 8, Manchester; 15, Hall of Science, London; 22, Bradford; 29, Blackburn.
FEB. 5, Camberwell; 12, Milton Hall, London; 19, Liverpool.
MARCH 4 and 11, Hall of Science, London; 23, Milton Hall.
APRIL 1, Manchester,

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.

BARNESLEY.—Letter bearing postmark of "Barnesley" refused. Unstamped letters are always rejected. Otherwise we should place ourselves at the mercy of low-class Christians who would delight in making us pay innumerable twopences for the privilege of reading their insults and slanders.

J. K. (Peckham).—Volumes you wish to sell should be advertised, or you might apply to Mr. Forder. You can hardly expect us to place this column at the disposal of all who want to turn their libraries into cash.

E. BUTLER.—Scarcely up to the mark.

J. WARREN.—Thanks. Shall be duly considered.

J. L. (Glasgow).—We are obliged to you for pointing it out. The mistake occurred in our absence.

W. TURNER.—Woffendale is wrong, as usual. What Cunninghame Graham's religious opinions are we cannot say, but John Burns is a Freethinker. The remark that Messrs. Bradlaugh and Foote were "conveniently engaged elsewhere" is full of the usual Christian charity. A glance at this journal and the *N. R.* would show any candid inquirer that both Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Foote were fulfilling long-standing engagements in the country.

A. HEMINGWAY.—We have booked you April 1.

W. C. SAVILLE.—Thanks for the budget of jokes.

J. G. WARREN.—We have no desire to misrepresent the East London Branch. It appears from your letter that its inactivity has not been so great as we were led to believe; but at the same time you must admit that far more should be done amidst such a vast population.

G. HARPER.—Your list to hand, but of course we only acknowledge subscriptions for the Wallace Nelson Fund through its secretary.

J. B.—The phrase "the providence of man" is applied to Science by Dr. Mark Akenside in his poem on "The Pleasures of the Imagination."

J. COTTERELL.—We really cannot take the responsibility for other lecturers' assertions. The following are answers to your questions. 1. We accept no single theory of the origin of Christianity, but of course every student knows that the gospels include a good deal of ancient sun worship. 2. The cheapest is Dupuis's chapter on Christianity, translated into English and published at one shilling by Thomas Scott. Most works on this subject are extremely expensive. 3. Tertullian does not question the existence of Paul, but an inferential argument has been founded by the author of *Antiqua Mater* on Tertullian's silence as to Paul.

J. H. BIRTLES, Oldham, challenges us to a written discussion on a number of questions, and among them whether there is "a Disiner." This sample of our would-be opponent's orthography is a sufficient answer. God Almighty is said to be very fond of the illiterate, but we are not so fond of discussing with them.

A. R. ATKEY.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

T. E. J. MAIR.—The mock sermon is very good, though a little out of date by this time. We have no right to reprint it. Why not apply to the author through the publisher? We do not know of any Christian sect which teaches that bastards cannot enter heaven. According to the Mosaic Law, bastards were cut off from the congregation, practically for ever. Certainly the Church of England teaches that baptism is necessary to salvation.

EX-RITUALIST.—Shall appear.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Redruth Independent—Thinker—Chatham and Rochester News—Truthseeker—Lucifer—Jus—L'Union Démocratique—Le Cri du Peuple—Radical—Western Figaro—Southport Guardian—Freireligiöses Sonntags-Blatt—La Semaine Anticléricale—Great Thoughts—Countryman—Weekly Dispatch.

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.

This evening (Dec. 18) Mr. Foote preaches "A Real Christmas Sermon" at the London Hall of Science. His morning lecture will be on "The New French President."

Royal Paupers being nearly sold out, Mr. Foote is preparing a third edition, considerably revised and enlarged for permanent circulation. Over seven thousand copies of this pamphlet have been sold in about as many months, and it is still in constant demand.

THE fourth and last part of our Bible Handbook is in the press and will soon be ready. It will include *Unfulfilled Prophecies and Broken Promises*, and *Indecencies and Obscenities*. We hope to publish it directly after Christmas.

AMONG the "unemployed" in America, according to *The Independent*, are no fewer than a thousand Congregational ministers. We trust there is a proportionate number among the other sects.

THE *Freethinkers' Magazine* (Buffalo, N.Y.), reviewing the Debate on Socialism between Mrs. Besant and Mr. Foote, says that "No abler discussion on the subject has ever appeared." Singularly, however, the Debate sells very slowly. Both disputants spent great pains over the controversy, and the price of the volume is by no means extravagant. What is the explanation? Either there is very little intellectual interest in Socialism—which we are inclined to believe; or else the *National Reformer* report killed the sale of the verbatim report. The *N. R.* report was only a summary one, but heaps of people got the notion into their heads that it was complete, and a notion like that is as hard to drive out as a badger from his hole.

THE *Weekly Dispatch* thinks the most remarkable feature in the Queen's long reign is the startling decrease of crime. It says that "Nothing is so strange as this fresh proof that, side by side with the decay of religion, there is a growth of morality observable among the people." According to one of the speakers at the Thieves' Supper, there were 50,000 convicts at the Queen's accession. Now there are only 7,000, although the population has doubled.

THE *Rock* says that the German Protestant missionaries have sent home word that at Tokio, Japan, a Buddhist minister has publicly burnt a statue of Buddha and a copy of his scriptures without causing any tumult, and that many Buddhist ministers have become "Rationalists."

THE *Rock* also laments that in India numbers of natives who understand English, eagerly read the Atheistic literature imported into the country. It says the Aryas (reformed Hindoos) are bitter opponents of Christianity, and show a decided tendency towards allying themselves with Atheism. They use the press to aid their attacks on Christians.

THE *Freidenker*, the organ of German-American Freethought, for Nov. 27 gives an interesting sketch of the life and works of Ludwig Büchner, the author of *Force and Matter*.

THE *Daily Tribune* of Salt Lake City says, "The Reply of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll in the November *North American Review* [republished under the title of *Faith and Fact*] judged by all the rules, is one of the strongest and most brilliant productions that has fallen from any pen for a decade." It adds that Paradise will lose much if its rules do not admit Ingersoll.

HERE is a bit of uncommon plain-speaking. Preaching at Greenwich recently, the Rev. Hinchcliffe Higgins, a Congregationalist minister, said it was paltry to make a fuss about different views of the Atonement while "honor, veracity and right-mindedness were habitually set aside by men who worshipped in churches," and while "in many branches of business it was needful to have eyes all over the head to see that some Christian did not get the better of one."

WE are glad to note that the *Christian World*—the least bigoted, and perhaps the most influential religious journal—denounces "the new clerical propaganda against Board Schools and 'godless education,' which," it says, "is being pushed forward with great activity, and with not a little unscrupulousness."

THE same journal rebukes a minister for describing sceptics as "dull and unhappy," and says that Darwin's case is "a notable refutation of this statement." "No man," it observes, "ever led a more serene and happy life." Good, but there were sceptics before Darwin. Voltaire, for instance; and fancy describing him as "dull and unhappy"!

WE have recently come across a report of A 'Three Nights' Discussion on the question, Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah? between Mr. Robert Roberts, editor of the *Christadelphian*, and Mr. Louis Stern, an orthodox Jew of Birmingham, which is notable as the first public debate between a Christian and Jew in England. The discussion was held in the Temperance Hall, Birmingham, Oct. 17, 18, and 19, 1871. Mr. Stern ably held his own against the *Christadelphian*, though he took up the curious position that, according to Luke xxiii., 26, it was Simon the Cyrenian who was crucified. This view is by no means a novel one, it having been broached by Basilides in the second century.

HERE is an item from the discussion which created some disturbance on account of its "blasphemy." Mr. Stern said, "My friend asked me if I believed in *ruacha kodush*? Of course; the word *ruacha* is 'wind,' and *kodush* is 'holy,' and if a holy wind sometimes causes virgins to conceive, I should advise all respectable ladies to keep out of the draught."

MUCH was the straining on Temperance Sunday to make the Bible teach teetotalism. One of the sensible things said was that of the Rev. Silas K. Hoeking, who, preaching at Southport, said: "We send our missionaries to heathen lands, and the same ships that carry the missionaries have their holds full of fire water, and gin and rum are much more effectual among the heathen than are our missionaries. Canon Taylor has recently startled the churches by stating that Christianity in Africa is a failure, and that Mohammedanism is the salvation of the African race. Way? Mohammedanism is a great total abstinence society. Better in many instances we had never sent missionaries to heathen tribes, because they have opened up the way, and British spirit merchants have followed upon their heels, and strong drink has made the savages a hundred times more savage than before."

WE are asked to acknowledge the following subscriptions for the Wallace Nelson Fund:—Amount already acknowledged, £24 8s. 4d. I. J. Tierney, 1s.; R. Fox, 6d.; Mr. Schofield, 2s. 6d.; J. M. D. Worsnip, 2s. 6d.; Barnsley Friends (per D. Pattison), £1 13s. 6d.; Adam Rushton, 5s.; Dalton Clay, 5s.; Liverpool Friends (per W. Schweizer), £1 16s. 6d.; Birmingham Friends (per J. Partridge), 10s.; Huddersfield Friends (per W. H. Spivey), 5s.; Leeds Friends, second list (per J. G. Fisher), 12s. 7d.; Derby Friends (per G. Harper), £2; J. H., 1s.; T. C. Stansfield, 2s. 6d.; J. W. W., 1s.; S. Hunter, 1s.; A. Hemingway, 1s.; Sheffield Friends, first list (per William Nelson), £3 2s. 8d.; Thomas Collier (Rochdale), 5s.; G. Alward, 5s.; S. Alward, 2s.; T. Darrell, 1s. Total, £36 4s. 7d. We are happy to hear that Mr. Nelson's health is already improved.

MR. G. WEIR, of Edinburgh, held another meeting at the Mound last Sunday, and convulsed his audience by reading some "blasphemy" from our Christmas Number. Several policemen shared in the merriment and made no attempt to arrest the speaker. We fancy the bigots will have had enough of Mr. Weir before he is done with them.

CHRISTIANS ON FREETHINKERS.

AFTER the appearance in the *Rock* of Mr. Wheeler's disclaimer of an alleged sick-bed recantation, a Christian propagandist challenged him in the columns of that journal to deny that he prayed to God, and offered to bring witnesses to prove it if he persisted in his denial. This foolish Christian was quite unable to see that his challenge was as senseless and preposterous as it was inconsiderate and ungentlemanly. Mr. Wheeler had explained that the story of his conversion could only refer to his insanity, and might possibly, for all he could remember to the contrary, have been founded on delirious exclamations uttered at a time when he was quite unable to think. Who but a Christian would persist in holding an opponent responsible for his words and actions at a time when he was confessedly insane? If this bigot's asserted belief in Mr. Wheeler's conversion is genuine, it only shows that Christianity and insanity are so much alike that professional Christians readily mistake the one for the other. Of course, the assumption throughout this Christian's challenge must be that Mr. Wheeler is a liar, and that he only pretends to have been insane. Such insulting and outrageous assumptions in face of well-known facts are simply a disgrace to the Christian vermin who delight in them.

It is, however, gratifying to observe that there are also Christians of a better type; Christians who, however faulty or prejudiced their views may be in some respects, really desire to do justice to their opponents, and to give credit wherever credit is due. In a letter in the *Rock* about "The Freethinkers," Mr. Douglas Phillips says:

"I was much interested with the letter from the editor of the *Freethinker*. It was moderately written, and its object not unreasonable. He does not wish it to be considered that he deserted his cause in the hour of danger. However the Freethinkers may be regarded, they are consistent and honest, so far as teaching and acting in accordance with their professions, and form a striking contrast to those hypocrites and snakes in the grass who profess to preach and practice one thing, and do the opposite."

Unfortunately Mr. Phillips commences with a mistake. It was the sub-editor of the *Freethinker*, Mr. J. M. Wheeler, whose letter of disclaimer in the *Rock* interested Mr. Phillips, and not the "editor," as he loosely has it. Here is the beginning of a Christian myth concerning Mr. Foote. Sundry Christians may easily take up the error and spread the story that Mr. Foote prayed fervently to God during an illness. This would merely be an instance of the way in which such stories are evolved.

Mr. Phillips proceeds to deal with Freethinkers and Freethought in general, but his ideas and arguments are of the usual exploded kind so common among the more

thorough believers. He says, for instance, that "every human creature worships something as the originator of being"—a purely gratuitous assertion, which absurdly assumes that Freethinkers and Buddhists are Theists who worship a Creator of some kind. The best argument he puts forward is the old one, that wants imply suitable objects—imply, that is, their own fulfilment. The existence of hunger implies in a general sense the existence of food, and therefore, it is alleged, the hunger for immortality implies the reality of a future existence in another world. It is true that the hunger for life implies that there is life; but why are we then to reverse our argument and suppose that the dislike of death proves the unreality of death? Wishes and fears should at least be taken as equal in proving the general reality of the objects with which they concern themselves, and in connection with which nature has evolved them by the survival of the fittest hopes and fears for the circumstances. Thus the instinctive fear of serpents and reptiles in monkeys and in men may be regarded as proving the general reality of the objects which caused that dread; but the desire to utterly escape them does not prove their unreality. The extension of the argument or analogy from the finite to the infinite robs it even of such partial validity as it might have possessed within natural limits. Wishes do not secure their own realisation when extended beyond their legitimate domain of fact and possibility. If it were so, the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone would be realities; the Mohammedan paradise would be equally genuine with the Christian hell, and the Indian's happy hunting-ground with the Buddhists' Nirvana.

Mr. Phillips assumes that all men have been created with the thought and anxiety about the future life, because it is necessary for men to have it. He says: "The unbelievers have this thought, and they also worship something." Are the "babes and sucklings," to whom Christ reveals himself, so simple-minded as to be incapable of rising to the comprehension of the fact that their beliefs are not shared by those who reject them? that unbelievers are not believers? that Atheists are not Theists? that Freethinkers are not necessarily hypocrites or idiotic fools who grossly misrepresent their own opinions? Unbelievers do not "worship" in the religious sense, and to use the word in any other would be mere verbal swindling. Nor do unbelievers usually entertain the thought or belief of immortality, except in the irrelevant or second-hand sense in which they have the thought of the Trinity, or of witchcraft, or of Valhalla, or of the transmutation of metals, or of flying through planetary space. Why, even in the Books of Moses, the idea of immortality and the anxiety about a future life have not evolved into any manifest existence; the Jews adopted such ideas at a later period from other nations.

Mr. Phillips concludes his letter on "The Freethinkers" thus:

"They are, no doubt, sincere in their opinions, and they profess that their object is to benefit mankind; but why they fight against the believers it is difficult to understand. It can be of no advantage to them to make converts, or to change a believer's opinion, for they must acknowledge that the believers are actuated by the same motives for doing good, and that their efforts in this respect have not been altogether unsuccessful. The opposition cannot be simply for the gratification of getting the best of an argument. No; it is an endeavor to kill that worm which will not die, and to quench that fire which will not be quenched. They are brave in the midst of their friends, but in sickness, in the lone silent hours, the thought of this to them unknown and uncertain something hereafter is constantly present. It is amazing that there can be found any human creatures, who are dependent upon their Maker for everything whereby they exist, and whom the smallest of his agencies—a goat, a fly, a grain of dust, and a thousand other causes equally slight—can in a moment render prostrate and incapable, presuming to lift their poor weak arms in defiance of the Great Eternal. They are like the man who feared the plague: they ridiculed, they represented it as Folly, carried it in effigy in processions, played it in comic pantomimes, making it a thing to be laughed at, thinking by such means to drive away their fears. But the plague mocked at them. They began their song in merriment and laughter, and they ended it as shrieking plague-stricken maniacs; and the cart, with its driver ringing his bell and uttering his doleful cry 'Bring out your dead,' stopped at their houses and carried them away."

Mr. Phillips is tolerably correct in comparing his God to the plague that mocked men's agonies, and also in regarding Freethought as an endeavor to quench the fire of hell which the eternal torturer is to inflict on billions of undying

souls. But the plague is a reality. God and his hell are only *subjective* beliefs; they are only horrible dreams, dreadful imaginations, cruel nightmares, cursing the human mind with terrors which are only too real although utterly baseless.

That Christians find it difficult to understand why opponents should reverence truth and seek to spread it, and detest mischievous falsehood and seek to destroy it, simply argues lack of comprehension on the Christian side.

As to the dread of hell or the hereafter being "constantly present" to Freethinkers in their lone, silent hours of sickness, Christians must measure our corn by their own bushel. It is marvellous how they know our secret thoughts and inward feelings so much better than we do ourselves. I never in all my life had the slightest dread of hell or a hereafter, nor have I perceived signs of such dread in Freethinkers. It is only in Christians that I have seen and known of such dread. It is believers in hell who dread hell. How can those who disbelieve in it fear it?

W. P. BALL.

IDIOTS IN HEAVEN.

Does the poor unhappy creature
Who an imbecile is born,
Sadly void of every feature
That man's offspring should adorn—
Does his sad condition tell us
Of a land beyond the skies?
Does his wretchedness impel us
Thoughts of endless life to prize?

How would he, devoid of reason,
Live through all eternity,
In a land where time and season
With their change can never be?
How could those who own the treasure
Of a clear, unclouded brain,
Find eternal life a pleasure,
Midst the fools amongst their train?

Could the Lord of all creation
Fail to feel the blush of shame,
Seeing thus his child's damnation
Through his own, the Father's blame?
Would the spotless reputation
That he boasts—still deck his brow?
Small his gaze of admiration
On his handiwork I trow.

One, and only one conclusion
From insanity is drawn—
Heaven must be a vain delusion;
Fleeing slowly at the dawn
Of a nobler aspiration,
Than the hope of life to come,
In the rising of man's station
And the brightening of his home.

WALTER MALINS.

ANOTHER GLORIFIED MURDERER.

PAYNE, the Coventry murderer, has been jerked to Jesus in the usual fashion. He spent his last days almost entirely in devotion, and received the consoling ministrations of two ministers of the Gospel. At the place of execution he prayed, asking God to bless his wife and save her soul. He shook hands with the hangman and asked God to bless him too. The prayers and blessings of such a noble and generous saint ought indeed to be coveted by all right-thinking men. His last words were "Christ, Jesus, my Jesus;" so there is no doubt of his salvation and glorification if the Bible is true. He is one with Jesus, for whomsoever cometh to him he will in no wise cast out. The sanctified murderer will reign for ever in paradise among the blessed, while such ignoble wretches as Ingersoll and Garibaldi and Huxley and Darwin will piteously but vainly beg the beatified criminal to moisten their tongues with a single drop of water! Beautiful faith! Exquisite consolation! Who will not become a Christian forthwith?

This glorified angel had cut the throat of his sister-in-law, Charlotte Taylor, with whom he is alleged to have been on terms of undue intimacy. But his crime has ensured his salvation. Glorious fact! His misdeeds have led him to eternal heaven. The moral evidently is, Go thou and do likewise. Neglectful Christians, worldly-minded indifferentists, act while there is yet time. Seduce, betray, murder, and you will certainly cling to Jesus to the last moment without the terrible danger of relapse or the forgetfulness that forfeits the salvation of so many unfortunate souls who become absorbed in their worldly duties, and wickedly neglect their own interests in a world to come.

FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN.

A DANBURY man lost his dog. After he had given up all hope of finding the animal it came home wearing a collar marked: "Whoever finds this dog will return him to the Rev. ———."

A CHRISTIAN journal naively confesses that when it considers "the immeasurable superiority of Jesus to Mahomet, Confucius and Buddha, the vast advantages offered by Christian civilisation, the moral beauties of the Gospel and its powerful appeal to human hopes and fears," it is "amazed that the results are so few." When conclusions refuse to follow isn't it time to suspect that the premises are unsound? Is it not probable that the "immeasurable superiority" of Jesus to Buddha is all moonshine?

AN article by A. Hilliard Attenridge, on Protestant Missions in Southern India, in the Catholic *Dublin Review*, declares that at Tanjore, where Protestant Missions have been established for over a hundred years, they are in a state of decay. Many of the converts avowedly are Christians only from mercenary motives. "Most of them are very ignorant, the catechists in many instances as ignorant as the people; and there is widespread immorality; a loose theory and practice in regard to marriage and a pagan element in the family life of many nominally Christian households." These are the fruits of the Christian labors of a century.

CHRISTIANS often notice the frequent union of religion and immorality when the credit of their own particular sect is not at stake. Thus a Protestant traveller in Italy writes in the pages of the *Christian Commonwealth*: "The priests bear a lower character. . . . Morality is not, however, believed to be at all universal among their tonsured brethren, even good Catholics frankly admitting that too many live loose lives. Yet they are none the less accepted as priests, though despised as men—so completely has the religious function been perverted to something professional. It is, indeed, the same everywhere in the Romish Church. To keep a drunk priest till he has become sober, that he may say a mass for his guardians, is by no means uncommon in Mexico, and to listen to mass from an immoral priest is not thought in any way unbecoming in Italy. Religion and morality are, in fact, divorced!"

If we wish for Christian testimony to the frequent union of religion and immorality among Protestants, their Roman Catholic brethren readily furnish it.

PRAYER FOR A DYSPEPTIC.

THE following prayer was sent to Mr. G. R. Sims that he might use it as a cure for his dyspepsia. It is issued by the president of the "New York School of Primitive and Practical Christian Science."

"Holy Reality! We BELIEVE in Thee that Thou art EVERYWHERE present. We *really* believe it. Blessed Reality, we do not pretend to believe, think we believe, believe that we believe. WE BELIEVE. Believing that Thou art everywhere present, we believe that Thou art in this patient's stomach, in every fibre, in every cell, in every atom; that Thou art the sole, only Reality of that stomach. Heavenly, Holy Reality, we *will* not try to be such hypocrites and infidels as every day of our lives to affirm our faith in Thee, and then immediately begin to tell how sick we are, forgetting that Thou art everything, and that Thou art not sick, and therefore that nothing in this Universe was ever sick, is now sick, or can be sick. Forgive us our sins in that we have this day talked about our backaches, that we have told our neighbors that our food hurts us, that we mentioned to a visitor that there was a lump in our stomach, that we wasted our valuable time, which should have been spent in Thy service, in worrying for fear that our stomach should grow worse, in that we have disobeyed Thy blessed law in thinking that some kind of medicine would help us. . . . Lord help us to believe that ALL Evil is utterly unreal; that it is silly to be sick, absurd to be ailing, wicked to be wailing, Atheism and denial of God to say, 'I am sick.' Help us to stoutly affirm with our hand in Your hand, with our eyes fixed on Thee, that we have no Dyspepsia, that we never had Dyspepsia, that we will never have Dyspepsia, that there is no such thing, that there never was any such thing, that there never will be any such thing, Amen."

PROFANE JOKES.

"David," said the superintendent, "was a manly boy." "I don't know how that was," said the smart bad boy, "but Job was a boily man, just the same." And it was so.

"My pa," said one small boy, "is a preacher, and is sure to go to heaven." "Huh!" said the other small boy, "that ain't nothin'." My pa is a doctor, and can kill your old pa."

"Now," said a Walnut Street Sunday-school teacher, "our lesson to-day is about the battle between David and Goliath. Why did they fight?" Little Towhead: "For the gate receipts and points."

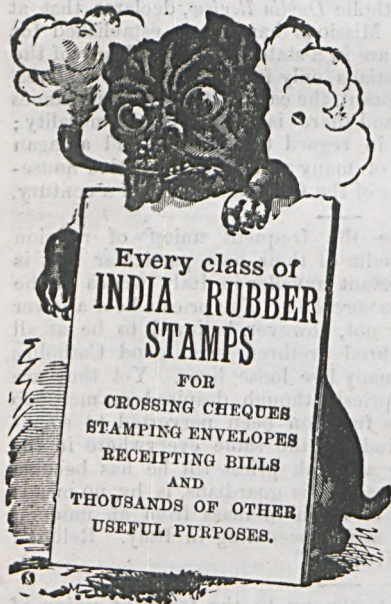
A clergyman being much pressed by a lady of his acquaintance to preach a sermon on the first Sunday after her marriage, complied, and chose the following passage in the Psalms for his text: "And let there be abundance of peace—while the moon endureth."

"There is a fear," observed the parson, "of this brook overflowing our garden." "Oh, dam it!" suggested little Tommy, whose practical mind was bent on blocking the channel with earthworks. "I'll teach you to swear," cried the astonished father, as with pious energy he boxed Tommy's ears.

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The Old Man of the Sea. By Prof. W. D. Gunning.
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