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EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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CHRISTMAS IN HEAVEN.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

NEARLY two thousand years ago certain wise men came from "the east" and went back again. Where they really started from is unknown, for "the east" is very vague, including as it does all the world to the right of you when you look towards the North Pole. But the word which is translated "wise men" is really Magi, and as these were priests of the Persian religion we may conclude that they set out from some part of the Persian empire. Their object was to find a new-born baby, a juvenile king of the Jews, at a time when the Jews had ceased to be a kingdom. Why they were so anxious to discover this little stranger is a puzzle, for they belonged to another faith than Judaism, and the Jews were an insignificant people compared with their own nation. However, they did find him in a stable, where the frankincense they brought him as a present was no doubt very useful in perfuming the premises.

These wise men, whose wisdom we have to take on trust like the genius of the heroes of sensational novels, had no idea where the baby was to be found, but they inquired as they went along, and probably were told to follow their noses. Such directions, however, were not all they had to trust to, for in the night they were guided by a star. This

star could scarcely have been one of those known to astronomy. It eventually stood over a certain building, whereas all the stars we are acquainted with are so immensely distant that they stand over every house in London at the same time. Perhaps it was a special luminary manufactured for the occasion by him who "made the stars also," or it may have been an angel with a bull's-eye lantern.

This was the original Star of Bethlehem, but that designation has since been attached in a poetical way to the baby born at that place, and whose nativity it heralded. Christians say it was the bright, the morning star of a new era. Milton indeed, in his famous Nativity Hymn, tells us that even when the day began to break,

The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame

The new enlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear,
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

We humbly beg John Milton's pardon, but the Star of Bethlehem was not a morning star; it was an evening star, and it heralded the longest, the darkest, and most disastrous night in history. The twilight lasted till the fourth century; then every star of Paganism had faded from the sky, and the Star of Bethlehem was without a rival. No wonder, therefore, it attracted universal attention. It was

like a lamp in a sepulchre. Religions, says Schopenhauer, are like glowworms; they require darkness to shine in. When the sun of reason illuminates the sky they are invisible and forgotten.

Century followed century and the darkness deepened. Neither the sunlight of science, nor the moonlight of poetry, visited the earth. That one star only gleamed through the black night, and as its color slowly but surely changed from golden to crimson, it turned the atmosphere into a mist of blood.

Christianity robbed Rome of its energies. The poison of an abject superstition crept through the blood of the masters of the world. The Hercules among nations, as Heine says, was effectually consumed; the "helm and armor fell from its decaying limbs, and its imperious battle-tones degenerated into the prayers of snivelling priests and the trilling of eunuchs." The death-agony of Rome lasted for centuries. Priestcraft alone triumphed in the confusion, and when the Barbarians fell upon the prostrate carcase, rending and dividing it, the Church had become the mistress of every art of imposture, and soon the northern conquerors were subdued by her spiritual diplomacy. The Pope sat like a spider at the centre of a mighty web, he darted his priests to all parts, and they returned laden with spoil. His foot was on the neck of kings, his bishops took precedence of nobles, his lowest priests lorded it over laymen, and by the end of the eleventh century God's vicegerent on earth was absolute master of the feudal system of Europe.

Ignorance and depravity matched each other. Thought is the only cure for sensuality. Religion is always compatible with the grossest vice. The very Popes, says Jortin, were not men but devils; and the mental darkness was beyond all belief. Never in the records of history had the human mind suffered such degradation. Science was supplanted by miracles, and art produced nothing but ghastly wooden images of dead or dying saints. But out of the chaos there arose one thing, the gothic cathedral. Built like a hollow cross, it was consecrated to the worship of death. A dim religious light came through the variegated windows, the floor was built over corpses, and the iron tongue in the belfry was used to scare away the devils. Whole districts were stripped of wealth to erect these magnificently dismal houses of God, while the people lived in wretched hovels amidst dirt and disease.

Presently a light broke in from the East. Arabian science, borrowed from Greece, shed its first rays over the horizon. Then came the Renaissance, when scholars, poets, and artists drank from the fountain-head of Greek civilisation. Gradually the sky kindled with light. Sculpture and painting blossomed after a thousand years' sterility. Printing was invented, America was discovered, and Kepler, Copernicus, and Galileo expanded the physical and mental sky alike by their astronomy. From that moment Christianity was doomed. Its decay has lasted through centuries, but the process is swifter in every generation; nor need we wonder if the fall of a mighty faith is as long as its rise.

All over Europe, to say nothing of America, Christianity is rapidly perishing. The clergy wail over the desertion of the people and the hostility of the leaders of thought. Scepticism, if not downright Atheism, animates the advanced party in Russia, while eighty thousand priests fanatically support the Czar's despotism. German scepticism is too well known to need comment; the land of Goethe, Humboldt and Haeckel, is never likely to return to the catacombs of faith. France is sceptical to the core, and its leading prose writer, M. Renan, says that the negation of the supernatural is an absolute dogma to every educated intellect. Here in England the churches and chapels become emptier year by year, while the press teems with "infidel" works. Forty years ago scientific men sought for Bible texts to countenance their theories; now the Church searches the works of Darwin, Huxley, and Spencer for passages that may be perverted into giving an air of intellectual respectability to its dogmas. What a change! Yes, despite all the Christmas sermons of a venal priesthood, the Star of Bethlehem is vanishing, and the morning light of the sun of truth is creeping from hill to plain. Christ will depart for ever, and his place will not be with the beautiful gods of Greece, but with the fantastic relics of oriental superstition. With him goes the religion of death and sorrow, giving place to the religion of life and joy.

G. W. FOOTE.

CHRISTMAS.

It is no good protesting against Father Christmas. Grave philosophers may tell us of the ills, chills, bills, and pills attendant on his train; but the young of each generation will continue to demand their mince-pies and plum-pudding, and youths and maidens will dance and kiss beneath the pearly misletoe. Just because the world is constructed so badly we want at least an annual dose of the medicine of mirth, and there is an old-world flavor of Pagan jollity about Christmas that endears it to the natural heart.

Solemnity, as Ingersoll says, is a near relation to stupidity. Of all the cant ever uttered about Christmas, the most absurd is that which would connect the season of revelry with the birthday of the Man of Sorrows, who came to such an unfortunate end in Jerusalem. No doubt Christmas does celebrate the re-birth of our Lord and Savior the Sun; but as for the birthday of the carpenter's wife's son, verily of that day or even of that year knoweth no man. Matthew fixes it in the days of Herod, Luke at the time of the taxing under Cyrenius—over ten years later—and Tertullian places it in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. Shepherds do not keep their watch at night in Judea at this time of the year, and the learned Lightfoot agrees that at whatever time Jesus was born it certainly was not at Christmas.

It was not until the sixth century that Dec. 25th was generally kept by Christians as God's birthday. The Fathers of the first three centuries do not speak of any observance of the nativity. At first they kept the feast of Epiphany, or shining of the God, on Jan. 6th. For as Adam was born on the sixth day, so must the second Adam be born on the 6th. Jablonski thinks that the custom of keeping Christmas on December 25th originated with the Basilidians in Egypt. At any rate, the Epiphany of Christ was gradually assimilated with the Pagan winter festival and the whole period consecrated; Dec. 26th being assigned to St. Stephen, Dec. 27th to St. John, Dec. 28th to the massacre of the Innocents, etc.

All the heathen nations, from India to Norway, kept a festival at the winter solstice. Even the Jews have a very similar family festival lasting for seven days in which they use lighted tapers. This they call *Chanuka*, of which the German Christmas *Weihnacht* is a literal translation. The Jews refer their Chanuka to the dedication of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus, but it is quite possible that, like other Jewish festivals, it had its origin in nature worship.

Our Christmas customs have descended to us from various sources. Their principle features were taken directly from the Roman Saturnalia, held from Dec. 21st till the end of the year. During this season business was entirely suspended. Everyone feasted and rejoiced, visits and presents were exchanged, the houses were decked with laurels and evergreens, and all kind of games and amusements were indulged in by the people.¹

Christmas trees and other accessories are of Scandinavian origin. The misletoe was a sacred plant with the Druids. As to the kissing beneath, perhaps we had better enjoy the custom without investigating its sources.²

Long before Christians supplanted Pagan superstitions with their own, the inhabitants of this country had a winter festival of rejoicing they called Yule—a word allied to *wheel*, and expressing the revolution of the seasons. The burning of the Yule log is a survival of this nature worship. In the south of France to this day the fire is blessed and prayed to, the youngest member of the family going down on his knees before it and supplicating it to extend its warmth to the poor throughout the winter. In the middle ages the revelry of Christmas was conducted by an "abbot of misrule"—in Scotland called an "abbot of unreason"—who, being the occasion of disorder, was put down by Parliament in 1555.

The Puritans justly considered Christmas, like other of the Catholic festivals, as so many remnants of Paganism. Prynne says, in his *Histrio Mastix*, "Our Christmas lords of misrule, together with dancing, masks, mummeries, stage players, and such other Christmas disorders, now in

¹ See Chambers' *Book of Days*.

² Pliny, who refers to the Druidic use of misletoe, says it was believed to be a remedy for sterility (*Nat. Hist.*, bk. xiv.). The plant was sacred to the Scandinavian goddess of love.

use with Christians, were derived from these Roman Saturnalian and Bacchanalian festivals, which should cause all pious Christians eternally to abominate them." To this day the Scotch persist in their disregard of the Pagan Christmas, while celebrating the no less Pagan New Year's festival of *Hogmany*. Dr. Hamilton tells how in the 17th century "the ministers in Scotland, in contempt of the holy days observed in England, cause their wives and servants to spin in open sight of all the people upon Yule-day, and their affectionate auditors constrain their tenants to yoke their ploughs upon Yule-day in contempt of Christ's nativity, which our Lord has not left unpunished; for their oxen ran mad and brake their necks and lamed some ploughmen, as is notoriously known in sundry parts of Scotland."

But despite the Puritans, pantomimes, Christmas cards, holly, mistletoe and other abominations are gradually making their way even in godly Scotland. The old Pagan festival shows little tendency to decay. It will doubtless long continue to afford Christians an opportunity when they can eat, drink and be merry all for the glory of God.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

STEWART HEADLAM's reading the Church of England burial service at Linnell's grave last Sunday afternoon was a grotesque performance. It was too dark to read, and as no lamp had been brought Headlam had to spell out the words by the aid of wax matches in a box hat. All to this that the rain was falling fast, and you have a comical picture indeed.

PERHAPS Stewart Headlam will tell us what good was done to anybody by the mumbling of those words in fits and starts. The corpse could not hear them, and God Almighty has heard them too often already. On the other hand, many if not most of the demonstrators must have regarded the burial service as a superstitious farce.

HEADLAM buried Linnell with the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. Now we venture to tell him that if he talked such rubbish at any workman's club in London he would be soundly laughed at. Christianity has as many friends in such quarters as Sir Charles Warren.

LINNELL was a poor sort of a martyr after all. Still he is dead now, and it is needless to repeat the revelations which were published in other journals, though scrupulously excluded from the ever-truthful *Pall Mall Gazette*. After all, the funeral was not a display of respect for the deceased, but a demonstration against the new police tyranny in London. For this reason, we presume, William Morris's "Death Song" was such a miserable affair. It was as dull as death, and that was its only appropriateness. When a true song is sung for the London democracy it will not be in a sort of Pre-Raphaelite style. The words will leap like a cataract instead of creeping like a lazy stream. Tennyson, in *The Poet*, writes thus of Wisdom:

"No sword
Of wrath her right arm whirl'd
But one poor poor poet's scroll, and with his word
She shook the world."

William Morris's "Death Song" did not shake the world, nor even London. We believe, indeed, it shook nobody, except perhaps a few sympathisers who, as they read the verses, were apprehensive that the poet would lie down and snore before reaching his last lines.

JUST a word in conclusion on this affair. Mr. Stead pretends that the people who stood round Linnell's grave (they were nearly all Socialists, and Mrs. Besant was amongst them) fervently echoed Stewart Headlam's words from the Lord's Prayer—a prayer, by the way, which is no more Jesus Christ's than it is ours, for it is simply borrowed word for word from Jewish prayers in use before the Christian era—"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven." "This," says Mr. Stead, "sums up in one great formula the aspirations of all the Socialists, Democrats and Revolutionists who ever struggled, fought, and died for the cause." If he means the cause of liberty and progress he is talking downright nonsense, for three-fourths of the heroes and martyrs of freedom in modern times have been outside the pale of Christianity. Mr. Stead does not explain the meaning of this "great formula." He is simply in a pious vein, and fancies he is addressing the children in that suburban Sunday-school. If the London democracy is caught by the religious sentimentalism dangled before its eyes by Mr. Stead and other Christian Socialists, it will deserve the disasters that must ensue. Practical reforms will be neglected while Radicals are indulging in the frothy nonsense of the Sermon on the Mount, and the Tories and the privileged classes, playing their game astutely, will have everything their own way.

MRS BESANT still writes "Daybreak" in the *National Reformer*. We look forward with interest to her account of her feelings

while listening to Stewart Headlam's "religious expression," as Mr. Stead calls it, of the intense feeling of the London democracy.

DR. PARKER is home again with a reputation not at all improved by his American trip. An extremely cute business letter of his, proposing to exploit Mr. Gladstone's friendship on his return to England, has been published, and all Dr. Parker can do is to cry that he marked the letter "private." But the *New York Herald* remarks that he sent the letter to three different editors, all strangers to him, and that it is ridiculous to suppose they were bound by his "private" in an uninvited communication.

DR. PARKER now explains that he did not want to make hard cash by interviewing Mr. Gladstone and sending several columns of copy to America. He merely offered it "to any paper that would show the greatest enterprise in the matter." But ordinary people will think that "the greatest enterprise" is merely a euphemism for the biggest offer of dollars.

RUMORS of war again, just as Christendom is preparing to celebrate the birthday of its fabulous Prince of Peace! Russia and Austria are glaring at each other across the snow fields, and at any moment may be flying at each other's throat. What a pretty state of things after eighteen centuries of the so-called gospel of love. Those who want to see what the war-ogre consumes in Europe, in blood and treasure, should read Mr. Foote's *Shadow of the Sword*.

AN unseemly contest has been going on for some months past between the rector of Merthyr Tydvil and his congregation, who fervently detest their rector's ritualistic innovations. Mr. David Evans was elected as the people's churchwarden. He, of course, became obnoxious to the rector. The struggle ended at last in a physical contest in church. The rector tried to prevent the churchwarden from taking part in the collection and seized the bag in which he was placing the contributions. After various other devices had been tried in vain, the rector ordered a Mr. Frost to eject the churchwarden, who, however, in the rough-and-tumble *fracas* that ensued quite held his own, and even succeeded in snatching two bags off the plate in the rector's hand. With these spoils Mr. Evans retired from the fray. We hope the rector is satisfied with the highly edifying spectacle he has afforded his congregation.

THE autobiography of a Major in the Salvation Army describes what he looks on as a splendid device to draw a large audience to hear the message of Blood and Fire. The incident is located at Sunderland. The "Major" says, "I billed as speakers forty of the greatest drunkards and blackguards of the town, and twenty thousand came to hear me." Rather a reflection on Sunderland.

THE Society for Promoting the due Observance of the Lord's Day have stopped the Sunday concerts at Aston, Birmingham. These concerts have been going on for six years, with an average attendance of four thousand, which in the summer has been increased to over ten thousand. Thus Sabbatarianism kills innocent recreation, and drives people to grosser pleasures or to hypocritical asceticism.

A FLORIDA paper says that the liquor sellers of Atlanta, Georgia, have expressed much righteous indignation against "the desecration of the Sabbath" by the holding of Prohibition meetings.

A POEM in the Christmas Number of the *Rock* depicts its ideal Freethinker thus:

"Or lashed by danger's lurid waves,
Horrors on horrors thick accrue;
His spirit, terror-stricken, raves—
'O God! my God! what shall I do?'"

A note is appended which says that this last line was "The agonised and despairing exclamation of the infidel Volney, amid the roar of a fearful tempest at sea, when the ship was given up for lost." Anyhow the cry seems no worse than the "agonised and despairing exclamation" of Christ on the cross and of the psalmist during his troubles, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Volney's exclamation, moreover, was only invented for him by unscrupulous foes, whereas Christ's cry of despair was so striking and well-known that his friends had to record it of him. If Christians can make allowances for God the Son and for the inspired "man after God's own heart," why can they only see cowardice and dismay in the pretended exclamations of a mere uninspired fellow mortal?

THE same poem speaks of Christian "hymns borne o'er the foaming main," and adds as an explanatory foot-note: "It is said to be the custom on the Adriatic, when the fishermen are out in stormy weather, for their relatives to assemble on the beach and sing a hymn, which is responded to by those on the deep to indicate their safety." The notion that the writer of such a note has of the sea and of stormy weather must be as childish as his notion of the horror-stricken Freethinker always quailing before the terrors of Christian doctrines which he laughs at as imbecilities or as superstitious survivals of ancient savagery of thought and feeling.

THE Salvation Army having met with some success in Ceylon, the priests there have started a "Buddhist Salvation Army," which imitates the tactics of the Christian fanatics.

THE Duke of Norfolk has taken £10,000 as his personal Jubilee offering to the Pope. Pity he can't find a better use for his money.

EXTENSIVE seizures for tithes have just taken place in North Wales. The Church Defence Association sent a large force of bailiffs and police to a number of farms and seized stock, crops and other property. The roads were in parts deep with snow. How long will it take the Church to win the affections of the Welsh by these Christian methods of exhibiting the love and brotherhood that flow from Christianity?

CHURCH rates are supposed to have been legally abolished by Act of Parliament in 1868. But they were levied in Marylebone last year to the tune of £5,680. They are also levied in many other parishes, often under other names, such for instance as the "composition rate" in Bethnal Green.

Two Oldham Christians, both named Taylor, attending the same place of worship, and occupying the same pew, fell quarrelling as to the space to which they were entitled. James Taylor kept pushing the other, whereupon in accordance with the maxim "Resist not evil" he pulled out a pin and held it so that when pushed the pin went into James. This worthy Christian waited till the Lord's day was over, and then on the Monday gave his fellow worshipper two lovely black eyes. Of such are the kingdom of heaven.

THE *Church Times*, in an article on the Lapsed Masses, says, "It is, unhappily, true that the men who attend divine service anywhere are seldom more than half as numerous as the women; and if men attend in greater numbers it will generally be found that it is because the preacher has invented a gospel which leaves out Christ." This looks very much like an admission that Christ is too sentimental and effeminate for the masculine mind.

AN enterprising provision dealer at Nottingham indulges in a wheeze on one of his bills about Noah taking ham into his ark. Nottingham is very pious, but it relishes this piece of blasphemy.

MARY ANN BOTIS committed suicide at Pimlico while suffering from religious mania. She threw herself from her window. While being taken to the St. George's hospital, where she died, she exclaimed, "O merciful Father, be merciful." She had been very much troubled because she had thought the end of the world was near—a thoroughly biblical idea. She was independent so far as means were concerned, and used to say that she ought to be very happy, but was not. Religion was evidently no consolation in this case, but a source of fear and misery.

ANOTHER sudden death in the pulpit. The Rev. Thomas Nattrass fell while conducting the service in the Wesleyan Chapel, Bowdon. He died before medical aid could be procured. It is supposed that heart disease was the cause of death.

THE Yellow River in China having overflowed some 7,000 square miles of country, it is said that some "millions" of people are now deprived of home and shelter. Many thousands were drowned. But Christians know that God doeth all things well, and his loving compassion is over all his works. Truly the divine way of manifesting love and compassion passeth understanding.

It is said that the Duke of Newcastle is going to spend seven hundred pounds on a jewelled altar cross for St. Paul's Cathedral.

THE Bournemouth paper celebrates a new altar frontal at St. Clement's Church. It is designed by the vicar and on a field of cloth of gold represents the Lamb of God "as it had been slain," standing on the altar in heaven, on which is also the chalice ready to receive the drops from his sacred wounds. On either side is an angel censuring, and in the outer panels two other angels playing a hand-organ and a harp respectively. Very pretty. But an Italian brigand with a monk would better fit in with the hand-organ than an angel.

NOTHING less than eight archbishops and fifty-four bishops will satisfy our High Church reformers, who say that twenty-seven new sees for England should be created at once. All very well, but who is to pay the piper? The stipend of the Archbishop of Canterbury should support at least eight archbishops and the incomes of the bishops of London and Durham might well be divided among twenty right reverend fathers in God.

LORD PROVOST CLARK presided at the Edinburgh annual meeting of the Religious Tract Society, and disburdened his soul on the subject of Infidel Literature. "The other day, he declared, "he saw specimens of such literature, and anything more grossly blasphemous he never saw." He would be very glad if the magistrates could suppress such publications, but he was afraid a prosecution would only advertise them; consequently they must trust to the Tract Society to counteract their pernicious

influence. Lord Provost Clark is evidently a fine old bigot. He would like to thrash Freethinkers, but is afraid the stick would hurt his own hand. That is about as much toleration as can be expected from a true believer.

ONE writer in the *Catholic Press*, who has had much experience at police-courts, admits that "our [Roman Catholic] contribution to the ranks of the darker section of London society is out of all proportion to our numbers." Just what we should expect. The greater the reliance placed on religion the weaker are the natural safeguards of morality.

IN a separation case in the Edinburgh Court of Session, there was a witness thirteen years of age, and Lord Fraser in cautioning him to tell the truth, stated that "something terrible would happen to him in the next world if he told a lie." Probably the boy would have been more frightened by a stick. Anyhow Lord Fraser knows as much of what will happen in the next world as the chair under his Lordship's breeks.

A NEW Prayer Union is being formed, the first object of which is stated to be to pray "that Christian life and teaching may be increasingly subject to the Holy Ghost." We were under the impression that the Holy Ghost was Almighty, and that it was promised he, she or it would guide Christian life and teaching into all truth long ago. But the New Prayer Union evidently think it necessary to ask for more power to the Holy Ghost's elbow.

THEY have been having a controversy in the *Jewish World* as to whether the Hebrew Scriptures sanction cremation. The negative side appears to have the best of it. The prophecy to Adam was, "Fill thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken." All the patriarchs and Jewish kings are spoken of as buried not as burnt. Cremation was an Aryan custom, earth burial Semitic. But what does it matter how the patriarchs were buried? The requirements of modern civilisation must be considered, whatever the old Jew books may say.

THE English Church Union has taken to giving masses for the dead, and according to a report in the *Church Times* the dead appear to appreciate it. It states that "Another admirable innovation is the yearly celebration which the E. C. U. has established for its deceased members. This was held on Monday at St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square, and was very largely attended." There has been nothing like this since the days when the bodies of the saints arose and came out of their graves, and went into the holy city (Matt. xxvii., 53).

THE Rev. Alfred Bax has been discoursing on the inspiration of the Bible in a Baptist chapel at Islington, and here is a sample of the rubbish which finds favor with Christian congregations. The Bible, said Mr. Bax, was a divine or a human production; if human it was the work of a bad or a good man; but a bad man would not write a book containing such bitter things against himself, while a good man would not write such blasphemies. This nonsensical alternative was excusable when Simpson wrote his *Plea for Religion*, but it is inexcusable in an age like this. The men who wrote the Bible were as honest and dishonest as other men; they believed it because they knew no better, while Mr. Bax professes to believe it when he ought to know better.

THE Rev. A. H. Mackonochie, the well-known Ritualist, of St. Alban's, got lost in a storm in Scotland, and has been found dead in the snow. So eminent a light of the High Church should have been under the special care of Providence, but he seems to have wandered to his death as if guided by some malicious spirit.

A PARAGRAPH in the *Echo* states that on a recent Sunday the congregation at St. Mildred, Bread Street, City, mustered one solitary individual. This, says the *City Press*, is somewhat less than usual, as sometimes two individuals assemble for the purpose of worshipping in the sacred edifice.

A BISHOP, at one of his country visitations, found occasion to complain of the deplorable state of a certain church, the roof of which was evidently anything but water-tight. After rating those concerned for their neglect, his lordship finished by declaring emphatically that he would not visit the *damp old church* again until it was put in decent order. His horror may be imagined when he discovered himself reported in the local paper as having declared, "I shall not visit the damned old church again." The bishop lost no time in calling the editor's attention to the error; that worthy thereupon setting himself right with his readers by stating that he willingly gave publicity to his lordship's explanation, but he had every confidence in the accuracy of his reporter. That bishop didn't feel well!

ONCE upon a time a good man took his little boy to the gallery of the House to show him the great men of the nation, and they listened eagerly to an able effort by one of them. When he had finished, the father turned to the boy and put his hand on his head. "My son," he said, "an honest man is the noblest work of God." The boy looked into his father's face with his great, earnest eyes. "Papa," he inquired, simply, "who made Congressmen?"—*New York Truthseeker*.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

JAN. 1, Milton Hall, London; 8, Manchester; 15, Hall of Science, London; 19, Plaistow; 22, Bradford; 29, Blackburn.
 FEB. 5, Camberwell; 12, Milton Hall, London; 19, Liverpool.
 MARCH 4 and 11, Hall of Science, London; 25, 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. Forster, 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.

D. S. (Govan) writes: "Your Christmas Number this year was delicious. Since the first number you edited I have had them all, but each fresh comer seems to beat its predecessor."

E. A. CLARK states that he has many battles over Freethought in his workshop, and has distributed a number of our tracts, which are "in great favor." Our correspondent is thanked for the cuttings.

H. C. J.—Shall appear. Sir Isaac Newton might be called a Unitarian although he did not belong to that body, for he denied the equality of the Son with the Father.

J. H. BIRTLES.—You really should learn to spell. This time you put a *g* in *design*, but you still put an *i* in the first syllable. We treated your "challenge," as you spell it, good-humoredly; but as you persist with it we must tell you that you are an ignorant ninny. Any further letters from you will go into the waste-basket unread.

J. T. WARDE.—Pleased to hear from an "owd collier." The letter you refer to should have been returned to you through the Dead-letter Office.

A. R. ATKEY.—Praying machines are common enough already among some of the Buddhists. Professor Ryan's joke is none the less refreshing. Few scientific men have any belief in prayer.

E. T. GARNER.—We approve the arrangements. What you refer to was no joke, but a common way of speaking. We said that seven thousand *Royal Paupers* had been sold in as many months. Strictly speaking we were wrong; but our space is limited, and we cannot always spin out vernacular phrases to make them absolutely correct.

J. BOWEN.—We are sorry to hear of Mr. Heath's decease. He was a good servant of the cause.

G. WEIR.—Thanks for the cuttings. Glad to hear you have a good audience at the Mound, and that the police give you a wide berth.

R. D. C.—Pleased to hear you were so delighted with Mr. Foote's "Real Christmas Sermon." Only one sentence in the discourse was borrowed from Robert Taylor. You say you have never heard anything so convincing, and ask us to publish the lecture. We are too busy at present, but the suggestion shall be considered.

W. CABELL.—Your refutation of the argument against pre-natal existence seems to us no refutation at all, for according to this doctrine it is not the brain but the soul that thinks and remembers. Plato and Wordsworth consistently teach or suggest the theory of reminiscence. Read Wordsworth's great ode on Immortality, and you will see that in his opinion we do recollect something of our previous existence. You are right as to the culture, but we are also right as to the phoenix. Both are mentioned by different Fathers.

E. PANKHURST reports that by lending the *Freethinker* to his orthodox friends he has induced several of them to think on religion for themselves with gratifying results.

J. NEATE.—Pleased to hear of the fellow's failure, but we prefer not to advertise him further.

J. D. LEGGETT.—When Mr. Foote visits Portsmouth again he will give another lecture on the foundations of Christianity.

W. MALINS.—Shall appear.

PAPERS RECEIVED—Liverpool Weekly Post—Open Court—Truth-seeker—Bournemouth Observer and Chronicle—Jus—Boston Investigator—Freidenker—Chatham and Rochester News—Western Figaro—Freireligioses Sonntags-blatt—Le Radical—Journal du Peuple—Railway Signal—Thinker.

SUGAR PLUMS.

CHRISTMAS falls on a Sunday this year, and we presume that most Freethought halls will be closed—at least for lectures. Our editor has a Sunday off, which is an agreeable change; and together with the sub-editor he will celebrate as jollily as possible that jolly old festival which Christianity stole from Paganism. Long before Christ was born or thought of the world put on the fool's cap at this time of the year, to rejoice with feast and song and dance over the new birth of the sun; and long after Christ is forgotten, except by antiquaries, we hope the world will continue to wear the fool's cap at this season.

"WHAT," some good folk will exclaim, "the editor of the *Freethinker* play the fool!" Well, why not? Everybody has a fool in him, and if you don't sometimes play the fool with him he'll play the fool with you. So heigh ho the holly! Light the big fire, turn on the gas, shine bright eyes, and let us all talk the most charming nonsense. Mammon avant! Duty go to Hades! Come pleasure with thy smiling face and tripping feet! We'll spend a day or two with thee, and still have enough days left in the three hundred and sixty-five to study the wrinkles on the face of Care.

"AN Hour in Hell" will be given by Mr. Foote to the inhabitants of Plaistow, in the Unicorn Music Hall on January 19. Very suitably the place is opposite the West Ham Church—we mean the Music Hall, not Hell.

This lecture has been arranged for by the West Ham Branch. Why cannot other Branches imitate this enterprise? Lectures should be delivered more frequently in London on week-nights, and we hope the London Secular Federation will see to this matter.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are urgently wanted for the Annual Children's Party at the London Hall of Science. They should be sent to W. Cookney, 1A Willow Street, St. Paul Street, Finsbury, E.C. Mr. Cookney wishes to acknowledge a good list next week, and if he cannot he will be inclined to say "Fie, fie!"

THE *Thinker* of Madras continues its policy of reprinting from the *Freethinker* and other journals. The number for Nov. 20 contains "Among the Christians," by Mr. Foote, "Why Christianity Lasts," by Mr. Wheeler, and "Was Jesus Sincere?" by Mr. Kroll Laporte.

The experiments at the new crematorium, constructed by the city of Paris, at Pere-Lachaise cemetery, at a cost of about two hundred thousand francs, have been very successful. Bodies are completely reduced to ashes within two hours, and it is proposed to make some improvements which will reduce the time and cost of incineration.

An enthusiastic Materialist put a headstone over the grave of his wife in a cemetery at Nievre, France, upon which there is the following inscription: "Deprive'd of all vitality, here lie the remains of the material that formed Madame Durand. No cards and no prayers."

DR. PAUL CARUS, who is known as a Freethought scientific writer in the American and German-American journals is, it appears, to take the place of Mr. Underwood in the editorship of the *Open Court*. As Mr. Underwood's time will be liberated for lectures, we trust the Freethought cause will be no loser by the change.

THE *Catholic Standard* places public schools next to mixed marriages in the list of causes of defection from the Catholic Church in America. National education is indeed a capital remedy for religion, and if it were only administered free from any admixture of the religious poison it would be still more effective.

A CONGRESS of Belgian Freethinkers takes place at Brussels on December 25 and 26.

OUR French namesake, *Le Libre Penseur*, of Angers, has a very sensible article by A. T. on Religious Neutrality in Public Schools, anent the London International Conference.

THE *Freethinkers' Magazine* for December opens with an article on Bible geography by A. S. Ramson, entitled "Where?" According to Mr. Ramson, the topography of the Holy Land is a network of confusion, and the monks of Palestine have made the task of correcting the map more difficult by their arrangement of the "holy places" to suit their convenience. Mr. Ramson thinks the whole story of the twelve tribes a myth, expanded from the two tribes of Judah and Ephraim, and that there was no Hebrew nation properly speaking before the time of the Maccabees, that is two centuries before our era. The opening address of Courtlandt Palmer to the American Secular Congress is given, with an excellent portrait of that gentleman.

IN America, as at home, the ministers complain of the desertion of the churches by the male sex. The *New York Independent*, an evangelistic organ of large circulation, has recently noted twelve average church congregations and it was found there were over five times as many women as men. The young men are specially conspicuous by their absence. This is a good sign. It will be better when the young women follow suit.

THE young Israelites in America, according to the *Jewish Messenger*, are departing from the faith. They do not become Christians but Infidels. They have ceased to pray or to keep the holidays and fasts, and they deny the sacred character of the Scriptures.

WE are asked to acknowledge the following subscriptions to the Wallace Nelson Fund:—Amount already acknowledged, £36 4s. 7d. W. Simpson, 2s. 6d.; Alex. Kenyon, 5s.; Wm. Bailey, 2s. 6d.; W. K. Notts, 2s. 6d.; Ed. Brown, 1s.; Ajax, 1s.; per Dr. Hardwicke, £5; Clay Cross Friends: J. Jones, 1s.; W. Lowe, 1s.; J. Smith, 1s.; J. Lester, 1s.; Mrs. Lester, 6d.; J. Smith, 6d.; A. Toplis, 6d.; A Few Friends, 1s. 6d.; Huddersfield Friends: R. Fabrum, 1s.; A. Leuer, 1s.; C. McDonald, 1s.; J. Binns, 6d.; W. Wigglesworth, 6d.; Grimsby Friends: L. M., 2s.; R. J., 1s.; W. S., 6d.; R. T., 1s.; Oldham Friends: E. Jagger, 10s.; J. N. Wharmby, 2s. 6d.; W. Mallalieu, 1s.; J. Mallalieu, 6d.; S. Ashworth, 6d.; W. Wright, 6d.; J. Lees, 1s.;

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MARION CRAWFORD tells this story of Oscar Wilde: "Wilde," says he, "came into my study one day, and sat down at a table, leaning his head heavily on his hand." Here Crawford dropped into Wilde's position. "And he said, 'Ah! Crawford, Crawford, I am feeling very sad to-night. One-half the world does not believe in God, and the other half does not believe in me.'"

LONDON SECULAR FEDERATION.

THE delegate meeting of the London Branches of the N. S. S., for the purpose of adopting a constitution for the proposed Federation, was held at the Hall of Science on Thursday, Dec. 15, Mr. G. W. Foote presiding. There was a large attendance and a very full discussion. Finally the following constitution was unanimously adopted:

- (1) The London Secular Federation shall consist of the federated Metropolitan Branches of the National Secular Society.
 - (2) The affairs of the Federation shall be managed by representatives of those Branches, together with the officers hereafter specified.
 - (3) Each Branch shall be entitled to elect at least two delegates to the Federation Council.
 - (4) Branches with fifty financial members shall be entitled to elect another delegate, and an additional delegate for each further twenty-five; but no Branch shall send more than five delegates in all.
 - (5) These delegates shall form the Council of the Federation.
 - (6) The officers of the Federation shall consist of a President and Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, all of whom shall be elected annually by the Council; they may be elected from the Council or from outside, but when elected they shall sit and vote on the Council. This right, however, shall not apply to any *paid* officer.
 - (7) The Council shall meet for the transaction of business at least once in every month.
 - (8) Should any officer resign, the Council shall fill up the vacancy at the next ordinary meeting after his resignation is accepted.
 - (9) The Annual Meeting of the Federation shall be held in the month of January, and the election of officers for the ensuing year shall then take place.
 - (10) Every Branch shall pay a subscription of 5s. per year for each of its delegates on the Council. Beyond that all subscriptions shall be voluntary.
 - (11) The Federation shall in no way interfere with the autonomy of the Branches, but shall strengthen existing Branches, promote the formation of necessary new ones, and transact such business as can be done in common for all.
 - (12) No alteration shall be made in these rules except at a Special Meeting of the Council, after a month's clear notice, during which interval every federated Branch must be consulted by its delegates as to the alteration proposed.
- The Federation will begin business at its first meeting on January 12, at the Hall of Science. Every Branch should select its delegates before that date. Any struggling young Branch in financial difficulties, and unable for the moment to pay the subscription, should send its delegates nevertheless, and let the circumstances of the case be stated to the Council. Officers for 1888 will be elected, and plans for immediate action will be submitted for consideration. There is a bright future before the London Secular Federation if the spirit which has animated its inception is manifested in its work. Let every Branch resolve to participate and it will soon be found that union indeed is strength.

OBITUARY.—I extremely regret to announce the sudden death, by drowning, of Mr. Wilkinson Heath, on Tuesday, Dec. 13th, at Whitby, while on a visit to his late brother's family. The inquest was held on Wednesday, when the jury returned the following verdict: "That deceased was accidentally drowned by falling from the West Pier." Mr. Heath was manager for Mr. Thwaites, at Stockton, and well known as a firm and energetic Freethinker for many years.—*J. Bowen.*

CHRISTIAN SUPERSTITION.

CHRISTIAN superstition is obviously far too large a subject for the space at my command. I accordingly pass by on the one hand the great Christian superstitions (such as the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Trinity, etc.) which custom has made respectable. I will merely take two or three present-day examples of Christian superstition which even the respectable part of Christendom must acknowledge are such, and which are nevertheless of a representative character. I shall quote them from the *Christian Herald*, a journal whose full title is "*The Christian Herald and Signs of our Times*," so that it intends or professes to be fully abreast of the age, at least in a Christian sense. The periodical is edited by "a clergyman of the Church of England," and it professes to sell a quarter of a million copies weekly. Whether this is true or not, the *Christian Herald* sells enough to afford a number of pictorial illustrations every week, and its circulation is certainly extensive among the more ignorant kind of Christians, who are more at the mercy of biblical doctrines than the better educated Christians, who are not quite so good at believing.

1. In the *Christian Herald* for Nov. 9 I read an account by the Rev. E. Davies of an African king's wife being miraculously "cured of poison" in response to her prayer to God, although she was a heathen. She was condemned to die for using witchcraft, and thus causing the death of a little girl by the bite of a snake. In the presence of a missionary, Bishop William Taylor, she prayed aloud to God to deliver her from the poison if she were innocent. The result is thus given:

"She drank enough on Friday to kill her, but she still lived. Then on Saturday she drank poison again, and after waiting awhile they gave her more and still more. But her prayer was answered, for she still lived."

Bishop Taylor then describes the "incredible" rejoicings in which she "led the procession of dancing-women, like Miriam at the Red Sea." He also tells us that "The dances on this occasion are of the order of the olden time when King David danced before the ark. Pious questions are then put to the readers of the *Christian Herald*, of which the concluding one is:

"If a poor heathen could trust God in her emergency, and be delivered, why should it be thought impossible for a Christian person to trust God for bodily healing, especially when he has expressly said in his holy Word, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and God shall raise him up'?"

It is clearly taught that "prayer to God, even without faith in Christ, worked a wonderful miracle and saved a woman from death. From this example and from Scripture the readers are taught to trust to the exploded delusion of faith-healing.

2. The *Christian Herald* for Sept. 21 gives an account of sundry spiritualistic *séances*, in which deceased persons appear in public to their friends and relatives, shaking hands with them, talking to them, smiling, and yet disappearing and appearing through the curtain without apparently lifting or moving it. Credulous Christians are taught that this resurrection of the dead to order is a sober fact, and it is added at the conclusion of the article that the services of Mr. Walter Christmas, who conducted these manifestations, can be obtained for evangelistic meetings by applying to his address, which is given. The most suggestive line in the article is one where, in describing the "wonderful strides" with which Spiritualism is advancing in America, it is casually mentioned that "In Hartford, with only 40,000 inhabitants, eight mediums make a good living." Given credulity out of which a "good living" can be easily made, and Spiritualism, like Christianity or any other delusion or fraud, will always advance with wonderful strides.

3. In the *Christian Herald* for Oct. 26 the editor gives one of his many "Prophetic Calendars," which are supposed to be deduced from the prophecies in the Bible. The following are samples of its items:

"About 1891-2 a Napoleon will rise as a little sovereign near Syria and become King of Syria by 1891, and for 1,260 days from Aug. 14, 1897, to Jan. 26, 1901, he will be Emperor of Ten

¹ The common-sense view of the matter is that as she was a king's wife, the priests gave her only weak decoctions of the poison, or even substituted some perfectly harmless drink. But this does not affect the question of the credibility of the missionary bishop, who was probably more superstitious than his native rivals.

new Kings of the Ten Kingdoms and the great leader of Socialists, Mohammedans, Romanists, and Spiritualists; and as Antichrist will massacre millions of Christians who refuse to worship his image or receive his mark 666, and will perish at Armageddon on April 11, 1901 (Dan. vii., 24-5; Rev. xii., xiii., xvii., xix.).

"1896. March 5. . . . About 3 p.m. . . . Resurrection of Christians and translation of 144,000. 1896. March 5 (39th day). The Man-Child—Christ mystical—the body of 144,000 wise virgins, ascends."

"1897. Jan. 25 to May 16 (365th to 476th day). Trumpet 2. One-third of sea turned into blood (Rev. viii., 8). 1897. Jan. 25 to Feb. 25 (365th to 395th day). Flight of Christians into wilderness on eagle wings begins."

4. Nearly a column of Faith-healing news is given regularly every week, and for further information we are referred to a periodical called *The Healer and Faith Witness*, which is edited by Mrs. Baxter, wife of the editor of the *Christian Herald*. A "meeting for Divine Healing" is held at Bethshan Hall every week. Bronchitis, paralysis, indigestion, varicose veins, scarlet fever, blindness, and all manner of diseases are healed by faith—any unknown individual's statement of what the Lord has done to him being at once accepted as gospel. One brother testifies: "My girl was taken bad with diphtheria. She was taken to the Lord, and he healed her completely." The Bethshan witnesses often represent themselves as actually talking to the Lord, or going to the Lord, or carrying people to the Lord, or placing a diseased part in the Lord's hands, and they often explicitly say that God spoke to them in such and such words. Such ways are thoroughly biblical, though educated Christians repudiate them nowadays.

It is only simple justice to observe that in all its belief in faith-healing, resurrection of the dead, ghosts, devils, angels, prophecy, miracle, the power of prayer, warning dreams, special providences, awful judgments, and so forth, the *Christian Herald* is thoroughly Christian. It represents truly the primitive Christianity of the past. It is a survival—a living fossil; it brings back the past before our eyes. The fact is that modern Christianity is largely a sham. On all critical occasions it rejects the Bible it professes to obey. In the name of Christianity it has falsified, civilised, modernised, the faith once committed to the saints. It has betrayed its Master with a kiss. But the *Christian Herald* is true to the old faith; and the contempt with which educated Christians commonly view such contemporaneous examples of real Christianity is as instructive as it is unjust. The educated Christians have gradually forsaken the faith of their fathers while professing only to improve it, and such really Christian survivals as the *Christian Herald* may far more justly accuse these presumptuous reformers of time-serving hypocrisy in thus corrupting and often reversing God's revealed teachings.

W. P. BALL.

THE CONVERTED CLOWN AND HIS CREDITOR.

A PREACHER, known as the "Converted Clown," was sued in the Edmonton County-court by a watchman, who had lent him ten pounds and had not been able to get more than a guinea of it back again. Mr. Christopher King, the converted clown, did not put in an appearance, but sent a friend instead, who pleaded that the collections at his tabernacle were so small. Mr. Avory, who appeared for the plaintiff, said: You talk as if the tabernacle was a shop, and religion was a common trade. The Friend: He hardly takes enough to live upon, and has to pay rent and other expenses. Mr. Avory: He calls himself a converted clown, and issues papers headed "Holding forth the word of life," but I think my client was the clown. (Laughter.) The Judge: And not converted. Mr. Avory: Not to prudence. The Friend: Plaintiff offered to lend the money to relieve Mr. King of difficulties. The Judge: Was plaintiff a member of defendant's congregation? The Friend: He said to Mr. King, I am a member of the Lord, and if you want £5, £10, or even £20, you can have it. (Laughter.) The Judge: And he took £10. Well, people are apt to lend to the Lord when they don't put their hands in their pockets; but when they do, as in this case, they find lending to the Lord is not so profitable. (Laughter.) How is the money to be paid? The Friend: He can't pay more than four shillings a month. Plaintiff: When he borrowed the money he was receiving £3 a week. Mr. Avory: He found preaching better than endangering his neck by tumbling about in a pantomime. (Laughter.) Why is he not here to-day? The Friend: He has gone to look for an appointment. Mr. Avory: In his old profession—clowning? The Friend: No, as an Evangelist. The Judge (to plaintiff): Are you one of the defendant's fold? Plaintiff: No, but he came to my house, and I believed he was honest and straightforward. The Judge: Well, he may be. You had great confidence in him? Plaintiff: I had, and therefore lent him the money. He told me he would pay 3s. per week, but has not kept up the instalments. In the result judgment was given to plaintiff with costs, payment £1 per month.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ALLEGED FORGED TEXTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Please find me space to reply to Mr. Wheeler on 1 John v., 7. He says that this "passage was interpolated to favor the doctrine of the Trinity." With all due respect to Mr. Wheeler, I cannot accept his statement without evidence. He can of course show that the earliest Greek MSS. are without it. But will he kindly explain how it came in the Roman Catholic text which was derived from Jerome's translation, A.D. 392? Respecting Acts xx., 28, Mr. Wheeler ought to know that the two oldest Greek MSS. read: "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This I think demonstrates it not a forgery.—Truly yours,
8 Olga Street, Bow, E. THOMAS LONGLEY.

[NOTE.—That the words bracketed in the passage 1 John v., 7, 8, "For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth], the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one," are spurious is evident from their absence from all early Greek MSS. and from the silence of the early Fathers as to so important a text—the only one expressing a Trinity in unity. The Revised Version has omitted the passage as an interpolation. It is for the Roman Catholic Church to explain how it made its appearance in the Vulgate text, since its appearance there throws on that Church the suspicion of being party to the forgery. Porson, in his twelfth Letter to Dr. Travis, says it is absent "even from many of the best and oldest MSS. of the Vulgate." Respecting Acts xx., 28, Mr. Longley ought to know that the genuineness of a passage is not settled by the "two oldest manuscripts," the Vatican and Sinaitic, being in its favor. Those MSS. are not pretended to be older than the fourth century. But Irenaeus, at the end of the second century, cited it as "the Church of the Lord," as it is found in the Alexandrine, Ephrem, and some twenty other important MSS., including the Armenian and Coptic versions. It is also so cited by the Apostolical Constitutions, by Eusebius, Augustine, and others, while the Vatican reading only appears in later Fathers like Ambrose. This, with the improbability of Paul talking of God's blood (see 1 Cor. xv., 50), convinces me that the orthodox alteration is spurious. If Mr. Longley would examine the evidence as to how far the doctrine of the Trinity is a development, I think he might agree with me on these points.—J. M. W.]

SOME HOLY CONUNDRUMS.

What Jewish tribe was not partial to sea-bathing? Asher: because he continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his breeches." (Judges v. 17.)

What ship is God like? A man o' war (Exodus xv., 3.)

Who is the greatest benefactor of cats? The father of "lights." (James i., 17.)

Why is a mill-stream like an unbeliever? Because it's almost sure to be damned.

What is the difference between a tortoise and an infidel? One is hunted to shell, and the other is "shunted to hell."

What animal is an occult card player? The ass: because he "knoweth his master's crib." (Isaiah i., 3.)

When will God play cards? On the last day, when he will "descend with a trump."

How was Jesus unkind to the young man of Nain? He stopped his beer.

Why should God have been suspicious of David? Because David was "after" God's own heart.

What biblical individuals are parsons fondest of? The Profits.

Who first beheld "the living bread" (John vi., 51)? Zechariah, who saw a "flying roll." (Zech. v., 1.)

Text for tipplers.—Try the spirit. (1 John iv., 1.)

Born ministers.—People born with a caul.

What is the difference between a High Churchman and a Baptist? The one uses wax candles, the other dips.

Not many years ago, an Irish jockey was called as a witness on a trial, and the barrister on the opposite side, with that infamous licence those gentlemen use in such cases, did all he could in the cross-examination to invalidate his testimony, "What are you?" he began in a bullying tone. "Sure I'm a jockey, as my father was before me," replied the other coolly. "Ah," said the bully, sticking his thumbs within the armholes of his waistcoat, "and I suppose your father did a little cheating in his time like the rest of your fraternity?" "Troth, and I s'pose he did, now and then," was the quiet response. The counsel smiled blandly at this damaging admission. Then, assuming a stern tone and shaking his fore-finger, he demanded, in a loud voice, "And where do you suppose he is now?" "In heaven I hope; Lord rest his soul." "And what should such fellows as jockeys do in heaven?" cried the barrister in a voice of thunder. Paddy scratched his head, then with a sly grin said, "Train horses for the angels, perhaps." "And cheat them as they did their fellow mortals." "Maybe," said the jock, still unabashed. "Ah, they would be prosecuted there," said the bully triumphantly. "Sorra a bit," answered the witness. "And why?" "Because they might search all over heaven and the devil a lawyer would they find there." A shout of laughter in the court, which the ushers could not suppress, hailed this retort. "You can stand down, fellow," said the barrister, growing as red as a peony.

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