

THE FREETHINKER

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

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No 237.



THE HOLY TREE - TRICK.

And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.—LUKE XVII., 6.

BRADLAUGH'S TRIUMPH.

SIX years and a-half ago a duly elected member of Parliament was refused his seat at St. Stephen's. When he applied for it he was mocked and reviled, and when he tried to take it he was brutally assaulted by messengers and policemen, fourteen of whom ejected him from the premises like Saturday-night "chuckers-out" at a public-house. Those who saw this gentleman standing on the pavement in Palace Yard, with clothes dishevelled, pale and panting, fixing his eyes grimly on the door through which fourteen hirelings had fought him into the open air, will never forget the scene. It was shameful and disgusting. But it was not surprising. The Tory party, although aided by a bigoted squadron of professed Liberals, were chiefly responsible for the infamy; and everybody with any knowledge of history knows that the Tory party, with all its pretence about law and order, is always ready to use violence, when it is safe to do so, against the champions of popular rights.

Years have rolled by, parliaments have come and gone, since that eventful day; and that expelled member now sits in the House of Commons unmolested, although his

fitness or unfitness to sit in the same chamber with Alderman Fowler and the Woodstock Bantam is precisely the same as it was then. That has not changed, but the times have changed. The game of bigotry on this question is played out. Baiting Bradlaugh no longer pays; first, because Bradlaugh is an awkward customer to tackle; and secondly, because the people are tired and sick of the cant of religion from the lips of men who have far less honesty and veracity than the Atheist they presumed to assail.

But the "chucked out" member does something more than sit in the House of Commons. He speaks, works, and is universally respected there. Nay more, he has just carried the second reading of an important Bill by a thumping majority of a hundred in a full House. And what is that Bill? Its object is to abolish the compulsory Oath altogether, not only in Parliament but everywhere else. Six years ago the House of Commons would not let Mr. Bradlaugh swear or affirm, nor would it alter the law, although Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and other leaders of the Liberal party pleaded eloquently for common sense and common justice. But now the House of Commons lets Mr. Bradlaugh sit after swearing, without so much as a bray of dissent from a

single Tory jackass; and—more remarkable still—what it would not do for the leading Liberal statesmen, it has actually done for the despised and rejected Atheist. By a big majority of a hundred (nearly two to one) it has carried the second reading of Mr. Bradlaugh's bill, which permits affirmation instead of swearing wherever an oath is at present required by law.

Seldom has the whirligig of Time brought about a more signal revenge. Mr. Bradlaugh may well be proud of his triumph, especially when he sees himself supported by some of his quondam enemies like Lord Randolph Churchill. He has shown what courage, patience, and tact can achieve when backed up by energy and ability. He has furnished another striking proof of Mirabeau's accuracy in calling "impossible" "that fool of a word."

So much for Mr. Bradlaugh's marvellous success. Now for a word on the other side, or rather a word of warning. Mr. Bradlaugh naturally expressed his readiness to consider reasonable suggestions in Committee. But we trust he will decline to yield a hair's-breadth on the principle of his Bill. One Tory suggestion, if adopted, would be simply fatal. Mr. Bradlaugh would give believers and unbelievers the same right; those who like to swear can swear, and those who like to affirm can affirm, without inquisition on the one hand or declaration on the other. But the suggestion we refer to would throw upon every affirmer the onus of publicly stating his "conscientious objections to an oath." The result of this would be that Freethinkers would not only run the risk of insult, but also lay themselves open to persecution. Their public declaration would mark them out for the attacks of bigotry, and that seems the very object of the suggestion. Besides, there is something invidious in making the oath the matter of course, and the affirmation the exception; it is keeping an open door for the orthodox, while making heretics knock and ring. This is not religious equality; it is simply that hateful thing "toleration" in a fresh disguise.

We do not imagine that Mr. Bradlaugh does not see this. Our object is simply to draw attention to a danger. Fortunately many Freethinkers perceive it clearly enough already. Some of them go so far as to say that they would rather have no Bill at all than a Bill with such a miserable condition. Mr. Bradlaugh's great majority on the second reading should allay these fears. The principle it embodies is decisively adopted by the House, and if Mr. Bradlaugh refuses to compromise it (as we hope and believe he will), the compulsory oath will be abolished, and all who do not believe in God, or in taking his name in vain, will be at perfect liberty to make an affirmation. Carried thus, the Bill will be a landmark of civilisation. Its success will be a memorable incident in the annals of freedom. And if Mr. Bradlaugh's name is associated with it on the pages of history, as assuredly it will, his immortality is far more secure than the Archbishop of Canterbury's.

G. W. FOOTE.

THE MORALS OF EVOLUTION.

CARDINAL MANNING, who loses no opportunity to pose as the friend of humanity, and to imply that his Church is the very incarnation of benevolence, contributes to the current number of *The Nineteenth Century* a paper entitled "A Pleading for the Worthless." The title is appropriate. The Cardinal is fairly open to the retort that he pleads for the class of which he is himself a representative. His Church teaches men to "increase and multiply," and trusts to re-establish her supremacy by sheer force of numbers. No wonder that Church wishes to cast upon the worthy the burden of the many worthless whom she encourages. Cardinal Manning's proposals, so far as they can be picked out of a mass of rhetoric and verbiage, would establish a poor law similar to that which formerly was found to encourage improvidence and pauperism, and which on that account was abandoned.

We have nothing to say against efforts to save the criminal and depraved, but exhortations to this end are useless unless they point out the means of salvation—worse than useless when they mean simply that the worthy should assist in the process of multiplying the worthless. To say, as Cardinal Manning says, that society is responsible for all its social wrecks implies that there shall be no elimination

of the unfit. It means that whosoever will may bring into the world as many children as he pleases, and calmly throw on others the responsibility of their maintenance. The Roman Church, by a disgusting minuteness of inquiry in the confessional box, opposes all attempts at the restriction of population. How vain the effort is where the law breaks up large fortunes, and social circumstances compel prudence, is seen in France. But so far as the effort is effectual it leaves the Catholics with a larger but a poorer, and, we must add, more depraved and criminal population. Now, is it to the interest of the race that those who are industrious and prudent, what Catholic writers call the Pagan population, should sacrifice themselves for Cardinal Manning's clients?

It is easy to point to the horrors and miseries which disgrace and blot our civilisation. The bulk of these are the result of poverty of which the chief factor is over-population. The social wrecks who are crushed out in the battle of life may well excite our tender pity and utmost care. But to teach them to multiply and insist on the duty of others to support them will never remedy our social ills. The only effectual plea for the dirty is soap and water, and the only plea for the worthless is to make them cease to be so. Make, if you can, the idle industrious, the drunkard temperate, the thief honest, the improvident prudent. Whoever does this assists the work of social evolution, but it is folly to simply bewail the worthless, and throw on others the burden of their support. Bad as is the present social state, it would be immeasurably worse could the survival of the fit be replaced by the survival of the unfit. The question of questions is the character of the men and women who shall compose the future generation. The Catholic Church shows that its only concern is that they shall be of the true faith. In encouraging its followers to become as prolific as possible, it offers a menace to civilisation which it will need something more than plain speaking to counteract.

It is vain to talk to Cardinal Manning of political economy. He regards all science with mistrust. His one panacea for the ills of humanity is religion, and the doctrines of his religion place him in blank opposition to what evolution teaches as the necessary conditions of social welfare.

The central principle of evolutionary teaching has been summed up in Herbert Spencer's famous phrase, "The struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest." It is not strange, then, that the hasty objector should see in it only a struggle of brutal forces, and should regard the maxim "Might is right" as its logical outcome. But this view is entirely superficial. All the sentiments of tenderness, sympathy, and concern for the suffering, which are happily growing, are as much the result of evolution as the selfishness which acts as a restraint upon these sentiments. In proportion as men are associated by ties of co-operation this restraint is relaxed, but it becomes salutary when there is danger of the better being sacrificed for the worse. And this is the plain meaning of Cardinal Manning's propositions, that the worthy shall support the worthless.

The doctrine of evolution, so far from taking us back to the days of brutality and barbarism, has shown us how we have emerged therefrom. The more we know of nature's methods the better can they be subordinated to human happiness, and we are learning to compass by humane means what nature reaches through slaughter. Evolutionists who see that every advance in an organism is brought about by a differentiation of parts and division of labor for common benefit, are in no danger of losing sight of the importance of mutual help and benevolence. Exactly as the family which was closest bound in ties of sympathy and affection could hold its own against others in which the tie was not so firmly knit, just so the nation where the people share in common benefits and are united by common sentiments, is at an advantage compared with those in whom such feelings are less strong. Morality, unlike theology, can take care of itself. It has been made by man for man. It is not founded on any book, any church, or any law. It is founded in the nature of things. Erase every theological idea and the conditions of social health will remain the same, exactly as the conditions of physical health will remain the same. How vain is it then to seek to prescribe for social ills with further doses of religion.

J. M. WHEELER.

ACID DROPS.

A THOUSAND working men listen to the organ recitals at the People's Palace on Sunday mornings, and nearly twice as many in the library in the evening. This annoys the sky-pilots, who claim a monopoly of Sunday. They have therefore set the usual machinery in operation, and have obtained 11,000 signatures in six weeks against this horrid desecration. On the other hand, the Sunday League has obtained 16,000 signatures in three weeks in favor of its continuance. It is pull devil, pull baker; and evidently the baker is winning.

The *Star* says, "When it was harshly said of some noble-minded heretic that he was destined for hell, F. D. Maurice retorted that such an one would purify the infernal regions." Maurice never said anything of the kind. Emerson was the "heretic" of the original story. Some one said he was going to hell, and Father Taylor, the Boston temperance preacher (and a noble fellow, too), replied, "Well, if he goes there, he'll sweeten the place."

THOSE who remember the dressing Mr. J. M. Robertson gave the Rev. J. M. Wilson in the *N.R.* will read (if they do read) with amusement the laudatory notice of that gentleman's volume in the *Poll Mall Gazette*. The *P.M.G.* advises Christian apologists to drop everything but "the moral splendor of Christ," as though Freethinkers are to be caught by such a paltry trap as that. Freethinkers no more believe in Christ's moral perfection than they believe in his miracles. Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.

THE Duke of Norfolk is returning from Rome. England wouldn't miss him if he stopped there for ever. We believe that his lordship's pilgrimages have had no effect upon his son, who is unnaturally short of brains even for an aristocrat.

MR. CARTER, a veteran Freethinker residing at Nottingham, has attracted the attention of the Yahoos of the Salvation Army. He is very old, and his life is precarious, and these pious savages have set their minds (if they have minds) on saving his soul. Their method of attempting this is peculiar. They give him a dose of "Salvation music" from the street, and then knock at his door, although he is ill in bed. The old gentleman has no remedy against these impertinent scoundrels, but he plasters his window with *Freethinker* cartoons to let them see he is still "holding the fort."

THE Rev. R. P. Hills, vicar of Ironville, Alfreton, has a poor opinion of his curate, who reciprocates the compliment. He objected to his curate's style of preaching, and characterised it as "exciting, unphilosophical, and sensational." After this the vicar took his curate with him to visit a parishioner, at whose house he stayed some twenty minutes. He then asked the curate what he thought of his mode of visiting. The curate asked if he wished him to be candid, and on the vicar replying that he did, the curate said, "Your mode of visiting reminds me of a washer-woman's gossip over her suds." The vicar was so excited and unphilosophical that he dismissed his too candid curate on the spot. Mr. Davies had to sue him for a quarter's salary, which was awarded by a county court jury in lieu of notice.

TEXT. "Love one another." Comment. The Earl of Harewood lets a chapel to the Wesleyan Methodist on condition (1) that no service is held during church hours, (2) that no Sunday-school is conducted, but a Bible-class only is held, and that not in church hours, (3) that the sacrament of baptism and the Lord's Supper are not administered. So much for Harewood. At Dunkeswick the Earl will not allow a chapel to be erected at all, and the local Wesleyans have to meet in barns and lofts. The President of the Wesleyan Conference has addressed the Church of England earl on the subject, and the noble Harewood replies, "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter."

THE Rev. Dr. Adamson, of Edinburgh, declines an invitation to become ministerial colleague of Dr. Parker for reasons of "a public and private character." Rather rough on Parker. Or is it rough on Adamson? God knows, we don't.

WE presume this is the same Rev. Dr. Adamson who recently declined a public discussion with Mr. Foote. Many years ago he had a debate with Charles Watts, but he backed out before the finish on the ground that his congregation objected.

THE rector of a village on the borders of Hertfordshire was recently locked up in a room by a lady parishioner on whom he had called. After a time he shouted for help from a window, and was released by the village constable. When this functionary spoke to the lady on the matter, she replied, "Yes, the Lord told me to lock the parson up, and I have done so."

"GENERAL" Booth is sending the hat round for £5,000 as a marriage portion for his daughter, who is about to marry Tom Tucker, of the Indian contingent of the Salvation Army.

THERESA SMITH has been torturing her child by deliberately burning it with a red-hot poker. A little boy named Spencer has set fire to his sister, who died of the burns. These culprits must have heard of the way in which God will serve the majority of his children hereafter. They try to imitate his perfect conduct, and an ungodly press talks of "fiendish cruelty." If the press was unmuzzled, would it not describe the conduct of the Christian God in similar terms?

A VIOLENT quarrel on teetotalism has split the congregation of the Independent Chapel at Llechyryd, Cardigan. The seceders have built a fresh chapel. "And now," says Dr. Parr Jones, "there is so wide a gulf between the two, that no one can pass from one to the other, and the Holy Ghost himself would not be admitted into the new tabernacle unless he promised never to enter the old one."

THE Rev. E. B. Brackenbury has been writing to the Bishop of Winchester to tell him that church people would be "pained and shocked" because St. Stephen's Church at Bournemouth was to be used for the Swedish royal wedding according to Lutheran rites. Nevertheless this parson appeared as a guest at the ceremony, however much pained and shocked he might be by such a desecration of a Christian edifice with Christian rites.

THE Church of England Young Men's Society hold smoking concerts every fortnight at Ludgate Circus. The other evening the Rev. J. C. Crawford "contributed very considerably to the jollity of the evening by the jocular manner in which he discharged the duties of the chair." The comic songs and recitations were keenly enjoyed by the vicar of St. Bride's and the organist of Exeter Hall, who were present as visitors. Is the Rev. J. C. Crawford named after the original J. C.? Fancy J. C. and his apostles doing comic songs, and jokes, and pipes, and cigars. No wonder some of the Y.M.C.A. secretaries are shocked at the idea of smoking concerts. Nothing could be further removed from the ideal of a Christian's life as put forth by Christ. The only smoking he approved of was the smoke of torment ascending for ever and ever—and the smoking concert that the saints were to enjoy was the howling of the lost who were smoking in hell below.

THE Iowa Senate was recently opened with prayer by the Rev. Ida Bolton. This is supposed to be the first occasion in which such an office has been performed by a woman. St. Paul, who suffered not a woman to speak, is evidently going out of fashion among Christians, although he wrote so large a part of the New Testament.

THE Rev. H. USHER, rector of Saltfleet, has lost thirty bottles of prime old port. His servants broke into his wine cellar during his absence. Instead of giving them his champagne also, as he ought to do if he really believes in what he teaches, he locked them up for the theft.

SPURGEON says the present liberalising departure in theology is insane. If God wanted a progressive theology he would not have given us the Gospel, or else he would have made arrangements for successive editions. Spurgeon stands to his guns, but the fort he defends is a doomed one. Christians are quitting it every day, and taking up positions intermediate between Christianity and Secularism.

THE *Rock* notices a "very painful series of letters" which have passed between the Dean of Manchester and the Rev. J. R. O. West, who has published a print representing church history as a tree with Mr. Gladstone chopping at it. The motto underneath is "Woodman, spare that tree." The Dean was offended, and requested the Rector to withdraw the print from circulation. The Rector refused, but had a number of slips printed to hide Mr. Gladstone's face. The Dean offered to buy up the whole issue of the obnoxious print, but altered his mind when he found the bill would come to £50 or £60. He then called on the Bishop to take the matter up. But the Bishop has no more power in the matter than the Dean has. Hadn't the Dean better attend to something of more importance? What has all this to do with the salvation of souls?

M. FELIX NARJOUX, in his new book on Italy and the Italians, gives a striking account of the national fondness for "indulgences." They are collected much in the same way as amateurs collect postage stamps. The number of indulgences obtained, either by money or works, is kept like an account in a commercial register. Fashionable ladies carry beautifully bound little books in which they enter them daily. The Marchioness Trasmène has an indulgence book of this kind, and she willingly shows it to the profane. Every time she has won an indulgence she puts down the date, motive, and number of days gained. The last time our author saw it this pious lady had already economised 103 years 7 months and 12 days of indulgence. As she is still young, she proposes to increase the number of her indulgences constantly, so that when she becomes old she may have a total of 500 years of indulgence, which will save her from the horrors of purgatory and ensure her entrance direct into Paradise.

A MAN was arrested at Muncie, Indiana, for "disturbing" a religious meeting by reading a newspaper during the services, but the Court could not see the disturbance and he was released.

FATHER MALONEY, the miracle worker, who recently fled from Philadelphia to escape prosecution and the fury of his dupes, came nigh being murdered the other night. He had established a wonder-working shop in Erie, in the house of a widow. Her son, Frank Maguire, who became insane as the result of his experience with the miracle-worker five years ago, attacked Maloney in his chapel with a revolver. He fired on the ex-priest, and inflicted a slight wound. The miracle-man disarmed his assailant, and the latter was sent to the insane asylum. When Maguire lost his mental balance at the time of his first experience with Maloney five years ago, he shot and almost killed his little sister under the impression that he was carrying out his mission.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher, after relating to the children the story of Ananias and Sapphira, asked them, "Why does not God strike everybody dead who tells a lie?" One of them immediately answered, "Because then there wouldn't be anybody left!" That child evidently hasn't a very high opinion of the veracity of his Christian instructors and associates.

THE Bible Society carefully preserves a Polynesian Bible stained with blood. It is a precious memento of "a minor massacre of St. Bartholomew in the Island of Uvea, when the Catholics arose against the Protestants." Christianity repeats itself. It takes the pious bloodshed of Christian Europe even to the peaceful islands of the Pacific. The story of the "Martyrs of Polynesia," from which the *Rock* quotes the account of this blood-stained Bible, is evidently a story of Christian murder as well as of Pagan persecution. The manner in which Christians loved Christians in the Christianised island of Uvea is thus described by Christians: "The inmates were gathered around their family altar when they were attacked. The head of the family had just finished reading a portion of the New Testament when the assassins rushed into the house and killed him with their tomahawks. The portion of Scripture from which he had been reading was found after his death stained with his blood." Truly a significant Bible to preserve. It shows the massacre and martyrdom which arise from a fervent belief in its teachings.

CONNECTED with the sacraments, Dr. Chalmers often told a favorite story about a Highland baptism. A clergyman went to administer the rite in the house of one of his hearers, near which there ran a small burn, or river, which, when he reached it, was so deep and swollen with recent rains that he could not get across. In these circumstances he told the father to bring down his child to the burn side. Furnished with a wooden scoop, the clergyman stood on one side, and the father, holding his child as far out in his arms as he could, stood upon the other. When the time came for sprinkling the babe, the minister, dipping the scoop into the water, flung its contents across, aiming at the baby's face. He failed more than once, calling out to the father after each new trial, "Weel, has it gotten ony yet?"

THE Catholics and Theosophists have been squabbling over the corpse of Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford. The former claim that she sent for a priest and died within the pale of the Roman Church. Mr. Edward Maitland declares that a priest was only permitted to attend to secure peace and quietness, as the sister never ceased to importune her to send for one. He asserts that she died a Theosophist.

THE *Nineteenth Century* has an article entitled "Long Life, and how to attain it." It would seem that the best way would be to become a bishop. That class is longer lived than those in any other line of business. The nineteen bishops who have died during the last twenty years had an average of 76 years, 2 months and 15 days each. The task of overseeing the souls of a diocese does not appear to be a very onerous one.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury in moving the Church Discipline Bill in the House of Lords, admitted that there were a great number of clerical scandals brought to the knowledge of the bishops which were not made public. He said: "One of the great difficulties in the way of getting rid of evil livers among the clergy was getting persons to give evidence against the clergyman. When a clergyman has been convicted of a civil or criminal offence, there was often much difficulty, attended with great expense, to get the offender out of the living and parish."

JOHN BRIGHT objects to the 37th Article of the Church of England, ("It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the magistrate, to serve in the wars,") as dethroning the individual conscience. But certainly Jehovah did not appeal to the individual conscience when he commanded his chosen people to utterly exterminate the Canaanites. Christianity has been the cause of more wars than any other religion. Its founder enjoined, "He that hath not a sword, let him sell his garment

and buy one;" and since the time when Peter smote off the ear of Malchus his followers have been ready enough to use it. Revelation makes out that there are to be wars and rumors of wars till the last, and then war in heaven. Jingo is modelled on Jehovah, and worshippers of the one naturally offer incense to the other.

THE *Jewish Chronicle* denies that the gloomy Puritan Christian Sunday is founded on Judaism, which, it says, forbids work, but not recreation. It declares that the Jews are never averse to taking pleasure on their Sabbath so long as it is not incompatible with their religious exercises. No doubt by the law of Moses it was death to work on the day of rest; but Christianity, with its asceticism, has added new terrors to the Lord's day.

As "Sam Jones," the "Evangelist," contemplates paying a visit to England, it is as well to read what he says of himself to a reporter of the *Rockford (Illinois) Gazette*:—"Some people say that I am doing this work for money. Well, I am. I like money. I'd like to see the man who does not. I have been paid 500dols. an hour for talking, and when anyone says anything to me about it, I tell them that it's no more than I'm worth." What shall it profit a preacher if he saves the whole world and doesn't make anything out of the business?

IN the absence of Mr. Foote and Mr. Bradlaugh, the Rev. S. D. Scammell stands on his own mound at Chatham and crows loudly that he has driven them from the field. Why did he not put in an appearance when Mr. Foote visited Chatham in order to reply to his assertions?

THE *Christian Herald* tells how the Lord healed Mrs. Blew Jones of cancer after the doctors had told her that nothing could save her life for more than six or eight weeks. And yet the bishops don't inquire into the case, or recommend it to the Emperor Frederick. Other stories in this Christian journal are of a man "saved from sin and rheumatism," a nearly-ruined man who obtained "£100 in answer to prayer," "a farmer's death truly foretold," and "a blaspheming scoffer struck dead." This last impudent lie convicts itself. The story, as told by the "Evangelist," says "the scoffer fell dead upon the spot," and was found "standing on his feet with the glass in his hand."

ANOTHER story given is that of a "pious peasant" who is about to be evicted for lack of means to pay the rent. He sings a hymn, and a tame raven knocks at the window and presents him with a royal ring set with precious stones. Thus God helps the godly. Such is the Christian superstition that still circulates widely in the nineteenth century.

THE Rev. A. W. L. Rivett, vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, Barnstaple, complains of a great depression of trade. The offertory for several months past, he observed, had been little less than mocking the Almighty. The advice to put the deity on half pay, for which Mr. Holyoake was imprisoned over forty years ago, seems to be largely followed in Barnstaple.

THE *Daily News* reports a fresh clerical scandal in Spain. A lady placed her daughter for three months in a convent at Lorca. At the expiration of the time the abbess refused to give her up, and would only allow her to be seen by her mother behind a grating. The Minister of Justice seems to be powerless. It is expected that the ecclesiastics will have their own way, as with the Vigo nun. In the latter case no punishment has been inflicted, while even in the case of the parish priest who fired at one Protestant clergyman and assaulted another, the authorities have not sent the offender before the tribunals, but have only asked his bishop to inflict an ecclesiastical censure.

THE Rev. H. O. Pentecost says:—"Those who believe in the Bible may have no difficulty in believing the record of Jesus, and it's not for me to sneer at them. That Jesus could turn stones into bread, that he was whisked through the air to the top of the temple, or that he was on a mountain top from which he could see all the kingdoms of the earth, is impossible for me to believe. Neither are there any good reasons why I should believe in a personal devil. The devil was of Persian origin, and he was imported by the Hebrews into Palestine. I can't believe in the existence of an almighty God and at the same time of an almighty devil. Say what you will, in the popular conception of religion the devil is smart enough to get the best of God, at least for a season; and if Calvinism is true, the devil has more power to destroy than God to save. Neither do I believe the writer of St. Matthew's gospel knew anything more about angels than I do, and I don't know anything about them. The only angels I know are women and children."

OBITUARY.—We regret to announce the death of Mr. G. F. Kemp, brother of Mr. Arthur Kemp, from an accident while riding a bicycle. His ankle was broken, and clumsy treatment appears to have done the rest. Mr. G. F. Kemp took charge of the shop at Stonecutter Street, for a short period prior to the arrival of Mr. Forster during our imprisonment in 1883. His funeral takes place to-day (March 25) at Ilford Cemetery.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, March 25, Secular Hall, Rusholme Rd., Oxford Rd., Manchester: at 11, "Creation: a Reply to the Bishop of Carlisle," at 3, "A Secular Sermon on Easter," at 6.30, "Was Shakespeare a Christian?"

APRIL 1, South Place Institute, London; 8, Plymouth; 15, Huddersfield; April 22, Liverpool; 29, South Shields.

MAY 6, Camberwell; 13 and 27, Hall of Science, London.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

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

SCALE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:—Thirty words, 1s. 6d.; every succeeding ten words, 6d. *Displayed Advertisements*:—One inch, 3s.; Half Column, 15s.; Column, £1 10s. Special terms for repetitions. J. C. (Nottingham).—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

OLD FREETHINKER.—Miss Weston does good *if* she saves any sailors from drunkenness, but we very much doubt the value of her goody-goody pamphlets. We only notice her unfavorably when she slanders Freethinkers.

R. W.—Among "infidels" who prominently testified against slavery must be mentioned Abner Kneeland, La Roy Sunderland, Parker Pillsbury, Gerritt Smith, Elizur Wright, Henry Brewster Stanton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Ernestine Louise Rose, Lucy Colman, and Ella Gibson.

W. C.—The Rev. M. Geldart was very liberal. His Christian brethren tormented him and drove him to suicide. Evidently *they* didn't think there was much room for Freethought in the 6th or any other Article.

A. LOVETT.—Moxon's "Shelley," edited by W. M. Rossetti, is complete at 3s. 6d. Your verse is promising. Stick to composition in a workmanlike spirit, and you may do something worth reading. Always remember that labor is the price of excellence.

D. P.—M. M'K's letter is excellent. Certainly there is no crime in distributing Freethought tracts. Bigots *might* put the Blasphemy Laws in motion against you, but we hardly think it likely. You may assume they are only bragging.

S. ABEL.—Marriage can take place in England at a registrar's office. There is no need to go to church. Whether English marriages are recognised in other countries depends on their special laws.

J. P. (Workington) wishes to know where the *Freethinker* and other Freethought publications are sold in that town.

G. STRATHEARN (East London, Cape Colony).—Mr. Forder has executed your order and applied the balance, 2s. 7d., to the Benevolent Fund.

INQUIRER.—Winwood Reader's *Martyrdom of Man* is still published at a high price by Trübner and Co., although the work is stereotyped. We believe the copyright expires soon. When it does, a cheap edition may be expected. We agree with you that the book is a masterpiece.

SOME answers to correspondents unavoidably stand over till next week.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Lucifer—L'Union Démocratique—Le Journal du Peuple—Freidenker—L'Union des Libres-Penseurs—Jus—New York World—Liberty—Menschenthum—American Idea—Neues Freireligiöses Sonntags-Blatt—Western Figaro—Ironclad Age—Drapers' Record—Freethinkers' Magazine—Freidenker—La Vespa—Chatham and Rochester News—La Cocarde—Le Proletariat—Le Radical—Countryman—Freethought—Thinker—Liberator—Burton Chronicle—Devon Express—Jus—Sunday Chronicle.

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

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. COURTNEY KENNY has reintroduced his Religious Prosecutions Abolition Bill, this time without the obnoxious Indian clause which displeased Christians and Freethinkers alike. Every lover of freedom can now give unreserved support to the Bill. Even if it does not pass, it will be something to have such a Bill discussed in Parliament. Freethinkers should write to their local representatives in the House of Commons, urging them to support Mr. Courtney Kenny.

OUR Manchester friends are specially requested to give publicity to Mr. Foote's lectures to-day (March 25) in the Secular Hall, Rusholme Road. The experiment is being tried of extra advertising in the newspapers instead of paying for posters which are apt to be badly displayed. This *should* fill the hall, but it is an experiment after all, and we count on the readers of the *Freethinker* making the editor's visit to Manchester known among their acquaintances. The subject of the lectures (see above) are new and attractive.

DR. McCANN may well cry "The Lord deliver me from my friends!" The third of his course of lectures at the London Hall of Science broke up in disorder through the imbecility of his chairman; a gentleman who began by protesting his fairness too

much, and ended by preventing the lecturer from getting a hearing. This is how the fat got into the fire—and a pretty blaze it was. Dr. McCann, being rather unwell, cut his lecture short, speaking only for about forty minutes. Mr. Moss followed with an effective speech of sixteen minutes, one minute over time. Dr. McCann replied with animation for eighteen minutes, three minutes over time. Then Mr. Foote rose, and when he had spoken eleven minutes the chairman called time, rose from his seat, and jerked his bell furiously. Mr. Foote was just then in the middle of a peroration that might have taken twenty seconds longer. It was idiotic to interpret fifteen minutes as meaning fourteen minutes sixty seconds, to the very tick, even if the chairman were right in his calculation; for everybody with the least common sense knows that "fifteen minutes" means as near as possible, and that, for the sake of the speakers, the audience, and the subject, it is best that a remark should be finished, and not cut short in the very middle of a sentence. However, out of respect to the chairman, who was on his legs, Mr. Foote sat down, though the audience cried out "Give him his time!" repeatedly. At last the chairman got a hearing, and—would it be believed?—he actually used the fact that he had given Dr. McCann three minutes over as a reason why he should be strict with Mr. Foote. This was too much for the audience; they burst out into derisive exclamations; and when the chairman said, "Mr. Foote has had fifteen minutes by two watches before me," they cried out "He hasn't, he hasn't." And they were quite right. Mr. Foote mounted the platform at twenty past nine by the hall clock, and the chairman called "time" at thirty-one past by the same timepiece. Still, even if they were wrong and he was right, a chairman with any tact and graciousness would have said, "Well, gentlemen, I must hold you are wrong; but as you all feel so strongly that there has been a mistake, and we have plenty of time before us owing to the shortness of Dr. McCann's lecture, I will allow Mr. Foote the four minutes, or at least ask him to conclude the argument so unfortunately interrupted." But no; that was inconsistent with his dignity: he would not budge an inch. All very fine, Mr. Chairman, but you miscalculated your power, and cut the discussion very much shorter than you intended. The audience jumped up and refused to hear Dr. McCann's reply. Thus ended what might have been a good-tempered meeting all through, simply because the chairman played the part of a firebrand. Unless that gentleman is a big subscriber, we should imagine the Christian Evidence Society will hardly be anxious to secure his services again.

WHAT a beautiful proof of the efficacy of prayer? Dr. McCann was indisposed on the very evening he was to demonstrate that God helps his children! Mr. Engstrom, too, led off with a prayer, asking the Lord to be present and make the meeting fruitful, and it ended in a storm! Let us pray.

EVEN the Christians present seemed out of sympathy with the chairman; at least they did not support him at the crisis with any demonstration. Why on earth, then, did he not yield gracefully? Was it because Mr. Foote was saying some very caustic things, and the audience was growing very enthusiastic? Anyhow, Dr. McCann must be exonerated. He was as much annoyed as anybody, and judging from the look on his face we should say he thought it stupid to quarrel over a minute when there was "heaps of time" to spare.

MR. DE LISLE, in the debate on Mr. Bradlaugh's Oaths Bill, introduced the *Freethinker*, and dwelt with horror on our cartoon of the famous prize fight between G. Hovah and B. L. Zebub. Had the papers reported this incident we should have had to thank Mr. De Lisle for a good advertisement.

PIOUS Churchmen cannot leave Colenso alone. Dr. Littledale writes to the *Academy*, charging the late Bishop of Natal with having "compiled a Hymnal for use in his diocese, from which he excluded rigidly every mention of the very name of Christ." We are glad to hear it. It shows that Colenso was sensible all round.

DARWEN has some sturdy Freethinkers, but the Branch languishes for want of lectures. How can Freethought do anything but go backwards in a town where Freethought lectures are delivered once a year? This is a matter to which the N. S. S. should give greater attention. The Lancashire Secular Union might, in the meanwhile, do something to redress this grievance. There is the excellent Co-operative Hall available, and all that is required is a tolerably good lecturer once a month or so.

Lucifer sends us "A Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury," reprinted from the Christmas number of that magazine. It is pointedly written, and shows that ecclesiastical Christianity finds no favor among the Theosophists. A good simile which it applies to the Church of England might be extended to all theology. It says that it is like a train running by the momentum it acquired before steam was shut off.

PAINESVILLE, in Ohio, U.S., America, is named after the rebellious needleman whose pen did so much for the cause of American independence.

MAX NORDAU, the Austrian author of *Conventional Lies*, has put forward another powerful work, entitled, *The Sickness of the Nineteenth Century*.

THE *Freethinkers' Magazine* for March, gives portraits of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Helen Gardener, Susan Wixon, Ella Gibson, and some other American Freethought women. England boasts that since the time of Frances Wright and "Isis," Freethought has never been without a lady advocate, and we are pleased to see that there is no sign of the supply failing in America.

JULIET SEVERANCE, of Chicago, has just published a booklet on *Thomas Paine: The Author Hero of the Revolution*.

CHRIST'S PARABLES.—III.

THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD (Matt. xx., 1-16).

THE moral lesson of this parable is of a very questionable kind. Christ tells us that the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man who hires laborers to work in his vineyard for a penny a day. Later on in the day he hires more men, promising to give them whatever is right. And at the eleventh hour he hires more laborers yet. When pay-time comes he gives each of these laborers the full day's wages of a penny, although some of them have worked only one hour, while others have worked twelve. Those who have worked the full number of hours naturally feel that if the householder is going to be liberal with his money, they have some natural right to a share of that liberality. They murmur at his too equal method of distributing the reward of unequal labor, and exclaim, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day."

As God is the employer and the world his vineyard, the parable, as its whole and sole purpose, shows that God is indifferent to the amount of work performed by those who come to him for the wages of eternal life. Christ even goes on to say that "the last shall be first, and the first last." So little do the heavenly wages depend on conduct or merit. A death-bed repentance will secure the full reward promised for a whole lifetime of diligent well-doing and unflinching faith. In the Lord's vineyard the laborers at the eleventh hour are paid exactly the same wages as the laborers who have borne the burden and heat of the day. For the labor of the day, or of the lifetime, a man is practically to receive nothing. It is only the last hour, the last moment, of life that decides his everlasting wages. If at the parting moment the penitent takes service with the Lord, who will in no wise cast him out, he will receive the full and perfect reward of lifelong piety and zeal. Why, then, should he labor arduously and self-sacrificingly through the heat of the day, when he will receive no more for his prolonged toil than for merely turning up at the day's end to receive the fag-end of a task and a full day's wages? The obvious moral, or practical application, of the parable is that comparative idleness or wickedness may easily be made as profitable as diligent toil or the constant practice of virtue. No one can doubt that the effect of the goodman's policy, if continued, would be to encourage idleness. The laborers would not come in till the eleventh hour. If they had known the intentions of their employer, they would hardly have worked through the long weary hours of the first day. They would have left off and come back again at the eleventh hour, or they would have waited till that hour before commencing. Yet Christians think that the obvious result of so demoralising a policy must not be brought forward as an objection to the parable. Only one aspect of the teaching must be considered—the munificence of the employer to the short-timers—and we must resolutely shut our eyes to the moral effect of such equalisation of an hour's work with a day's. Let the Christian tell us what would be the practical result of such a policy if pursued, not as a surprise, but as a permanency. Of course, God's policy is to be a permanent one, and the laborers are fully apprised of the demoralising conditions beforehand.

Defenders of the parable may perhaps say that the last hired laborers were willing to work, and had been waiting for work all day in the public hiring-place. But the householder is represented as having gone out several times in the course of the day and hired those whom he found in

the market-place waiting to be hired. So the natural excuse of the laborers, that no man had hired them, by no means shows that these laborers had been waiting all day to be hired. If this had been the point of the parable, Christ should have given some decisive information on the matter. His neglect, and the general Christian teaching on the value of death-bed repentance, show clearly that the necessity of life-long willingness to work for the Lord is no part whatever of the lesson of indiscriminate acceptance and reward which Christ taught.

Christ's defence of the policy of equalisation is the purely legal or technical excuse which would be indignantly scouted if applied elsewhere—as in the Prodigal Son, the Talents, the Good Samaritan, etc. The toil-worn laborers received all they contracted for, and they had no further rights. The landlord could do as he liked with his own; and if he displayed generosity to the late-comers and only bare legal justice to the worn and weary laborers who had been foolish enough to endure the burden and heat of the day, what legal right had they to complain? It is selfish and unreasonable to expect more for twelve hours' toil than for one—so Christ teaches—and it is just to pay no more for twelve hours' work than for one, provided the strictly legal conditions of the contract are fulfilled. Thus God, at least, will act. He will do as he likes with his own. And he is perfect, and we are to be perfect even as he is perfect.

Not in this parable only, but in its fundamental doctrines, Christianity despises, weakens, perverts, and overthrows the great and all-important sense of justice, on which human happiness and progress so intimately depend. It substitutes for the sense of fairness, for the sense of proportion between merit and reward, or between work and wages, a debasing hope of reaping without sowing, and of winning utterly unearned glory and happiness by faith in somebody's death. Such visions are unspeakably attractive to credulous selfishness and superstitious greed. But they are subversive of the very foundations of all human morality and well-being, and they subvert them by a sheer delusion, a sheer falsehood. The most suggestive point in the whole parable may be the fact that those wholly imaginary wages of eternal life are fittingly valued—or indeed absurdly over-valued—at the munificent sum of one penny. The penny is but a promised penny which will never be realised.

W. P. BALL.

A CORRESPONDENT, whose children, though interdicted from religion at school, are yet slyly inoculated with the virus, sends us the following overheard illustration of wisdom from the mouths of the little ones:—Bessie (to Lily): "Who made you?" Lily (aged six): "Oh! don't bother me." Bessie (to Harry): "Who made you?" Harry (aged five): "Daddy." Bessie: "No, not daddy. God made you." Harry: "No, he didn't. God don't live here now." Alfred (aged three): "Daddy made you and me, didn't he, Harry? God made Bess and Lily."

THE subject of human greatness was touched upon in a Sunday-school class in the United States, and the teacher aptly illustrated by reference to the President. Then she made the application: "Now, children, great as the President is, wise, and all that; as much as he is loved and honored, there is one we should love and honor far above the President of this great country. Do you know who that is?" The teacher paused solemnly and reverently for an answer; and she got it. Not from one or two, or three of the class; but in concert and instantaneously every little boy and girl shouted out, "Mrs. Cleveland!"

THE *Christian Herald* quotes the text "They shall drink any deadly thing, and it shall not hurt them," and then gives an instance of a man who last year was "saved from poisoning through prayer" in fulfilment of the divine promise. A man named Wohlcke, of North Topeka, U.S., accidentally swallowed a quantity of strychnine which had been procured for poisoning rats. Two doctors had to give the case up as hopeless. But "a voice" kept telling his wife to "go to Jesus." She and others started praying their hardest and "obtained the witness that they were heard." The doctors came "and said 'He is dead,'" and left. But "Jesus took the case," and in a few minutes all were praising God for restoring the poisoned man to life. "What has the infidel to say to that?" exclaims the pious narrator, "Has the day of miracles passed?" Of course not; while idiotic believers are to be found there will always be wonders and miracles for them to believe. But who takes notice of these modern miracles? No man with the slightest reputation to lose will guarantee them, or even take the trouble to investigate them.

THAT HOLY LAND.

BY A PILGRIM.

Ye gentlemen of England, who live at ease at home,
Ye little know the dangers incurred by those who roam ;
With Judea on the brain, all troubled on they go,
And brave both land and water when the stormy winds do blow.

Ye little ken the perils first of landing out at Joppa,
Of the tossing of the boats and the yells of Arabs, "stop-ah."
And the stinks to brave to reach the house of Simon Tanner,
When faith and gelt are levied in a most peculiar manner.

Then the mounting of the Arab steeds of Cook's, among the stones,
And the jogging on to Ascalon leads to falls and weary bones.
Across sweet Sharon's desert fields where we see the Rose ;
Both colorless and scentless, with the thorns and briars it grows.

The plains of Bethlehem are all crooked : its shows are all a sham,
Where Jesus suckled, Joseph stood, we feel is all a Bam.
Nor Dead Sea's salt, nor Jordan's stream, which turbid swift doth
flow,
Can clear the fierce almighty flea of our camp at Jericho.

We mount the Mount of Olivet, by path both bad and steep,
We saw Jerusalem in a storm that made our noses weep,
And we had to "lob" through sewerage, which covers all its streets,
And stir up stinks which everywhere the holy pilgrim meets.

We see the Temple, now a mosque ; and Calvary's Hill—a hole.
The Tomb is not a tomb ; the rock not rock, but wall ;
And the hoary saints attending *do* the sinners as they wish,
For the den of thieves remains, and the booty is baksheesh.

You cannot dip 'in Siloam's Pool, it were in vain to try,
Nor drink at Jacob's Well, for Jacob's Well is dry.
Thy tent, Tiberius, yields not rest ; thy dust and hungry flea
Can not be cleansed by all the waves of stormy Galilee.

Jerusalem the golden, we sing so far away ;
But there the gold we lose, 'tis everywhere to pay.
But we gain the truth, and lose the dream, for verily we see
No holy land, no happy land, no comfort in "Judee," J. H.

NEWS FROM LUNA.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

THE aerial expedition has been a complete success, although when coming within the attraction of the planet we were steering for, our velocity was very alarming ; but, getting into another atmosphere and reversing our motion, we were enabled to land at a favorable point. Our amazement was intense, for on looking round we beheld on every side signs of a civilisation quite equal to that on the earth we had so lately left ; in fact, this planet's advancement had unintentionally been running almost in the same lines as that of the earth's. On arriving at Lunadon we found the Lunites entertaining their God, or a third part of him, who had incarnated himself some years before, and was still living amongst them preparatory to his ascension to the place where his paternal relative resided.

It was very interesting to us to study this young man's behavior and the fervency of the belief of most of the inhabitants in him and his mission. The study was more pleasing, they having the same institutions as our own planet, in fact seeming almost a servile copy. The very name this young man was known to his devotees by was Jesus Christ, and it seemed strange to meet our God in top hat, ordinary claw-hammer coat, sidespring boots, etc., going to some house of entertainment. I attended one of his lectures, his mother acting as chairman—I mean chairwoman—his subject being the promulgation of a philosophy only fit for a time when the Millennium had arrived. His oratory was declamatory and very desiccating, for he emptied the bottle of water provided. His hair is long, and he looks very æsthetic when running his taper fingers through it. He altogether makes rather an interesting figure on the platform. His mother made an impartial chairwoman, even allowing the usual time for dissentients.

I found this interesting couple had many engagements, some of which they will not be able to fulfil, I think, as the young man's ascension takes place at an early date, agreeing with our April 1. For long distances the couple prefer the railway, their properties going by the same train ; but they seem to have a liking for tricycling the shorter distances, the lady seated behind, Jesus pedalling in front ; tobacco on these occasions not being tabooed, his briar giving him rather a rakish appearance.

He has a tendency to perform feats of legerdemain when he gets a friendly audience, but is careful of whom his audience is composed, as some of the inhabitants have there and then excelled him, doing far more difficult tricks and bringing ridicule on the performance. I noticed a challenge in one of their sporting papers also, offering to walk Jesus on the sea and give him a hundred yards in the mile.

Becoming interested in the career of this young fellow I interviewed him, and found he was born at Bathsolem, where the incarnation first took place ; that he commenced his Lunatic life as a small but remarkably cross infant, was reared on natural or lacteal sustenance, assisted by a patent corn-flour food ; that a good tough pad brought his grinders through in splendid style ; that he was weaned at

ten months, having been short-coated, and jumped into his first skeleton suit when six years old. He was very expert at boyish games, and won marbles and buttons so profusely that his mother was afraid he might evince in after life a *penchant* for gambling. He made the acquaintance of a young lady named Mary, as young fellows are apt to do, but assured his mother his affection was purely platonic. His maternal relative thinks he has sown his wild oats and is setting down to good hard-working business. This event has so engaged my attention that the descriptive letter concerning the place has been quite overlooked, but I will try and satisfy you per next opportunity of transmission, and will then report further on this almost unique case.

REVIEWS.

The Drapers' Record, 85 Fore Street, London, E.C.—An excellently printed trade journal.

St. Agnes and St. Bridget. By Robert Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street. (1d.)—A readable pamphlet, showing the Pagan origin of these famous female saints. Mr. Forder is well read in the byeways of Pagan-Christian mythology.

The Bible Not of Man: or, The Fool hath said in his Heart there is No God. By C. M. HANDLEY. Third edition. Maldon.—A new poet has arisen to defend Christianity. Only by quotation can we illustrate how adequate he is to his task of converting the sceptic, whom he thus addresses :—

"Boast not of evolution's theme ;
Exploded is the flimsy dream.
If not, why not evolve again
When you have reached three score and ten?"

Similar flights of rhyme and reason meet us on every page of this wonderful work, which we commend to the outdoor lecturers of the Christian Evidence Society. It is about up to their level.

The Hebrew and other Creations Fundamentally Explained. A lecture by Gerald Massey. Price One Shilling. Villa Berdighiera, New Southgate, London, N.—"Such doctrines," says Mr. Massey, "as the Fall of Man, the failure of God, and all that bankrupt business in the commencement of creation, the consequent genesis of evil and original sin, the depravity of matter, the filthy nature of the flesh, have no other basis or beginning than in the perversion of ancient typology, and the literalisation of mythology." Whatever exception may be taken to Mr. Massey's explanations of the old Jew myths, and we confess to a frequent disposition to ask for "chapter and verse," there can be no doubt of the soundness of his method. Ancient myths must be explained, not by modern science or by any spiritual allegorising, but by the ideas in vogue at the time of their formation. Mr. Massey sees that our theology based on the Jews book is only a dead branch of the ancient mythology, and he seeks to show us what it was when alive. Mythology, he says, was a primitive mode of teaching natural facts, not an esoteric method of misinterpreting them. He holds that the Genesis story, while betraying Egyptian sources, was re-written after the captivity in Babylon and thus incorporates other matter found in the Persian Bundahesh. "Let us make man," he refers to the seven Elohim. Adam he identifies with the Egyptian Atum. The lecture contains some hits at Mr. Gladstone's defence of Genesis, and in an appendix Mr. Massey controverts the contention of Professor Sayce that the Babylonian and Egyptian myths are unconnected, and takes exception to many of his explanations of Babylonian myths.

PROFANE JOKES.

They were seated at a late Sunday dinner when the door bell rang. "Goodness gracious !" she exclaimed, "it's our minister, and I've been eating onions." "Never mind, my dear," replied her husband, "you need not kiss him to-day."

"Oh, sir !" said a rustic to the parson, while surveying his patch of potatoes, "you should not frighten 'un so ; you said in your sermon as we didn't ought to trust in common taters, and here are my taters, tho' common 'uns, still blooming and thriving."

"Can you recall the names of those two friends, my dear," he said to his wife, "whose affection was so great that one offered to die for the other ? Da—Da—the first begins with a D." "Oh, yes," said the lady placidly, "You are thinking of Dan and Beersheba."

A stranger recently stepped into a church in Indianapolis, and, after being permitted to stand in the aisle for some time, was approached by one of the brethren, when he inquired, "What church is this ?" "Christ's Church," was the reply. "Is he in ?" was quietly asked. The hint was taken, and the stranger was shown a seat.

A good Methodist asked John Wesley what he thought as to his marrying a certain woman, well known to both. Wesley advised him not to think of it. "Why," said the other, "she is a member of your church, isn't she ?" "Yes," was the reply. "And you think she is truly a Christian woman ?" "Yes," said Wesley, "I believe she is." "Well then, why not marry her ?" "Because," replied Wesley, "because, my friend, the Lord can live with a great many people that you and I can't."

An inscription on a monument winds up with the following touching obituary: "She lived a life of virtue, and died of the cholera morbus, caused by eating green fruit in the hope of a blessed immortality, at the early age of twenty-one years, seven months, and sixteen days. Reader, go thou and do likewise."

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