

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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COMIC BIBLE SKETCH.—No. 255.



CURSING A TREE.

And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. . . . And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master behold the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.—MARK XI, 12, 13, 20, 21.

SWEEPING THE ARENA.

MR. GLADSTONE does not venture to cross swords with Colonel Ingersoll again. He confines himself to reprinting his article on this side the Atlantic in an obscure Review, which declines to insert an advertisement of Colonel Ingersoll's reply. But now the great combatants have retired from the arena, a number of minor gladiators enter it to clear the ground. Under the title of "The Combat for the Faith," the editor of the *North American Review* publishes five short articles on the recent battle. The first is by a lady, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, probably a relative of the United States minister in England. With the confidence which misogynists say is characteristic of the sex, she entitles her article "The Real Issue," and plainly gives the triangular duellists (Field, Gladstone, Ingersoll) to understand that they are all more or less adrift and need her guidance to set them right. Her feminine lecture is deliciously audacious; and when, after alternately patting and chiding Gladstone, she coolly sums up Ingersoll's deficiencies and tells him he has no logic or biblical scholarship to "justify his foray against the Christianity of his

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age," the callous male reader can only smile and pass on to the next article.

Mr. R. A. Proctor follows her with an earnest, plain-spoken article on "The Evolution of Religion." Catching at Gladstone's admission that "the moral history of man, in its principal stream, has been distinctly an evolution from the first until now," he says that this gives up the whole ground in dispute, and is quite inconsistent with Gladstone's professed belief in the Fall of Man. As for the "reverential calm" which Gladstone demands in discussion, Mr. Proctor says it cannot be expected. "How," he asks, "can men be calm with what moves them to just wrath?"

"I can for my part be patient with the poor savages who picture gods savage and unreasoning as themselves; but I must confess I sympathise in my heart of hearts with Colonel Ingersoll when he loses all thought of reverential calm in contemplating the ways of men who in these days of a higher and purer morality can speak otherwise than with horror of the Being pictured as the God of Abraham, the God of Moses, and the God of Jephthah. Of what use is the evolution of morality if we are to hold by the teachings of the morality of savage times? And in what way shall men who love mercy, who as fathers seek their children's love, speak of a conception of the God which, while calling Him Our Father, pictures Him as mercilessly seeking his children's lives?"

Mr. Proctor points out that Ingersoll speaks no word against the good which the Bible contains. It is only the cross which "he has endeavored to burn out with the fire of his fervid words."

The Rev. Robert Collyer writes very amiably from the Unitarian standpoint on "The Bible in the Controversy." He deals with a very important fact, which Shelley noticed long ago in Italy, where he found religion was often a stimulus but never a restraint. Dr. Collyer shows that the Bible itself is invoked to justify or condemn all sorts of causes.

"We have drawn from it the power to save men and to slay them, to establish peace and to mass artillery, and to be Christians of the noblest type and of the direst. It is the text-book alike of your iron-clad Calvinism and your sunny and most generous Universalism, and the volume in which the Quaker finds food for his quietness, and your Millerite of all brands for his craze. It was the corner-stone of the great Puritan foundation which underlies our nation's life; it was also the book from which the Puritan drew his infernal power to hang the Quakers, whip and banish the Baptists, and to burn the witches, while the advocates of human slavery in the times I easily remember found proof in it to show that slavery was a divine institution, and men like Garrison that it was accursed of God and man."

Many of the things which Ingersoll denounces with incomparable vigor are also condemned by Dr. Collyer. He declares that if we found such stories as the miraculous siege of Jericho, the arrest of the sun and moon by Joshua, and the assassination of Sisera by Jael, in the scriptures of Hindostan, "we should at once say they were myths and legends; and of such treachery done in the name of their God, What a deity!" And he adds, "I say amen also to the things Mr. Ingersoll quotes for ruthless condemnation touching the whole business in the old fighting books."

The conclusion of Dr. Collyer's article is really striking. Some years ago he was riding across the prairies with a missionary fresh from Egypt, and asked him, "Tell me truly who was the very best man you found there?" The missionary answered, "My Mohammedan teacher of Arabic, he was the noblest and best man I found in the valley." Dr. Collyer asked, "Then what will become of him if he dies in that faith." The answer was prompt and unhesitating—"He will go to hell, sir, because he would not accept the terms of salvation found in the Bible." Dr. Collyer calls this a mean and vile dogma, and says it is no wonder if "a man so wholly human and tender" as Ingersoll should exclaim "If that is your God and this your Bible I will fight them both to the bitter end."

After the Unitarian doctor comes a Jewish rabbi—F. de Sola Mendes—who undertakes "The Vindication of Jehovah." The Jew feels his God is attacked and he rushes to the rescue. Let Ingersoll thunder against "that woful doctrine of the Atonement" or find imperfections in the teaching of "that pious Essene Hebrew of Nazareth," but let him keep his profane hands off the sacred ark of the Jewish faith. The fate of Uzzah is no longer to be dreaded, yet the temerarious infidel may be "knocked into a cocked hat" by a champion of Jehovah.

Rabbi Mendes is not strong in logic. Here is a sample. Gladstone accused Ingersoll of mocking, and Ingersoll replied that Elijah mocked the priests of Baal. But Rabbi Mendes gives the argument a new turn, by asking Ingersoll why he objects to Elijah's mockery when he mocks himself. After this highly original "you're another," the Jewish champion has the courage to assert that Jehovah was not responsible for the massacre at Kishon, for in the very next chapter he rebukes Elijah "for that bloody act." Rabbi Mendes appears to keep a Bible of his own. Elijah is reprov'd, but not for the massacre; he is reprov'd for running away and complaining of being left alone. So far from censuring the massacre at Kishon, Jehovah promises a perfect orgie of massacre in the days to come.

Ingersoll is taken to task for saying that Jehovah established a religion in which every temple was a slaughter-house and every officiating priest a butcher. Where, asks Rabbi Mendes, will you find a single Jewish temple to-day in which sacrifices are performed? Surely this is the most miserable trifling. Ingersoll is concerned with the Bible, and not with modern Judaism; and the very word slaughter-house is used by Farrar (though he adopts the French euphemism *abattoir*) in describing the sacred courts of the temple at Jerusalem.

"In infinite condescension to human ideas and human infirmity," says Rabbi Mendes, "the Almighty permitted sacrifices." For the same reason, perhaps, God permitted

theft, massacre, outrage and slavery. They were gracious concessions to human—that is, Jewish—infirmity. How the chosen people must plume themselves on being allowed these little indulgences by a God of infinite wisdom and justice.

Rabbi Mendes is full of the pride of race. He actually tells Ingersoll that industry and parental and marital morality were given by God to the Jews, who "faithfully conserved them by precept and example, for all the world's adoption." This complacent vanity shows what Cobbett used to call "considerable powers of face." The "world" certainly includes Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome, and those countries understood public and domestic morality before the Jewish Scriptures were known outside Palestine; and, in the case of Egypt at least, before those Scriptures existed at all. As for the modern world, its jurisprudence is chiefly derived from Rome, and its domestic morality from Pagan and not from Jewish sources. Perhaps Rabbi Mendes will be good enough to show how Solomon's precepts for walloping children square with our higher civilisation, and how the polygamy of the Old Testament squares with our modern views of the sanctity of home.

Nearly all the writers in the *North American Review* express the highest regard for Ingersoll as a man. Even Rabbi Mendes calls him "a most genial and cultured gentleman, whose sweet and reverent home-life has been repeatedly described to me by those privileged to witness it." Both as a man and as a debater Ingersoll comes out of this controversy with flying colors. The debate will do immense good, and the paltry traducers of this noble Freethinker will henceforth find it hard to carry on their wretched trade.

G. W. FOOTE.

A CLERGYMAN'S QUESTIONS.

THE *Church Evangelist* publishes "Seven Questions to put to every Infidel." The author of these questions is the Rev. G. S. Bowes. By the slanderous epithet "Infidel" he means those who like myself believe in the universality of natural law to the exclusion of the supernatural. I will quote his questions one by one and answer them.

"1. Can you say you have ever read the Bible carefully through, and you could now bear to be examined in it?"—I have not read every word of the Bible, for parts of it are far too tedious and uninteresting for any but pedants, fanatics, or prisoners to read; but I have probably read more of it and more carefully than nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand Christians, and I suspect, reverend sir, that I could bear to be examined in it by you far better than you could bear to be examined by me.

"2. Have you not read, whatever part you have read, rather desiring to pick holes in it, than honestly to find out the truth?"—Seeing that I read it and studied it for years as a Christian, and with my prospects in life depending on my belief in it, I can hardly have desired to pick holes in it. I wished to believe, and it was decidedly to my interest to believe. It was only the incredibility and wickedness of parts of the Bible that gradually forced me to give it up. Now that I know that the Bible is full of error and superstition, I naturally show people its faults in order to release them from a degrading belief in a false and mischievous creed.

"3. What do you propose to put in its place, that shall be more likely to be beneficial to mankind?"—For superstition I would substitute reason; for faith, knowledge; for falsehood and error, truth and wisdom; for prayer and delusion, education and common sense. Science, freedom, the printing press, the steam engine, have been potent agents in improving the condition of mankind, while religion has strenuously opposed all progress and development. Music, literature, art, and the innumerable sources of interest and enjoyment open to mankind may well replace the study of exploded myths, the unnatural terrors of eternal torture, and the hopes of an impossible renewal of life in incomprehensible realms of infinite bliss of a most childish kind.

"4. How do you account for the inequalities in the moral government of the world?"—This is a question for you to answer. You assert that there is a moral government of the world, the Atheist does not. That you should thus consider your own difficulty a poser for the unbelievers simply shows how muddled Christians are in their ideas.

They expect the Atheist to account for the injustice of a God whose existence he denies.

"5. How do you account for the unhappy deaths of Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume, Tom Paine, etc.?"—The stories are simply Christian falsehoods, as you would find, sir, if you had the honesty to test their truth before circulating them. How do you account for this tendency of Christians to invent and spread all manner of false statements against their opponents?

"6. How do you account for it, that most infidels are men of immoral lives?"—Because the Christians who write these lives are most unscrupulous in their mendacity, and the innumerable Christians who piously accept and repeat the shameful slanders, are partly deceived and are partly malicious liars for the love of God and the hatred of man.

"7. How is it that Christianity has done so very much more to benefit the world at large than Infidelity has ever attempted?"—Christianity has done nothing of the kind. It dragged the world back into the Dark Ages, and the Secular spirit has only succeeded in improving the world by defying the Church and breaking away from the Bible. The civilisation and progress that have prevailed in spite of Christianity are now claimed as the work of a religious system, which was the deadliest enemy of science and freedom and intellect. It is the Secular spirit which is infusing itself into Christianity and gradually undermining and supplanting it. It is unconscious Secularism that has caused civilised races to abandon the faith-healing of St. James for medicine and hospitals. It is the growing Secular spirit which substitutes education for religion, and insurance for trust in God. Christianity tried to make people take no thought for the morrow, and to submit to tyranny and poverty and wrong. It has not entirely succeeded in ruining the world by crushing out the best part of the human race by celibacy and by persecution and by thoroughly converting the whole race to the general madness of superstition; and the half-won victory of Secular progress is now claimed by the muddle-headed partisans of the system which destroyed the ancient civilisations, and did its utmost to strangle in its infancy the new-born civilisation which it would now fain claim as its own beloved offspring.

W. P. BALL.

ACID DROPS.

Russia has been celebrating the nine-hundredth anniversary of her conversion to Christianity. Our English papers report the proceedings, but they do not relate how the conversion of Russia came about. Vladimir, the Czar, appointed a commission to discover the best religion, and the verdict was given for the Greek faith. Resolving to be baptised, and not deigning to ask for a Greek bishop, the Czar declared war against Greece for the purpose of procuring one. Thousands of lives were lost in the siege of Kaffa, but Vladimir captured it, and was baptised, after which he thrashed his old gods and then demolished them. His subjects were afterwards baptised wholesale by imperial decree. A new religion was put on them as a brand is put on sheep, and ever since the Russians have been ready to fight anybody who says Christianity isn't true.

DURING the St. Petersburg celebrations the Bishops played a distinguished part. Like true priests of the gospel of humility, they were clothed in scarlet, blue and gold, and surrounded by the most extravagant pomp. The Czar and Czarina kissed a big cross amid salvos of artillery and the clang of church bells. Finally the troops were all sprinkled with holy water, and probably they wound up the festival with deep potations of a still holier liquor—Russian Brandy. Such are the mummeries which, as Shelley says, weld into a power irrefragably firm the axes and the rods that awe mankind.

The Archbishop of York has been preaching on "The Terrible Problem of the Poor." He does not explain why God allows this terrible problem to exist. But he showed its gravity, and that after the lapse of eighteen centuries the world is still full of misery, still waits for a redeeming power, since strife and struggle, pain and death, seem to be inscribed upon the world's foundation stones. What an impeachment of the Creator, if people only dared to think for themselves!

The Archbishop says that wealth was never so great, and poverty was never more stark and grinding. The power of Christ is to put things to rights. Eighteen centuries of failure, culminating in greater extremes of luxury and wretchedness than ever, somehow encourage the Christian to feel sure that his divine scheme of improvement will work in the future. By way of remedy the archbishop says we must more actively affirm the doctrine of love to others, and must apply it to thoughtless nar-

riages, intemperance, and want of thrift. How we are to apply it to these evils without encouraging them he does not condescend to explain. But Dives is to look after Lazarus; the rich are to maintain the poor. We wonder if the archbishop will take his own advice, or if the bishops will. How many palaces will they give up for the accommodation of the poor whose houselessness they lament, and what proportion of their thousands a year will they resign for their assistance?

THE Archbishop takes £10,000 a year from the nation—twice as much as we pay the Prime Minister. He lives in a palace, is surrounded by flunkeys, and sits in the House of Lords; yet he mounts the pulpit and mouths about the duties of the rich and the wrongs and sufferings of the poor. Why doesn't he practice a little morality instead of preaching it? His big salary is wrung from the sweat and tears of poor wretches who labor from morn till night, live on scanty earnings, eat too much of the bread of sorrow, and perhaps die in the workhouse and get buried in a parish egg-box. Let him relinquish his own unearned luxuries, and he may be listened to with respect; but while he preaches "blessed be ye poor" and rolls in wealth, he is a more disgusting object than the most profligate and callous millionaire. Physician, heal thyself. Who will believe in the efficacy of your medicine while your own carcase is rotten and your breath smells like a foxhole?

THE Archbishop is like the gentleman in the siege who said there was nothing like leather. His nostrum is—more Christianity! We suggest a remedy which the clerical doctors are always waving against—Common Sense. The chief causes of poverty are perfectly obvious to every man who has flung aside the spectacles of theology; but the clergy never deal with causes, they only potter over effects, and in fact they create most of the very evils they pretend to alleviate. Who howls like a parson at any Radical reformer who proposes to deal with social disease as with bodily disease?

NEVER mind the land question, never mind fiscal reform, never mind co-operation; all these things are materialistic; let us preach that avarice is a deadly sin, let us warn the rich that luxury must pay its dues to the poor, let us inform Dives that Lazarus must have the crumbs. Such is the Archbishop's "eloquent advice." Was there ever such a monstrous absurdity? Mrs. Partington's mop was more potent against the Atlantic than this clerical sentimentalism can ever be against the evils of society.

A LONDON journal says that the hum of our metropolis is but the multitudinous echo by millions of the prayer "Give us this day our daily bread." Well now that is good! Analyse the "hum" and you'll find precious little praying. It is a blend of rolling buses with swearing drivers, growlers and hansoms with cussing cabbies, naughty street boys shouting lies for newspapers, costers crying fresh strawberries a week old, and a host of other sounds we have no room to recite. "God damn you" is about the only prayer in the mighty chorus.

GEORGE TIMMS, a Warwick laborer, is detained as a criminal lunatic. He smashed his wife's head with a brick, and said the Devil tempted him.

THIS demented creature is rightly treated as insane, but the Christians who treat him as such are terribly illogical. That the Devil tempts people to crime is an established article of the Christian faith, and "being tempted thereto by the Devil" is still the formula of indictments for murder. Even in smaller offences the Devil is regarded as a sort of *agent provocateur*. When, for instance, Mr. Foote was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for "blasphemy" by Mr. Justice North, the learned judge told the prisoner that he had prostituted the abilities God had given him in the service of the Devil.

WHY these different measures? If the Devil tempts you to laugh at the Bible, you are punished as a criminal. If he tempts you to commit murder you are let off as a lunatic. Moral—go for a sheep instead of a lamb.

THE late Prebendary Irons was fond of walking down Parliament Street in episcopal costume, and being taken for a bishop. Once he passed all the police safely, but at the entrance of the House he was stopped by a doorkeeper who said, "No, Dr. Irons, you are not a Bishop yet." Turning to a Radical M.P., the janitor added, "I should have let him pass had he not spoiled my dinner yesterday with an hour's sermon."

ADDRESSING the army at the close of the Franco-German war the Emperor William declared that "Providence had willed" his exploits. His secretary, Schneider, wanted to alter "willed" to "permitted." For this the *Pall Mall Gazette* calls him a blockhead, because it is quite right to say that Providence has willed what Providence has accomplished.

OF course it is. But does the *P. M. G.* see the full force of the argument? God does all that God permits; therefore, God killed Warder Webb, God murdered John Mandeville, God drowned the last poor wretch who jumped off Waterloo Bridge,

God is spoiling the British farmer's crops with rain. "I create good and create evil; I the Lord do all these things."

CERTAIN rival parties close up together when their common interests are threatened. We are not surprised, therefore, to read that the Archbishop of Canterbury sent a congratulatory address to the Russian bishops. The Eastern and Western churches have their little jealousies and hatreds, but after all they are in the same trade. The spiritual brigands exchange courtesies from fear of the honest men.

THE Bishop of Ely has forbidden the deacons in his diocese to preach more than one sermon a week of their own composition. Is he sure they all do as much as that? Has he never heard of the lively trade in "original" sermons.

GEORGE PATTISON, a prominent member of the Salvation Army at Stockton, seduced Amelia Heath, another Salvationist, in the Theatre where the Salvation Army hold their meetings. The Bench ordered the defendant to pay 4s. per week till the child is thirteen years of age.

THE loss of life from the volcanic eruption in Japan turns out to be greater than was expected. Nearly 1,000 visitors have perished, and several villages have been destroyed. God is love, and this is one of his methods of showing it.

THE elders and deacons of the parish church of Elgin have resolved to form a Boy's Brigade in connection with their gospel-shop. This object, as stated by themselves, is "the advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys," whom they propose to endow with "a true Christian manliness." The method of operation is this. The boys are drilled in squads and supplied with belts and rifles. Drill begins with a prayer by one of the officers, and closes with a hymn. Evidently the Lord of Hosts is a popular God in North Britain, and his worshippers are fond of the text, "I came not to send peace but a sword."

A MAN in Finland has formally bequeathed all his landed property and possessions to the Devil. Will the executors have to call on him at his usual place of abode, or will the Post Office send a fireman to convey a registered letter printed on asbestos paper? The people believe that the deceased acquired the property by dealings with the Devil, and that this restitution is part of the bargain.

THE Rev. J. C. Jack, parish minister of King Dorum, has turned bankrupt. His principal creditor is Miss Maggie Simpson, who gained an action against him for breach of promise with £1,000 damages.

A RUGBY Salvationist received a cabbage as a present. Having examined it he ejaculated, "It's got a good head! God be praised! Hallelujah!" Query, could the cabbage return the compliment?

PROPHET BAXTER goes about with highly-colored imaginative pictures representing the end of the world, and the "Resurrection Saints and Ascension of Christians without dying," about March 5th, 1896. At Colchester the people, having made a close inspection, discovered that the pictures were old, while the date appeared to have undergone alteration. The author of *Louis Napoleon the Destined Monarch of the World*, was interrogated on this point. General uproar ensued, and the prophet's table and platform were upset in the mêlée.

PROPHET BAXTER, however, delivered his lecture to an interviewer. He says that Napoleon, Gladstone, and Boulanger all bear the number of the Beast, but the two latter are minor Beasts. "What we look for in the case of the Beast is for the deadly wound of a sword, which will be healed." This has been verified in the cases of Napoleon and Boulanger; so Gladstone had better beware of swords. Only those who believe in prophecy—i.e., in Baxter—will be found among the 144,000 who will be caught up in the air. A Napoleon will yet arise, and be the "leader of Socialists, Mohanmedans, Romanists, and Spiritualists"—a combination most individuals would be excused from leading. Donnelly's Cryptogram is nothing to Baxter's Bible calculations.

A REPORT has been spread that Spurgeon will affiliate with the Presbyterians. This is about the proper place for him. The Westminster Confession of Faith is the most barbarous creed in Christendom, and that is saying a deal.

SOLEMN masses for the dead are offered at St. Barnabas's, Pimlico, and at other Ritualistic churches. This is, like the importance attached to the sacrament, part of the game of reintroducing priestcraft, but the Protestants who denounce purgatory fight shy of the sanction it receives from Matt. v., 36.

A MIRACLE again! Last week, according to the *Dominicales* of Madrid, a baker in Malaga saw the Virgin Mary among the flames of his oven. Astonished at the apparition he ran out of the house shouting like a maniac, "A miracle! a miracle! come and see the miracle; the Virgin Mary is in my oven!" Imm

diately the people rushed from all sides to the baker's shop. A woman, more curious than the rest, put her head inside the heated oven, and had her hair burnt and most of her face scorched. In her pain she exclaimed, "No matter, I have seen our Virgin Mary, that's my consolation!" As the crowd that gathered before the baker's shop had become so dense that it entirely stopped the traffic, the police interfered, drove the credulous mob away, and arrested the superstitious baker as being the sole cause of the nuisance. The Virgin Mary will never appear to that baker again! The time for miracles has passed. The world has grown too sceptical, and if J. Christ and Co., and other first-class miracle-mongers intend coming again, we would advise them to try some other planet.

A PAPYRUS, of extraordinary beauty and completeness, has been added to the British Museum. It contains some remarkable illustrations, together with certain chapters of the "Book of Death," carefully copied out by a scribe of Thebes. It dates from the 14th century before the Christian era. God has carefully preserved an uninspired Pagan manuscript nearly two thousand years older than the oldest existing copy of any of the Books of the Bible. Yet he leaves the all-important revelation of his will to chance. Not a single original MS. of the Word of God is in existence. The oldest manuscripts of the New Testament were not written till three to five centuries after the events they record, and the oldest copies of the Old Testament are still more modern, dating from about 916 A.D.

THE wet weather is distressing the farmers greatly. One pious person, who signs himself Walter Stanford, advertises in the *West Surrey Gazette* that there is "an unfailing remedy." The weather, says he, "is in the hand of one only. His hand can be turned by prayer, and especially by united prayer. I feel sure if farmers generally could be prevailed on to meet for the simple purpose of calling on God, He would answer." If Walter Stanford understood meteorological conditions he would no more think of imitating Elijah and praying that it might not rain, than he would pray to have six inches added to his stature.

THE *Cape Argus Weekly* reports the execution of William Matfield for outraging and murdering Louisa Delbridge, and publishes the murderer's confession. He says he dies in the Catholic Church, since "from inquiry I have found her to be the true Church where alone I can be saved." As usual, the murderer expects a seat in bliss, forgives everybody, and exhorts them to prayer and fasting.

THE Holy Sacrament must always be taken fasting. It would never do to mix the body and blood of the Savior with common food. Dr. Rogers, in his *Reminiscences*, tells of a priest who had to say mass daily at one o'clock. Asked how he managed so long a fast, he replied that he banked himself up with a big meal at 11.45 the night before, and kept his appetite down all the morning by a series of cigars.

SOME of our contemporaries are surprised that it cost £299 16s. 9d. for the Prince of Wales to worship at a city church a few weeks ago. But why? Religion and Flunkycism were always the most expensive luxuries, and who can wonder at a big bill when the two are united?

"REVERENT Rationalism" is the kind of Christianity the age requires, if we may believe the Rev. W. Currie, Chairman of the Congregational Union of Victoria. Very likely. Progressive Christians crawl forward, and like stopping at half-way houses. Once they hated Rationalism; now they take it with a strong dose of Reverence. By and by the Reverence will be discarded, and Rationalism will be taken "pure and unadulterated." To this complexion they must come at last.

EDITOR SHEPARD, of the *New York Mail*, publishes an extract from the scripture in each issue of his paper. The more news that an editor can bring before his readers the larger will be the demand for his paper, and Mr. Shepard has at length struck something entirely new to the citizens of New York.

CURIOUS typographical errors and verbal combinations often occur, even in Church papers. The *New York Churchman* reports that "at St. Thomas's Church, Homestead, Maryland, the Rev. Wm. Brayshaw, rector, is at once to be reshingled and otherwise repaired, and bids are now in hand; the cost will be some 600 dollars."

A LEADING clergyman of Louisville was suddenly called away, and a substitute preached to his congregation. The substitute had no sermon ready, and he used one of the regular minister's manuscripts. The tracings on the margin kept him smiling all through a deep and serious discourse, much to the wonder of the congregation. Among other notes were "bite lip bitterly," "extreme agitation," "pious smile," and "loud ringing voice."

THE Queen doesn't want to be bothered in her old age by ecclesiastics, and declined to receive at Windsor Castle the Bishops who assembled at the Lambeth Conference. The old lady has some sense after all. Perhaps the sight of so many black gaiters would make her melancholy.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, August 5, 11.30, Pimlico Pier (open air), "Salvation"; 7.30, Hall of Science, 142 Old Street, E.C., "A Blast from Rome."
 August 12, Albert Embankment (morning); Hall of Science (evening). 19, Battersea Park (morning); Camberwell (evening). 26, Camberwell.
 Sept. 2, Liverpool; 9 and 16, Hall of Science, London; 23, Manchester; 30, Camberwell.
 Oct. 7 and 14, Milton Hall; 28, Hall of Science.
 Dec. 2 and 9, Hall of Science.

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.

H. M. RIDGWAY sends 5s. for the London Secular Federation, and 5s. for the School Board Election Fund. He hopes some of the persons on the Board will make room for Freethinkers, and that "justice will be done to Mr. Moss and others." We regret to say that the N. S. S. Executive has rejected a motion that the School Board be asked why Mr. Moss is interdicted from lecturing on Sunday, and practically resolved to do nothing. We have, however, no hesitation in saying that this vote does not reflect the attitude of the rank and file of the Freethought party.

E. WOOD.—Letters for the Malthusian League should be addressed to W. H. Reynolds, Camplin House, New Cross, S.E.

W. WILDE.—Thanks for the old Bible pictures. They are intensely funny, though the humor is unconscious.

C. J. ROUSE reports that 16s. 1½d. was collected at Mr. Foote's open-air lecture at Camberwell for the School Board Election Fund.

T. BOWEN.—Mr. Foote will try to give the Columbia Road Station a lecture before the season closes, but he cannot fix any fresh dates for a week or two. Thanks for your promise to take several copies of the new Radical weekly.

J. G.—Cuttings received with thanks. We are obliged for your good wishes for the new venture.

T. BIRTLEY (Chester-le-Street).—Mr. Foote will be happy to debate with any clergyman in your district if you can succeed in bringing one to the scratch, but we are not very hopeful of your success, though the effort is worth making.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS.—D. Provan.

FREETHINKER.—The Bible describes the earth as having ends and four corners. See Job xxxviii., 13; Ps. cxxxv., 7; Rev. vii., 1.

H.—Your verse is very good in parts and very indifferent in others, the last verse being extremely feeble. Try again, and let your verses grow stronger as they advance.

H. MCPHERSON.—We accept your pleasant tribute of song, which is more meritorious than heaps of verses that get printed in big type. But you must pardon us for not inserting it in the *Freethinker*. Without pretending to any abnormal modesty, we hope we are sensible enough to refrain from printing our own praises, unless they are of a critical character and couched in sober prose.

A. J. WHITE.—Cuttings such as you send are always welcome.

CASA BIANCA.—Thanks. See "Sugar Plums."

R. O. SMITH desires to acknowledge 15s. 6d. collected by the Ball's Pond Branch for the School Board Election Fund.

CHARLES SMITH.—Mr. Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street, will supply you with Paine's *Age of Reason* post free for 1s. 2d.

A. R. ATKREY.—Letter received. Shall be glad to hear further.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—British and Colonial Printer and Stationer—Hampshire Independent—Colchester Gazette—Cape Argus Weekly—West Sussex Gazette—Fair Play—Freidenker—Secular Thought—Neues Freireligioses Sonntags-Blatt—Western Figaro—Ironclad Age—Truthseeker—Freethought—Fritankeren—Newcastle Daily Leader—Church Reformer—Manchester Guardian—Financial World—Port Elizabeth Spectator—La Lanterne—Intransigeant—Le Grolot—Le Petit National—Mot d'Ordre—La Vespa.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE had a very large audience at Station Road, Camberwell, last Sunday morning. Two or three policemen were among the audience, and tried not to laugh. It was hard work. Mr. Wise, of the Christian Evidence Society, had two speeches in opposition, and a question was asked by the chief of a knot of Salvationists in uniform. There was a collection for the School Board Election Fund.

MRS. BESANT lectured (or should we say preached?) at South Place Chapel last Sunday morning. Her theme was Natural Morality. A very fair report appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Secular Thought, Toronto, reaches us very fitfully. From the last numbers to hand we see it has reprinted Mr. Foote's reply to Gladstone, *Christianity and Progress*, in bold type. Our contemporary has the following paragraph in its "Notes and Comments."

"I AM very pleased to see that our brave co-worker, Mr. G. W. Foote, in spite of the bitterest opposition, if not persecution, is still flying the flag of the *Freethinker* to the breeze. Mr. Foote

is one of the very ablest exponents of secular principles in England, and I rejoice that he has won, by hard fighting perhaps, the right to be left alone. He still publishes the comic Bible sketches, which were ostensibly the reason of his late prosecution, but now, the orthodox having obtained a taste of his quality, he is no longer molested, and, I understand, the *Freethinker* is more popular now than ever it was, which is good news. *Secular Thought* extends hearty greetings to its able contemporary across the sea. May it increase and prosper."

LAZARUS no longer lies silently displaying his sores. He has taken to kicking at the door. Unless the suffering and injured can in some way or other make themselves a nuisance they are simply ignored. And the worst of it is, it has often been "the Soas of God" so called, who have been most diligent in stifling the cry of the "earnest expectation of the creature." In Ireland, for instance, the Church was actually organised, established, and endowed as a means of preventing the realisation by the people of their rights to their means of subsistence. And in London, when the unemployed came to sound the chapel bell in Trafalgar Square, the orthodox, with few exceptions, applauded the dispersal of the starving multitude by the dragoons of Scotland Yard. In the Southern States many of the clergy held that the Abolitionist was the child of the devil, and to this day, in our own country, it is the Church which, on the strength of misapplied texts from St. Paul, is the chief pillar of resistance to the earnest expectation of the female creature to equal rights.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

GOOD. But why "misapplied" texts of St. Paul? Surely the texts are plain enough. Why too are the clergy of the Southern States marked out as the special enemies of Abolition? The Northern clergy were just as bigoted and venomous.

MR. GEORGE PAYNE, in another letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, admits that the Oaths Bill is a better measure than he thought, though he still objects to what he considers its inquisitorial character, and thinks a more perfect measure might be carried by-and-bye if the present one were dropped. "Agnostic" takes up the cudgels on Mr. Bradlaugh's behalf, and vigorously defends the Oaths Bill as the best boon that can be hoped for in the existing circumstances. We are glad to see this correspondence continued. The more discussion the more light.

THE *Church Reformer*, in an article on "Bryant and May," says "it is a crying scandal that the Bishop of the great Church in this diocese should have left it to an Atheist to do what he ought long ago to have done."

MR. R. W. HUGHES informs us that the local Branch resumed its open-air propaganda on Peckham Rye last Sunday morning. Mr. W. Heaford was the lecturer, and his audience numbered over three hundred. The interruptions were few—for Peckham Rye, and the Branch hopes to continue the lectures without the disorder of previous seasons.

THE British Association will soon be meeting at Bath. The arrangements seem to be completed, with the exception of a sermon in the Abbey Church. The time and place are fixed, but a blank is left for the name of the preacher. Mr. Foote will be happy to oblige.

THE Sorbonne, the theological University which relentlessly condemned and burnt every heretical work during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has distinguished itself by appointing a professor of evolution. Truly the world does move. Voltaire's work has not been in vain.

OUR friend, M. Clemetshaw Cilwa, French delegate to the International Conference of Freethinkers and one of the organisers of the Conference in Paris next year, announces a work entitled *Les Martyrs et Heros de l'Emancipation Universelle*. The *Freethought Calendar* of citizen Sigward will also be published under the title of the *Centennial Almanack of the French Revolution*.

THE *Port Elizabeth Spectator* reports a successful anniversary meeting of the Port Elizabeth Freethought Association. Mr. E. B. Rose, formerly of South London, but who is now devoting himself to the task of propagating Freethought in South Africa, presided. Among the jocular toasts were "Mother Eve and the Devil, the first advocates of free discussion and of the acquisition of knowledge." Mr. E. B. Rose goes on to Kimberley.

THE *Radical Leader* is launched at last, and we trust our readers will pay her a visit and inspect her build and fittings. We hope she is destined for a long and prosperous voyage. Leaving metaphor we may state that No. 1 contains a variety of interesting matter. John Morley heads a series of "Political Leaders," and the Eleusis a series of "Radical Clubs." Foreign affairs are in the hands of an old war-correspondent. With a view to the approaching elections, "The London School Board and its Work" are exhaustively treated. Mr. Harrison's "Cromwell" and Walt Whitman's "Democratic Vistas" are lengthily reviewed. There are also leading articles and a choice stock of paragraphs.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

III.—ORIGEN AND PORPHYRY.

ORIGEN. It grieves me, O young friend, that thou who hast always received instruction with modesty both from me and from our common master, Plotinus, shouldst break away from the true Christian faith and return to heathenism.

PORPHYRY. Sincere convictions should not grieve you, O Adamantinus. I look on the opinions of my youth as cramping swaddling bands which I have outgrown.

O. The wisest are now leaving the follies of idol-worship and embracing the faith of the true God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

P. Class me not with idol worshippers, O father, though indeed the images are but symbolical representations of real natural forces, while your God and your Jesus Christ seem to me entirely mythical.

O. We have the records showing how God appeared to Moses and the prophets, while the miracles of Jesus Christ are attested in the gospels.

P. When God has anything to say to me he will surely say it to myself. Your gospels are like the votive tablets recording the miraculous cures of Æsculapius. They are the outcome of imagination and credulity.

O. There is the more sure word of prophecy.

P. Which your writers contort most wondrously in order to make them apply to their legends.

O. Does not Daniel distinctly refer to the coming of the Messiah and mark the exact time of his advent?

P. I have examined this matter. The forger of that work lived in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. This is proved by its narrating as in vision the events from the time of the alleged author to that date; by the use of Greek words; and by many other circumstances. Even Hippolytus allows it. The Jews do not place the book among the prophets. How comes it, pray, that they reject the prophesied Messiah while he is accepted by the Gentiles?

O. Their hearts are hardened, so that they have even invented a story of Jesus being begotten by one Panthera.

P. A man panther is a more probable father than a ghost pigeon.

O. The Holy Spirit appearing like a dove is but an allegory. But why do you heed only the outworks and turn against the inner doctrines of our religion?

P. Heart and head alike revolt against them. Your conceptions of God are such that it is more impious to share them than to slight the images of the gods. He ordains evil for his own glory; makes man capable of sin and then because Adam sins damns all posterity. At last he sends his own son to be sacrificed in an out-of-the-way corner, that believers in such rubbish may enjoy eternal felicity while all others are everlastingly tormented.

O. This must not pass as a statement of my belief.

P. It is so taught in your church, as I have heard from infancy.

O. Much that you accept as literal is purely figurative. All that story of the Garden of Eden is allegory.

P. Then is not your God an allegory also?

O. Nay, for God is the infinite personal spirit that acts in all and through all.

P. I cannot understand how the infinite can be a person. But let us not enter into the quicksand of metaphysics. If your religion is true it should approve itself to all alike, without any subtleties of interpretation.

O. No, for all are not equally fitted to receive it.

P. I agree that man makes his religion in accordance with his own mind. That of the Christian seems to me evidence of superstitious barbarity. What ridiculous stories are those you tell of your Christ-God being tempted by the devil, of his casting devils into pigs, cursing a fig-tree, and such-like tales, fitted only for the morbid appetites of those born with a craving for lies.

O. All these again are allegories not to be understood by the carnal mind. Therefore did the psalmist say, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

P. Then is not Christ—your great wonder—also an allegory, as Numenius, the Pythagorean, alleges in his treatise on *The Good*. I incline to think so, for I can find no evidence of his wondrous doings, or even of his existence, from contemporary historians.

O. There is the testimony of the apostles and prophets.

P. By your system of allegorising to explain away

difficulties you can make anything or nothing of all their statements. Either God spoke to Moses or he did not. Either Christ was born of a virgin or he was not so born.

O. Need this astonish you? Even vultures conceive without any connection with a male.¹

P. Your knowledge of natural history should be greater than mine, O father. There are many curious creatures spoken of in your scriptures—talking serpents, six-winged cherubim, cockatrices, dragons, and other animals, which I have been preserved from meeting in my travels.

O. All these are symbolical, like the statues of your gods.

P. Since you take so much as allegory, I wonder you obeyed literally the injunction to the elect and made yourself an eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake, thus depriving posterity of the offspring of so renowned and learned a father.

O. Thou knowest not, O Porphyrius, the troubles of translating the scriptures with no other amanuenses than pious girls.

P. How could you give them so filthy a task? The narratives have often raised a blush on my own cheeks. But your deed was unnatural and shows you akin to the priests of Cybele.

O. My temerity, instead of making me a priest, prevents my being even a presbyter. Elected to the office, Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, cited against me the canon of the law founded on Deuteronomy the twenty-third, that none who is so mutilated can enter into the congregation, and my election was annulled.

P. Or your example might become common, since perverted nature will do the most shocking deeds in the desire to exchange mortality for immortality.

O. My own father went to death for his religion, and I wrote exhorting him to suffer rather than deny Christ.

P. This is another article of my impeachment of your faith. It sets up fictitious virtues, such as devotion to God in place of real duties, such as those to the family, demanded by society. It creates antipathies. What can divide men more than this presumed necessity of belief in an incomprehensible being and mysterious dogmas, which they must regard before all things? The strife between Peter and Paul was but the beginning of endless feuds.

O. Christ came not to bring peace but rather division.

P. Yet he is credited with the saying, A house divided against itself cannot stand.

O. Thou must pray for grace, O Porphyrius, to understand these mysteries, and I, too, will pray for thee, for I would not have thee lost.

J. M. WHEELER.

CHRISTIAN FAIR PLAY.

GLADSTONE'S article on Ingersoll is reprinted in the *Congregational Review* for August. As stated last week, an advertisement of Ingersoll's reply was forwarded to the publisher of this magazine. It has been returned with the following note:—"The proprietors of the *Congregational Review* beg to decline the advertisement 'Reply to Gladstone,' the 'copy' of which is returned herewith." On receiving this pious and elegant epistle we wrote the following letter to Mr. Gladstone:—

"28 Stonecutter Street, E.C.

"July 26th, 1888.

"Dear Sir,—It may interest you to know that the *Congregational Review*, in which your criticism on Colonel Ingersoll is to be reprinted with your permission, declines to insert a civil advertisement of Ingersoll's Reply, which is issued by the Progressive Publishing Company. I may add that precisely the same advertisement has appeared in the *Athenæum*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and other papers.

"No one will suppose you have any sympathy with such contemptible bigotry, or that you have any desire to restrict the circulation of Colonel Ingersoll's Reply among the readers of your criticism; but the proceeding will serve to show you how widely spread is the dogmatic spirit against which you appear to think Colonel Ingersoll thunders too vehemently.

Yours truly, G. W. FOOTE."

Missionary (preparatory to giving a tract)—"My friend, do you know the chief end of man?" Pipor (innocently)—"Na, I dinna mind the chuno; can yo no whustlo it?"

In a certain clergyman's family the conversation turned upon the character of the baby—why he was so naughty. The brother, who had reached the age of twelve, and was studying the steam-engine in the interval of catechism, gave vent to his authority in the following suggestive reply:—"Papa, as we all inherit the sin of Adam, and the baby is such a little fellow, is there not a greater pressure of sin to the square inch on the baby than on the rest of us?"

¹ Origen against Celsus, book i., chap. 37.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

(Continued from p. 213.)

Of the Ten Commandments I have shown in my previous article that four only—namely 6, 7, 8 and 9—can be pronounced “unexceptionable.” But the term as thus applied requires explanation, or rather qualification. With regard to the specific crimes included in the prohibitions I have no hesitation in repeating the term without reservation. With regard to the crimes which they ignore the term is wholly inapplicable, and I have to observe that (1) Murder is only one of the large class of possible “offences against the person”—and that the most heinous; (2) Perjury is only one, and also the most heinous of the class of offences, including libel and defamation; (3) Adultery is only one (and not now in the Law’s eye the worst) of the various forms of sexual criminality. Of the four, therefore, I am disposed to regard only the commandment prohibiting theft as sufficiently exhaustive to dispense with supplementary prohibitions.

The theologian’s receipt for mending—that is plastering—these flaws is the familiar one to which I have already alluded. He “reads in” the requisite legal and moral ideas that are absent from the text, and tells you that the text implies them. It does nothing of the sort. The offences prohibited are specific; and not all the parson-power of the Universe (or even of the universities) can make a species include a genus, the less contain the greater. Only the obliquity of mental vision produced by superstition can account for the adoption of so preposterous a method.

It will hardly, I presume, be questioned that the homage paid to the Decalogue by the religious world is due to a sincere belief—carefully fostered, of course, by the official exponents—that this ancient code is the prototype of all modern successors. For such a belief there is no scientific foundation whatsoever. It would be equally correct to credit the bat with being the prototype of the horse. Compared with certain other Codes, modern and even ancient, it is a mere rude and amorphous essay in legislation. Its archaic character declares itself in every clause. That it had its origin in such an order of moral and legal ideas as would naturally characterise a partially, if not wholly, barbaric community is plainly discernible in (2) its compass, which is, of course, absurdly inadequate to the legislative necessities of civilization proper; (3) in the chaotic aggregation of legal, social, moral and religious ideas; in the “sacred” number of its articles; (4) in the total absence of anything to indicate a graduation of the offences on the scale of heinousness—a defect which deprives the serial arrangement of all significance; (5) in the monstrously disproportionate space assigned to the injunctions of a purely ceremonial import, these also taking precedence of the legal and moral ones, a circumstance which stamps the Code as one manufactured by a priestly legislature; (6) in the prohibition of only four distinctly legal offences, these being highly heinous, but by no means all the highly heinous offences demanding legislative consideration; (7) in the omission of offences less heinous, but nevertheless most serious; (8) in the precept enjoining “honor” rather than love as the best tribute payable by children to parents, a term in which also I trace the hand of a priestly legislature, this latter characteristically laying great stress on the observance of “the tradition of the elders”; and lastly in the flaws and superfluities enumerated in my previous article.

I have said enough, I think, to make it plain that the proper place for a Code of this character is a museum of antiquities.

My simile of the bat and the horse was not selected at hap-hazard. It is the germ of a little parable, or, more strictly speaking, fable, to which I invite the reader’s attention, as to a kind of oasis in the stony tract of my argument.

Once upon a time (and not so very long ago) the Horse, travelling in the dusk, fell in with the Bat, and addressed him as follows: “My friend, what a strange little animal thou art! For at first sight I took thee for a bird, but afterwards I inclined to set thee down as a mouse, and, as such, one that hath a claim to rank in my own family, the mammalian. Thou art different from the birds, in that thy wings serve thee only for a momentary flight, and from the mice in that thou showest thyself only in the dusk. Moreover thy body is exceedingly small and feeble and ugly, so as to unfit thee wholly for the service of man, whose best servant of all is myself, by reason of my swiftness and strength, whether it be for carrying or pulling. But, for thee, what reason is there that thou shouldst so much as live, far less thrive, as thou seemest to do?”

But the Bat answered and said: “Oh, mighty Horse, boast not so loudly. Thou art truly, as thou hast vaunted, a good servant of man. But thou art but a servant, and no more; whereas I am unto them a kind of god. And, as for thy reproach that I show myself only in the dusk, know that the mysteriousness of this my habit accounts in great part for the reverence in which men hold me. And as for thy other cavil, that I being a kind of mouse am also somewhat of a bird, and yet, for any clear object, neither the one nor the other—this also, I assure thee, supports my title to the homage of their veneration. Which latter, how great and earnest it is, appears plainly in every parish of many lands. For in nearly half of their temples they have set up a representation of me, graven on either wood or stone. Moreover, in every parish one of the people is paid to read out loudly and solemnly every seventh day a list of my structural parts, while the rest of the people listen to the recital

on their knees. And after each declaration of a structural part they all pray aloud to Jehovah, my Father-God, that they may be enabled by him to pay me due reverence. And this prayer is often sung, so that Jehovah may the more surely hear it. But some—a very few—are so ill-advised as to ask the reason of this worship accorded to me, saying: ‘Why should we bow down to the Bat?’ And then he that is paid to do so answers, that the Bat, though not clearly a bird is yet more clearly a mouse, and because of his strange appearance, commands the respect of man, but still more by reason of his being a ‘prototype.’ The meaning of which word I know not, nor care to know. But it satisfies by far the greater number of men. Moreover, for such as will not be satisfied with it, there have been ordained laws called Blasphemy Laws, which have power to cause men to be haled into courts and thrust into prisons. Yea, and in other days I have seen men burnt to death on this account. So, Master Horse, thou hast after all little to boast of in comparison with me.”

Now the Horse has his analogue in the Code Napoléon (for example): the Bat represents the Code Jehovah.

In one important respect, however, the resemblance of the Code Jehovah to the Bat ceases in a way decidedly favorable to the latter. The Ten Commandments have been more in human history than a merely passive and, so far, harmless object of idolatrous awe. It concerns me now to show that they are responsible for the perpetration of mischief on a stupendous scale; and this by reason of what they enjoin as well as by reason of what they omit.

W. M. M. RORISON, B.A.

(To be concluded.)

OBITUARY.—We regret to announce the death of Mr. Hiscock, the energetic secretary of the Finsbury Branch. He was buried on Tuesday at Chingford Cemetery, Mr. Robert Forder reading the Secular Burial Service. Mr. Hiscock will be greatly missed. He was an active social reformer as well as a Freethinker—a moving spirit in the Basketmaker’s Association as well as in the Finsbury Branch.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BABY BEATERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF “THE FREETHINKER.”

Noticing an “Acid Drop” in the current *Freethinker* (29th July, 1888), referring to the prosecution of the Rev. John Moulsoy, by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, I am desirous of drawing your attention to the following extract from the *Child’s Guardian*, published monthly by the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, edited by the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, Hon. Sec., dated 1st August, 1888, page 58:

“It is remarkable that the only two men whom we have had to imprison twice for assaults on a child, Duncan and Rouse, have been sober, well read, fine, and otherwise well conducted specimens of their class. Neither of them had the sullen, savage look, which so often goes with general brutality. One read science, and the other was strong on languages, and both regarded the Bible as false. . . . ‘The Bible is false,’ he says, said Charles’ mother. ‘Utterly false,’ chimed the little voice.”

I read the case of Duncan through, and it is impossible to imagine anything more brutal than the account given. I was so much affected that, although I have heavy responsibilities to meet from my small means, I had decided to subscribe to the Society until I read the portion which I have copied above. When I consider that so noble an object as the prevention of cruelty to innocent children, can be seized on and prostituted for the purpose of striking a cowardly, treacherous blow at a class of people whom the Rev. Editor dislikes, I think it best to assist the cause of the suffering little ones through some other channel. I wonder has the Rev. Mr. Waugh given consideration to the revolting episode which resulted from the founder of his religion taking it into his head to become a baby. I refer to Matthew ii., 16.

I wish you could do something to let Mr. Waugh know that he has been understood.

Yours truly,

A. LEWIS.

[Mr. Lewis might have added the texts from Solomon—“He that sparoth his rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him,” Proverbs xiii., 31. Withhold not correction from the child. . . . Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell,” xxiii., 13—14.—Edron.]

PROFANE JOKES.

Mamma: “And who dwelt in the garden of Eden, Freddie?”
Freddie: “Oh, I know; the A-lamscas.”

The congregation were singing, “I would not live alway, I ask not to stay,” when lightning struck the church steeple and the scramble began.

TEACHER (at the Mission S.S.)—“Yes, children, Daniel was cast into a den of lions, but not one of them dared to touch him. How strange—” Pupil (scoornfully)—“Aw dat’s nuthin’, I soon a duck do that act in der cirklis las’ year.”

“I wonder why Mr. Green hollers so when he prays?” remarked Mr. Dimdale on Sunday after church. “He has to,” piped in the small Dimdale from his perch at the window, “it says so in the Bible.” “I should like to know where?” suggested Mr. Dimdale. “Don’t it say ‘hollered he Thy name?’” answered the small boy with convincing promptness.

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