

THE FREETHINKER

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

Sub-Editor—J. M. WHEELER.

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[PRICE ONE PENNY.



CAN-CAN IN EXCELSIS.

THE eternal hosannas and singular manners
Of the night-shirted loafers who carol above
Disgusted Jehovah the frolicsome Rover
And he wildly exclaimed to the Shepherd and Dove:—
"Since I kicked out the Devil I've ne'er a revel,
My kingdom with sanctified milksops is crammed;
All convivial fellows have gone to blow bellows,
Or to pile up the coals on the top of the damned.
When I ruled autocratic, the Boss of the Attic,
I ne'er knew the feeling which mortals call 'low,'
Now I'm almost a ruin—it's entirely the doin',
Of what blaspheming scoffers denote as 'the Co.'"
Said Jesus the gentle "Your qualities mental
I fear are disordered by wittles and wine;
You are getting dyspeptic and seem cataleptic—
Why can't you at once in my favor resign?"
Here the Comforter twittered "Pray don't be embittered,
Dear Jesus your ways should be lamb-like and winning,
And 'Eadem Semper' repress your bad temper,
I swear I can hear all the devils a-grinning."
Said Jah to the Lamb "Four is better than three,
The greater the number the greater the spree.
Three people can't well play at cribbage and whist."
Said Jesus to Jahveh "Old pardner, your fist!"
"There's Michael," said Jesus; "Damn Michael," said Jah,
"I've a cove in my eye who is better by far:
He's aye good for a lark—at nothing he'll stick."
"And the person in question?" "Our relative, Nick."
God's word is his bond—in a second, no more,
The Devil shot up through a trap in the floor.
He came up so quickly, he fell with a slap
On Jesu's broad bosom and Jahveh's big lap.
With shaking of hands and polite salutations,
Old Nicholas greeted his friends and relations;
While the angels flocked round with effusive applause,
Admiring his narrative, antler's and claws.
But Michael flew off with a scowl most uncivil,

Declaring he never would "go to the divvle."
Now pint pots of porter and brandy-and-water,
And other strong liquids a god might get tight on,
Were brought in by waiters whose heavenly status
Was lower than that of the angels with white on.
Thus, the ice being broken, the holy quartette,
With much satisfaction, proceeded to "wet."
We'll imagine the sights that were seen on the heights,
Such roaring and singing and shouting and quaffing;
Jah related such "scorchers," Old Nick was "in tortures,"
And teetotal angels grew husky with laughing.
At length some old whiskey made Jahveh feel frisky,
So he leapt from his throne with surprising agility,
And commenced a rum dance (which the natives of France
Are said to perform with delight and ability),
With "Come join me as soon as you've got in your ballast" (wine
"In my favorite fling with the maidens of Palestine."
Approving the notion, they put down their "lotion,"
And each tried the highest his trotters to fling;
While the angels in ranks manœuvred their shanks
Like the loose-jointed mannikins worked by a string.
And Peter came racing, as blithe as a cricket,
Neglecting the souls who were thumping the wicket.
Then David the Roué, so jovial grew he,
Poured forth from his harp an inspiring measure
And every can-can-er, forsaking "Hosanna,"
Yelled loudly the strain with hilarious pleasure,
And the halos and diadems jingled and jangled
(Especially when night-shirts and shin bones got 'tangled).
But Jahveh, tired out (he's infernally stout),
Desisted, at length, from his vigorous capers,
And the others all sank on a damp, cloudy bank,
Save Mike who expressed his disgust for the "slapers."
Sweet visions swept fast through the father's hot brain,
And he lived o'er his gory-hued youth once again,
When he reigned o'er his people, a deity tribal,—
You'll find the account in his filthy old Bible, EX-RITUALIST

PARKER'S PROGRAMME.

DR. PARKER is an ambitious man. Besides preaching on Sundays and other times at the City Temple, writing a large number of volumes called *The People's Bible* in order to explain the real meaning of that obscure author the Holy Ghost, and holding Monday confabulations with working men, he aspires to form a reunion of quarrelsome Christians under the sacred banner of what George Eliot called "the utmost liberty of private haziness." As usual, Dr. Parker broaches his project in the *Daily News*. In the form of a letter he discloses the results of his recent mental and spiritual throes. The mountain has groaned in labor, and brought forth, not a mouse, but a cloud.

The oracle of the City Temple proposes several things. The first is "The total abolition, as tests of orthodoxy, of all written creeds, standards, and catechisms, as largely responsible for the infidelity and hypocrisy of the world." How delightful! There is to be no Christianity in particular, only Christianity in general; in other words, no Christianity at all except the name. The Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Atonement, the inspiration of the Scripture, are all to be set aside as trivialities. Well, now, that is precisely what we think them, yet we shrink from calling ourselves Christian. We still pay Christianity the respect of supposing that it means *something*. But Dr. Parker seems to be of a different opinion. His formula is—Christianity = X, and X = anything you please. We suspect that this canny preacher understands two things; first, that dogmatic (or real) Christianity is played out with intelligent people; second, that there is still good business in the name. The old original partners of the firm being fatally discredited, Dr. Parker wishes to turn the concern into a limited liability company; and we dare say he is quite willing to become chairman of the board of directors.

Freethinkers, however, are not such simple birds as to be caught by a little of Dr. Parker's salt sprinkled on their tails. They differ from him in having principles. Their "infidelity," as he calls it, is not occasioned by creeds, standards, and catechisms. They read the Bible for themselves, instead of studying Dr. Parker's wonderful Commentary, and they are thoroughly convinced of its human origin. They regard its miracles as fairy tales, its science as childish, its absurdities as infantile, and its morality as terribly mixed. They recognise some good things in it, but they feel that the worship of this single book is the worst form of spiritual slavery. If Dr. Parker will hold some confabulations with "infidels," he will find that he has quite mistaken their position.

Dr. Parker's second proposal is decidedly "cool." He asks the Evangelical party to secede from the Church of England! This will enable them to get rid of the Thirty-nine Articles, which are certainly as credible as the statements that God started the human race with a clay man and an amputated woman, that he showed Moses his "glory," and that he carried on an amour with a carpenter's bride. But, letting that pass, Dr. Parker does not tell the Evangelical parsons, whom he invites to leave the Church, how they are to obtain a living. Seven at least out of every ten of them are unfit for any other occupation. Their talents would scarcely find them bread and cheese in the open market. Dr. Parker, therefore, invites them to face destitution; and a knowledge of human nature, if only derived from a study of himself, should convince him that this is like crying for the moon. Surely Dr. Parker has heard of the Vicar of Bray.

"The approach of all Christian communions to closer fellowship and more active coöperation" is the next plank in Dr. Parker's programme. Excellent! But when will they begin? This sentimental desire has been expressed in every generation, but the millenium of Christian harmony is as far off as ever. Whitaker's list of Christian sects is always lengthening. In the Church of England there is bitter dissension, and Mr. Spurgeon's quarrel with the Baptists over the fine old doctrine of everlasting damnation shows how Nonconformists can dispute like hungry dogs over a succulent bone.

Elevating faith above form, and letting all controversies be about great subjects, is another fine proposal. It looks excellent until you inquire, What *are* great subjects? Then you discover that every point of theology is great; as, indeed, it must be if it comes from God. So far as men are concerned, one divine doctrine is as great as another. There are no degrees in absolute truth.

We quite agree with Dr. Parker that religious equality should be established before the law. But we fear that we understand "religious equality" in a different sense. Dr. Parker wants all *Christians* made equal before the law, while we want to see all *men* equal before the law. His equality only extends to the mouters of his own shibboleth. If he denies this, let him help to repeal the Blasphemy Laws, and all other laws which rob Freethinkers of the primary rights of citizens. By doing this he will prove his sincerity. By not doing it, as we expect, he will prove himself a mere word-spinner, a pulpit charlatan, a trafficker in fine phrases without a grain of honest value.

Certainly the "science of conduct" is better than the "non-science of hair-splitting." But what *is* the science of conduct, and what *is* the non-science of hair-splitting? Conduct cannot, in our opinion, be separated from conviction. If Jesus, for instance, was God, and his injunctions are divine, it is perfectly clear that marrying a divorced woman is a crime. Secular morality laughs at this canon of ethics, and says it is a matter for the man who marries her. If he is satisfied no one has any reason to complain. This is one illustration, and we might adduce a thousand. As for hair-splitting, a great many people put all theology under that head. Disputes about the Trinity, Grace, Predestination, Free Will, and Salvation, are all hair-splitting in the sense that they are disputes about words. There is no *fact* in the controversy on which the disputants may take their stand. It is logomachy from beginning to end.

Finally Dr. Parker wishes to see "man helping man wherever there is honest poverty or legitimate want." But there is nothing distinctively Christian about this. Charity is independent of the Bible. Hearts glow with sympathy irrespective of creeds. Love is the natural sun of life. The seeds of kindness spring up in every human soil. Before Jesus was born the flowers of goodness made the world beautiful, and when he is forgotten they will brighten the fields of life and enrich the air with their exquisite perfume.

G. W. FOOTE.

ST. PAUL AND WOMAN.

If the Apostle of the Gentiles was living now he would have an opportunity of launching out one of his well-directed curses like that which smote Elymas with blindness, as recorded in the veracious Acts of the Apostles. The writer of the article in the *Westminster Review*, to which allusion has already been made, not only considers St. Paul the great antagonist of the woman's movement, but deeming the Pauline doctrine of the wife's subjection and the husband's lordship opposed alike to reason and conscience, she says with the heroine of "John Ward, Preacher," there remains but "one thing to do—give up the Bible."

We say *she*, for there is little doubt the writer of the article is of the sex Paul had such little partiality for. We know not if there was any truth in the story told by those early Christians, the Ebionites, to the effect that Paul wished to marry the daughter of the high priest but was jilted; at any rate, it is pretty evident from 1 Cor. vii., 7, that he was a sour old bachelor. All his references to women are of the same character. As the writer in the *Westminster Review* remarks: "Again and again he affirms in the clearest and most pronounced terms that the position of the woman in general is a secondary and subordinate—nay, a servile one. He returns to the theme and dilates upon it; he enjoys, almost fondles, the idea that the woman must remain, as she has ever been, "under obedience" and "in silence." In one place, significantly breaking into the personal pronoun, he proclaims, with half-sacredotal, half-masculine arbitrariness, and with a note of irrepressible personal exultation, "I suffer not a woman to teach!" If Paul could have read the article in the *Westminster Review* and have known it to be written by a woman, we fancy there would have been an eminently Christian exhibition of temper, and perhaps another case for an ophthalmic hospital.

In the seventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, where Paul deals with the marriage relation, he puts that institution on a purely bestial basis, and says he that giveth a virgin in marriage doeth well, but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." Not a word as to the possibility of a girl having a will of her own in the matter. In a succeeding chapter (xi., 6-10) he insists that "the woman" must either be covered (wear a veil,

as they do in the East) or "let her also be shorn." "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, for as much as he is the image and glory of God: *but the woman is the glory of the man.* For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." The verse which follows, "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because she of the angels," has considerably puzzled the commentators. We think, however, it is illustrated by similar precepts in the Koran. Paul, like Mohammed, evidently thought that even the angels might fall into the snares of female beauty. A little further on (xiv., 34—35) Paul again says "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Paul well knew that the whole tenor and spirit of the Bible touching the status of woman is that her main mission is but to minister to the baser passion of man—his inferior, not his equal. But he continues, "if they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home." Woman's lot, according to the Apostle, is to be submissive and ignorant, or if she wishes to learn to ask her husband, whose slave she is. Who can suppose that if women had the writing of the Bible it would have contained such teaching as this?

Paul who said Wives, obey your husbands, said also Slaves obey your masters. The time is approaching when the one injunction will be no more heeded than the other. The Mohammedans, whose social system is so often stigmatised by Christians, simply carry out the teaching of Paul. That his doctrine virtually meant the slavery of women is evident from Eph. v., 22, where he says, "Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands *as unto the Lord.*" That is to say the submission must be unquestioning and complete. "For," he says, "the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the Church. . . . Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands *in everything.*" And again he says, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." Who can doubt that this most immoral teaching, which is inculcated upon every boy and girl from their school-days, is the fruitful cause of unhappy unions. A self-respecting woman before placing her life within the power of any man might reasonably demand that he repudiate the despotic doctrine of Saint Paul.

J. M. WHEELER

ACID DROPS.

At the great Liberal demonstration which Mr. John Morley attended at Portsmouth last week, the vicar said he had been bidden as a minister of religion "not to consort with Mr. Morley, who was described in terms which he would not read to them." The Rev. E. P. Grant is an ardent Gladstonian, and is above the bigotry to which he alluded. The spirit he despises is nevertheless a genuine product of Christianity, which says, "have no fellowship with the unbeliever," and "if any man come unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your home, neither bid him God speed."

A PERSON who signs himself "A Lover of Truth and Consistency," writes to the *Portsmouth Times* reprobating the conduct of Mr. Grant in standing beside Mr. John Morley, and says he would lead his fellow townsmen to believe that the man who knows no Christ is in his—a Christian minister's—opinion as fit to govern as the profoundest believer in Divine Providence. "This," he continues, "was the apparent end which prompted him to leave other and more pressing engagements to afford an oratorical display at the circus, to receive the applause of an audience largely composed of Freethinkers." A "Lover of Truth and Consistency" is evidently a good Christian holding that Christ has no fellowship with Belial. We are delighted to hear that the immense audience at the circus was "largely composed of Freethinkers."

THE Rev. J. H. Coghlan, a minister of the Church of England, has been convicted at the Central Criminal Court of fraud and conspiracy. His two associates, Manning and Rimell, were recommended by the jury to mercy, but the reverend sinner was left to his fate.

W. E. HOWARD, of electric sugar fame, joined the Salvation Army at Windsor (U. S.) under the name of Capple. His long beard, devout looks, and hearty "amens" got him a fine reputation, and he soon led the meetings and the singing. "His taste," says an American paper, "ran towards the sweets of salvation, and all the revival hymns that had any reference to saccharine qualities found favor in his eyes." But on hearing

that he was wanted the worthy soldier of the Lord "sloped" and now they can't find him, though they seek him earnestly with many prayers.

THE wife of John L. Sullivan, the bruiser, has joined the Salvation Army. She keeps a boarding house at Providence, and "Captain" Howland converted her after many visits, which set the neighbors talking. But, unfortunately, there was a row at the meeting when the convert was trotted out; Mary McLane, an old sweetheart of the "Captain" denouncing him furiously, and dividing the meeting into two halves, which very nearly fought a pitched battle. The Yankees are wondering what John L. will think of the business.

THE Rev. John Owen Owen, described as an ex-Wesleyan Methodist minister, has been committed to Carnarvonshire assizes, without bail, on a charge of obtaining a number of gold watches on pretence that they were required to select from for a presentation.

ROBERT WILSON, a member of the Salvation Army at Leicester, has been emulating the old patriarchs and taking to himself a second wife. Justice Stephen has little sympathy with the good old Bible ways, and harshly gave Robert Wilson five years penal servitude.

THAT "eternal want of pence" which we are told "vexes public men" has driven the Rev. William Penfold Cope into the Bankruptcy Court. It appears that this bankrupt Baptist minister used to borrow from the wealthier members of his congregation, preying on them in fact after praying with them. He especially favored the widows and got some considerable "mites" from them, although his official income from his chapel was £325 a year.

THE *Northern Echo* of Monday last reports a "Savage Fight for Chapel Furniture" at Norton (East Riding), Yorkshire. The minister and chapel trustees appear to have been engaged in a severe tussle with some of the congregation, in the course of which one Cartwright was struck, bruised and kicked, his eye blackened and his lip split. When muscular Christianity comes to the front it usually leaves evidence that it has been "moved by the spirit."

A PARSON and his parish at Adelaide, Australia, recently parted with mutual willingness, and in his farewell discourse the minister freed his mind as follows:—"I do not regret our separation, dear brethren, for three good and valid reasons. The first is that you don't love me, the second that you don't love one another, and the third that God does not love you. You don't love me—my salary is several months in arrear; you don't love one another, or there would not be such a dearth of marriages among you; and God doesn't seem to love you as you ought to be loved, because there have been no funerals among you lately."

THE New York Senate opens business with prayer, and on February 5 the gentleman who performed the function was the Rev. Dr. Leech, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who has a way of telling the Almighty that the faults of politics are due to the Democrats and the blessings to the Republicans. When Dr. Leech had finished, Senator Grady sprang to his feet and, in a passionate manner, moved to omit the obnoxious supplicator from the invitations for the rest of the session. Senator Ewen stood up for the preacher, and asked why Senator Grady felt so hurt because Dr. Leech asked the Lord to save them from political gamblers? This was a pretty retort, and a fine old storm was brewing; but the Lieutenant Governor said the discussion was out of order, and the prayer business will have to be settled behind the scenes.

THE Rev. F. Haslock, a Conservative clergyman, who complains already of being overworked—that is, for a clergyman—has been ignominiously defeated down at Grays, where he aspired to become a guardian of the poor. He only obtained 280 votes, while the popular candidate, Mr. F. W. Pelling, polled 683. Evidently the inhabitants want the parson to stick to his old-fashioned soul-saving business, and not to interfere with things that are too high for him.

THE *Irish Catholic* is a journal of the good old blarney sort. Among its recent "stretchers" is a circumstantial account of the awful deaths of several Freethinkers at Arras, in France, who sat down to a meat supper on Good Friday and burlesqued the last spread of J. C. and his apostles. One died a mass of corruption, five or six others have also perished, and the rest of the baker's dozen are trembling in their shoes. This is a very pretty story, but what a pity it all happened such a long way off!

HERE is another Good Friday scandal—from the same source. M. Demay, a Radical member of the Municipal Council of Boulogne, was invited to join a group of forty Freethinkers on the anniversary of the Crucifixion, but having to go to sea in his fishing smack he was unable to attend. Nothing, apparently, has happened to the forty wretches who ate meat together on Good Friday, but M. Demay, who was absent, went down in a

storm, and with him the whole crew, although they were shocked at their skipper's profanity. Such are the notions of divine justice advocated by Catholic journals!

At the Princes Hall, Picadilly, the other day, Prof. E. Douglas Archibald, M.A., delivered a lecture (with illustrations) on the phonograph, and said "not only would it record sounds, but repeat them as many as 7,000 times." What a pity Jesus Christ did not invent one of these machines and carry it about with him while on this earth, for then we should know exactly what he did say, and hear his own blessed voice.

THE Rev. Dr. Thos. Hamilton has issued a book entitled *Beyond the Stars; or, Heaven, its Inhabitants, Occupations, and Life*. He should follow this with a work on "The Other Side of the Moon, with a biography of the man who was sent there for picking up sticks on a Sunday."

THE ministers are all at loggerheads upon the question submitted to them by the *British Weekly* as to whether Dr. Hannay was right in saying that "the doctrine of eternal torment is practically dead." Most seem to think that even if it was true it should not be stated so bluntly, since ministers are popularly supposed to be bound to believe it.

THE Rev. Marcus Dods objects to Mr. Samuel Laing for criticising "the popular idea that the Christian revelation rests on the assumption of an inspired book." Dr. Dods well knows that the doctrine of inspiration can no longer be defended, but will he tell us what "the Christian revelation" does rest upon. Failing his answer we shall suggest one word, *credulity*.

THE *Shields Daily News* after inserting letters denying that the bishops and clergy are State paid, deprecates in a leading article the utility of newspaper discussions on religious questions.

As this question is continually cropping up we may as well say a word or two thereon. Mr. Gladstone is quoted as an authority against the clergy being State paid, although when speaking upon the Irish Church Bill, March 30, 1868, he said the Church Establishment was "but an appropriation of public property," and he called that institution a "great system of State endowment." The whole question about the clergy not being State paid is a war of words. It is as if soldiers should deny that they are State paid, because the money comes through the War Office. The bulk of the payments made to the clergy are derived from tithes which, as compulsory payments, were created by law, although the law in ancient time was that the poor were to have share of the tithes.

It was from the State that the great bulk of other "Church property" in the shape of glebes and other Church lands has been derived. The whole of ecclesiastical property is property impressed with a public trust to support such religious services as Parliament shall from time to time appoint. Any money or land given to the Church is therefore given to the nation, exactly as any book or antiquity given to the British Museum is the property of the nation. For those who are in present possession to claim it as their own, or to deny their support from the State, is exactly the same as if the attendants at the British Museum were to claim the valuables there stored, and to deny that they are State paid because the money comes through trustees.

No doubt the church has a moral claim to specific recent endowments given by its members with the intention of their being devoted solely to the Church of England. Many of the private endowments, as is well-known, were given to the Church when it was Roman Catholic, and just as these have been applied to the Reformed Church, so can they and others be again applied for such objects as the State deems fit.

THE congregation of the Rev. Dr. Yodyzsus, of the Polish Lutheran church in New York, wish to remove their pastor. He has collected a good deal of money for a new church, for which he fails to account. As Dr. Yodyzsus carries pistols with him, the congregation are rather chary of interviewing him. He shot at one of them who excited him recently.

ACCORDING to the *Freeman*, a wonderful work of grace is going on in Cardiff. People are being converted in shoals, and business men are asking "How many yesterday?" The principal covert seems to be a barber, who notifies that he will no longer do any trade on the Lord's Day. If this is all the moral effect of conversion the revivalists haven't much to boast of. What have they done with the Cardiff lusingtons, who are a numerous band? What have they done with the cheaters, thieves and prostitutes?

THE Rev. Stopford Brooke preached on Immortality at Bedford Chapel last Sunday morning. He gave a beautiful account of what is in store for us, but forgot to give proofs. His dream of immortality is a re-hash of the ancient theory of metempsychosis. In theology, at any rate, there is no new thing under the sun.

THE Roman Catholic Vicar-General at Allahabad was fined 100 rupees for "criminal intimidation," he having, it was asserted, threatened a lady member of the church with exclusion from communion and refusal of absolution if she prosecuted a brother of the church for assault. The Sessions Judge, however, on appeal, cancelled the conviction.

THE shadow of the Inquisition has not departed from Spain. Religious liberty is practically unknown in that country. Free-thought, of course, is out of the question; but even Protestantism has to walk very gingerly. Its pastors frequently get into trouble for attempting to hold services, and the Supreme Court has recently confirmed the decision of the lower tribunals that it is an offence not to take off your hat to the Host or to a Catholic procession. The other day, in Malaga, a Protestant pastor was sentenced to over two years imprisonment and a considerable fine for having dared to reply to a pamphlet in which a Catholic priest had abused Protestantism. Such is the tolerance of the Catholic Church in Spain! It should warn us against the Jesuitism of priests like Cardinal Manning, who pretend, when their Church is in a minority, that it never, never persecutes.

DR. PARKER'S Monday mid-day meetings appear to become more excited and disorderly than ever. When Dr. Parker represented Jesus as saying, "Come unto me all working men," a voice from the crowd shouted "And bring a threepenny-piece with you," and the Doctor's subsequent remarks were overwhelmed in a chorus of laughter. To the question which he asked—"How better could they spend Sunday than by going to church?"—he had numerous replies. Museums, country walks, clubs and halls, being shouted for. One speaker said that with a large family, a small income, and a rapacious landlord he could not afford enough to satisfy the parson. Another declared the schoolmaster was abroad, but not in broadcloth. The working man best spent his Sunday in trying to educate his fellow workmen. John the Baptist Freund, the martyr prophet, put in an appearance, but because he could not obtain a hearing pulled out a penny trumpet and began to blow it, when he was pulled by the coat-tails and tumbled over, disappearing among the seats.

A LITTLE girl of four was asked in her Scripture lesson the other day, What did Samuel answer when the Lord called him? "Oh," she replied, very promptly, "he said, 'Don't wozzy (worry) me: I'se a tumming (coming).'" The same child was one day beginning her dinner (which she had alone) when her mother reminded her that she had forgotten to say grace. "I hav'n't, mamma," she replied, "Well, what did you say?" "I said 'Tank Dod for dood dinner,' and He said, 'V'y welcom, Miss B'ookes; don't mention it.'"—*Christian Leader*.

WRITERS in the Correspondence column of the *Echo* have been discussing the question whether there are female angels. They have pointed out that the Hebrew term *Malach* is masculine, and that all the angels have masculine names and are, indeed, sometimes spoken of as men. But they have forgotten to notice that children were often born after the appearance of these angels to women. If this is not decisive, there is the text which says, "There was silence in heaven for the space of half-an-hour," which, it is said, is conclusive that there are no women there.

ACCORDING to the Rev. Wallace McMullens, Vice-President of the Irish Wesleyan Conference, some time ago a friend of his met the Marquis of Salisbury at a Wesleyan chapel at Tunbridge Wells. He afterwards, on board a Continental steamer, mentioned this to his lordship, who explained that he went in by mistake. When the service was over, he said he was accosted by an old gentleman who shook hands with his lordship and invited him to attend a class at his private residence. The Marquis said, "I have not made up my mind to join a Wesleyan class," whereupon the old gentleman pressed him to at least join in the Lord's supper. The dissenters were more hospitable to the Marquis than he to them, for he has done everything to prevent their having a decent chapel of their own at Hatfield.

FIRE-BURIAL.—The progress of cremation, as a "cause," is summed up in an elaborate series of figures in the new number of *Die Flamme*, the organ of the Berlin "Association for the Promotion of Fire-Burial." Up to August the 1st, 1888, Italy headed the list with 998 cremations; Gotha came second with 554; next America with 287; then Sweden with 39, England with 16, France with seven, and Denmark with one. The number of "crematories" in use at the present date are nine in Italy, six in America, and one each in Gotha, London, Paris, Stockholm, and Copenhagen. The present actual membership of the various Cremation Societies is given as follows:—The Swedish "Society for Fire-Burial," which is the largest in the world, has 3,012 members; its Scandinavian sister, the Danish, follows next with 1,226 members. The Hague Society, with its nine local branches and 1,218 members, is followed at a long interval by Berlin, with its 612 members. Milan has 580; Hamburg, 438; Zurich, 390; Frankfurt-on-Main, 365; Darmstadt, with its suburbs, 316; Vienna, 295; New York, 236; Dresden, 210; Chemnitz, 161; St. Louis, 153; Cincinnati, 150; Buffalo, 128; and Liegnitz, 80. It would seem that the colder countries, which were those that were last Christianised, are the readiest to revert to Pagan burial. Next September a large International Conference will be held in Germany.

MR. FOOTE'S LECTURES.

Sunday, February 24, St. George's Hall, Plymouth; at 11, "Mr. Adam and Mrs. Eve"; at 3, "Peter the Fisherman"; at 7, "Our Father Which Art in Heaven."

March 3, Milton Hall; 10, Newcastle; 11, Middlesboro'; 17, Claremont Hall; 24, Camberwell.

April 7, Birmingham; 14, Hall of Science; 21, Hall of Science; 28, Camberwell.

May 11, Milton Hall; 19, Milton Hall; 26, Camberwell.

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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. Australia, China, and Africa:—One Year, 8s. 8d.; Half Year, 4s. 4d.; Three Months 2s. 2d. India:—One Year, 10s. 10d.; Half Year, 5s. 5d.; Three Months, 2s. 8½d.

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LIVERPOOL CAMDENIST.—Certainly the texts you quote would modify the statement, though as there were only three priests at that time the consumption of pigeons and roast meat must have been miraculous, even if their households assisted. But the texts referred to in the *Bible Handbook*, p. 57, are of a very different tenor. In Leviticus x, 12-13, Moses distinctly tells Aaron and his sons to consume at the altar *themselves* certain portions of the burnt offerings, reserving the wave breasts and heave shoulders for their domestic use. On the other hand, the note is a brief one, and "devoured" does not mean that the priests necessarily consumed every particle, bones and all. It seems to us quite sufficient, especially as references are given to other texts. You must also bear in mind that Aaron and his two sons had no slaves out in the desert, so that Leviticus xxii, 11, could not apply at that time.

W. V.—(1) The "Fates of the Apostles," published in the *Newcastle Chronicle*, is of course derived from Christian sources, but there is not a grain of real history in the whole list. Peter and Paul, the two chief apostles, are said to have been executed at Rome, but there is no sufficient evidence for it; indeed, we might say no evidence at all. The martyrdoms of the other apostles are extracted from a mass of lying and silly legends of later ages, which no sensible man would regard as worthy of the slightest credence. (2) Glad to hear you took eight copies of our Bruno number, and that you intend to take as many whenever we publish such illustrations.

A WAVEREE.—(1) No scholar in Christendom carries a scrap of the Old Testament beyond the time of David, and most scholars decline to go so far. The bulk of the volume came into existence after the Captivity. (2) The 4,004 years period from Adam to Christ is a matter of fancy. The Jews reckon differently, and there are other calculations still. (3) Hospitals existed before Christianity. Every temple of Æsculapins, the god of healing, was open to sick persons, who were treated gratuitously by the priests of this deity. These temples were usually built in salubrious situations, near waters famous for their purity or medicinal qualities. Buddhism also had its hospitals. (4) There were Pagan charities, and there are Buddhist charities. Mohammedans are obliged by their religion to give alms generously. Two and a half per cent is exacted from all persons who have more than the minimum to sustain life; moreover, at the end of the fast of Ramadan, every Moslem is obliged to give special alms to the poor for himself and every member of his family. See Sale's *Koran*, Preliminary Discourse, section iv. Travellers agree that Mohammedans are very charitable.

JESUS IS COMING.—Hardly up to the mark.

B. C. HARMOND.—We are always glad to answer questions, though it is impossible to give exhaustive replies in this column. We hold there is not sufficient evidence that any of the gospels were written by the parties whose names they bear. The only authority for them is tradition. Polycarp is sought to be connected with John by giving an extremely old age to the latter. The story of their being contemporary is on the authority of Irenæus, a writer we think unworthy of credence. The epistle attributed to Polycarp does not mention the gospel writers, but only quotes similar, not identical, passages to some found in the gospels. The subject is fully dealt with in *Supernatural Religion*. Mr. Wheeler's *Frauds and Follies of the Fathers* will also be of assistance. Thanks for cutting.

A. R. (Macclesfield) writes, "I have no sympathy with those who complain about the price and size of the *Dictionary of Freethinkers*. I consider it excellent both in quality and quantity, and it will be a most valuable work when complete."

F. E. AND C. W.—Thanks for your touching letter.

J. BRUMAGE.—Thanks for the papers. We trust Mr. Parris will have the good audiences he merits.

FOX.—Even if we had time to devote to such matters it would be useless for us to apply as you request. What you complain of we believe to be very common. Such agencies rely on their customers not going to law for sixpence.

ONE IN THE FOG.—(1) You must inquire of the Lord. We haven't the slightest information on the subject. Lazarus's life after his resurrection is as obscure as his life before. There is no record of his second death and burial. Perhaps he is still a wandering Jew. Robert Browning has a fine poem, in which an Arab physician

relates his experience with Lazarus after he walked out of his tomb, and we dare say it is quite as true as the original story. (2) Christ is called the Son of God, the son of Joseph, and the son of Mary, for natural and theological reasons. He was the son of Mary in fact, the son of Joseph in politeness, and the son of God in fancy.

W. M. KNOX.—Thanks for the cutting. See "Acid Drops" and "Sugar Plums."

W. H. TAYLOR.—A similar bill was printed in the *Freethinker* some years ago. This new and longer version seems the work of a modern hand.

RECEIVED—Edinburgh Evening News—Menschenthum—Neues Freireligioses Sontags-Blatt—Portsmouth Evening Mail—Portsmouth Evening News—Bulletin des Sommaires—Catholic Times—Liberator—Ironclad Age—Northern Echo—Portsmouth Times—Grimsby News—Bournemouth Guardian—Shields Daily News—Lucifer—Liberty—Truthseeker—La Lanterne—Le Radical—Le Peuple—Brooklyn Daily Eagle—New York Press—Open Court—Eastern Evening News—Secular Thought—Freethought.

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.

PERSONAL.

HAVING paid back a considerable portion of the capital advanced to us in 1886, and having to pay back more very shortly, we shall be happy to hear from any friends who are willing to help us in sustaining and developing our Freethought publishing business. Five per cent. yearly interest is payable on all sums, large or small, and the legal vouchers for the same make them recallable by six months' notice sent in registered letter.

SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. FOOTE had good audiences at Manchester on Sunday. The morning and afternoon meetings showed a decided improvement on his previous visit, and, if possible, the audiences were more enthusiastic than ever.

THE Metropolitan Radical Federation held its annual dinner at St. Paul's Café on Tuesday evening. Mr. James Tims, the honorary secretary, occupied the chair. Mr. G. W. Foote proposed the toast of "The House of Commons," which was responded to by Mr. H. Labouchere, M.P. Mr. G. Standing proposed "Home Rule for Ireland," which was acknowledged by Mr. J. Biggar, M.P. Mr. Ben Ellis, another Freethinker, toasted "The London School Board," Mr. C. A. V. Conybeare, M.P., responding for that important body.

THE Rev. W. Sharman, hon. secretary of the Society for Repealing the Blasphemy Laws, says the Barnsley Secularists should interview Lord Compton, the Liberal candidate, on the subject. We heartily endorse the suggestion. Mr. Sharman will be happy to send any amount of literature on the Blasphemy Laws. His address is Parkfield, Lower Bank Road, Preston.

WE have received the following for the Swedish Prisoners' Fund:—Rev. W. Sharman, 2s. 6d.

MR. FORDER acknowledges the following subscriptions for the Swedish Prisoners' Fund:—H. C., 1s.; F. McD., 1s.; W. Cromack, 2s.; A. Kellaway, 1s. 9d.; H. Bee, 1s.; H. Wrightson, 1s.; E. Sims, 10s.; South Shields Branch N. S. S., 5s.; E. Smith and Son, 2s. 6d.

MR. G. L. ALWARD, of Grimsby, whose narrow defeat at the recent County Council elections we referred to a few weeks ago, contested a seat at the bye elections caused by the elevation of four councillors to the aldermanic bench, and has been returned for the Cleve division. The *Grimsby News* rejoices at his success, and regrets that "means were used of a most unwarrantable nature to vilify Mr. Alward in the eyes of the electors. Old prejudices have been raised and the religious question has, in our opinion, been most unfairly introduced. We are glad that the electors have seen through and resented the dodge that was played upon them, and we congratulate them on having obtained in Mr. G. L. Alward a staunch and true man who will in every way make them a first class representative." So says the *Grimsby News*, and we heartily cry "Hear, hear! Amen!"

MR. ALWARD's majority was a big one. He polled 452 votes, while only 301 were cast for Mr. Allen, whose friends raised the cry of "Atheist!" against his rival. Considering that bigotry did its level worst, Mr. Alward's success is a veritable triumph.

THERE is a good Branch of the National Secular Society at Belfast, and there should be one also at Dublin. Any Freethinkers in the latter city, willing to cooperate in establishing one, should communicate with Mr. W. M. Knox, 44 Stratheden Street, Belfast. Mr. Knox is secretary of the Belfast Branch, and is anxious to form another Branch in the capital city of Ireland.

A NEW and cheaper edition (3s. 6d.) of Mr. S. Laing's *Modern Science and Modern Thought* has been published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall. This work has now reached its sixth thousand.

COL. OLCOTT, who has gone to Japan to convert the Japanese to Theosophy, states on the authority of Leon de Rosny, that there are 12,000 persons in France who are Buddhistically inclined. The Theosophical Society, which is Buddhistic, boasts of twenty-five branches in America.

We hope to publish next week a full report of the discussion on "The Limits of Toleration" between Col. Ingersoll, the Hon. F. D. Coudert, and Gov. S. L. Woodford, at the Nineteenth Century Club of New York.

COLONEL INGERSOLL was not blackballed by the New York Players' Club. The report we published a few weeks ago was unfounded. The *New York Dramatic Mirror*—the organ of the actors—says "The publication was instrumental in showing most strikingly the great orator's popularity, and creating a tremendous amount of indignation among his friends and admirers before its falsity was discovered. The Players couldn't choose a better man than Ingersoll for rejection if they wanted to excite the enmity of the entire profession. The stage and its people have no warmer friend in the world, and surely no abler one."

COLONEL INGERSOLL'S reputation is growing in England. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, on Tuesday, gave a special heading to "An Hour's Chat with the American Bradlaugh." Mr. S. Storey, the member for Sunderland, had an interview with the Colonel, in company with Mr. Andrew Carnegie, and sends a report to the *Newcastle Chronicle*. Mr. Storey wishes he could reproduce Ingersoll's "inimitable delivery."

THE *New York Press* reports a touching tribute delivered by Colonel Ingersoll to the memory of Mrs. Mary Fiske, who was buried in Calvary Cemetery. We quote the following fine paragraph from his short address: "She knew that circumstances and conditions determine character; that the lowest and worst of our race were children once, as pure as light, whose cheeks dimpled with smiles beneath the heaven of a mother's eyes. She thought of the road they had travelled, of the thorns that had pierced their feet, of the deserts they had crossed, and so, instead of words of scorn, she gave the eager hand of help. No one appealed to her in vain. She listened to the story of the poor, and all she had she gave. A God could do no more. The destitute and struggling turned naturally to her. The maimed and hurt sought for her door and the helpless put their hands in hers. She shielded the weak, she attacked the strong. Her heart was open as the gates of day. She shed kindness as the sun sheds light. If all her deeds were flowers the air would be faint with perfume. If all her charities could change to melodies a symphony would fill the sky."

MR. C. B. REYNOLDS, the American "blasphemer," who was defended by Colonel Ingersoll, has had a lively experience at a place called Yankton. He had a large audience one Sunday night, and all was quiet; but on Monday and Tuesday a wretched row was occasioned by an Episcopalian preacher. On Wednesday the noisy parson stayed at home, and the meeting was quiet again. The *Dakota Herald* speaks highly of Mr. Reynolds's oratory.

THE *Freethinkers' Magazine* for February has a capital article entitled, "Should Freethought be Aggressive?" by Captain R. C. Adams of Montreal. The Captain, whose father by the way was a well-known Presbyterian minister in Boston, answers the question thus—"Can we ask shall we be aggressive? How can we help being so! When we contemplate the evils that arise from Christian beliefs, the mental torture and distress, the wasted efforts, the thwarted lives, the lost opportunities, we exclaim with the prophets of old, 'Cry aloud, spare not; lift up the voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgression,' against reason and humanity." If men can forsake home, comfort, and worldly benefits to preach Christ, may not Freethinkers consecrate themselves, their wealth, their powers, to remove the curse of superstition from the minds of their fellow-men?

AN interesting little volume of *Reminiscences of Three Years Among the Americans* is sent over to us from India by Amrita Lal Roy, editor of the *Calcutta Hope*. Mr. Roy is a Hindu, who went to America to see for himself the conditions which bring prosperity to that country. He was for some time engaged in the office of the *New York Truthseeker*, and he says: "At this date I cannot help comparing the conduct of these so-called 'infidels' with that of the pious Christians of New York, to whom I had applied for a situation on my arrival in America—very much to the prejudice of the latter. Nor can I refrain from acknowledging with gratitude that by few persons in New York were the peculiar circumstances in which I was placed so considerably recognised, or so much facility for making my way given to me as by the infidels of the *Truthseeker* office." Mr. Roy's little book is the work of an acute and impartial mind, and we are sure our American friends will value his testimony.

WHILE Moody is evangelising in San Francisco, Mr. Putnam,

one of the editors of *Freethought*, has issued a "Call for a State Liberal Organisation," and has been holding successful meetings at a large hall in San Francisco. In California already Church buildings are taxed, and the Freethought movement is in a forward condition.

JUDGE NORTH—no relation, we presume, to the judge who sent Mr. Foote to Holloway—presided at the California Convention. A good executive committee was formed with a long list of vice-presidents.

THE Secularists of Chicago have succeeded in obtaining an "injunction" restraining the County Commissioners from paying any more money to "St. Mary's Training School," a Roman Catholic institution that had been drawing money for its support from the County treasury. Mr. E. A. Stevens, secretary of the American Secular Union, was the leading spirit in the agitation.

ONE of our subscribers, who is in the brush trade, is desirous of employing a young Freethinker as a packer. Some previous knowledge would be necessary. The wages offered are £1 per week, and excellent board and lodging can be obtained in the town (Cornwall) for 10s. per week. Hours from 8.30 to 7. The present occupant of the situation is a local preacher, who is being shifted to another berth in the same house. Perfect freedom of opinion is secure, and the young man may read as much "blasphemy" as he likes and preach the gospel of Freethought, if he pleases, every evening in the week. Anyone who wishes to apply can obtain the address by writing to us, enclosing a stamped directed envelope for reply.

MR. C. C. CATTELL, of Birmingham, sends us rather late in the day a copy of his *Did Bacon Write Shakespeare?* which is now selling as a People's Edition at twopence. The price is a low one, but we really don't think "the people" care twopence for Mr. Donnelly and his cryptogram. A page of *Hamlet* is generally felt to be worth all the volumes written on this wretched fad. Mr. Cattell's pamphlet, however, is smart, and he gives the Yankee mare's-nester some hard blows.

ERNEST RENAN, whose great books on the history of Israel are now appearing in the English Press, is sixty-six years of age, though of late he has been spoken of as the illustrious "old" scholar. His residence in his beloved Brittany, is on the road from Louannec to Perros, two places known only to a very restricted class of tourists. "I have been hard at work," says the great scholar, "for almost half a century, and yet I know nothing." He is a tremendous worker. He begins early, and leaves off before sunset. Unlike St. Hilaire—a midnight oil-burner and toiler of the small hours—he has all his life been convinced that an hour's rest before midnight was worth two after it.—*Echo*.

HIGHLY appreciate notices of Mr. Wheeler's *Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers* have appeared in the *National Reformer* and the *Commonweal*. The American Freethought papers have given it good preliminary announcements, and we shall soon receive their press notices of Part I. The two parts already published contain the lives of over 240 Freethinkers from Abelard to Julius Cæsar.

WE are publishing the Bruno Statue engraving at twopence instead of threepence, to put it within the reach of every Freethinker. It is now on sale by Mr. Forder.

The warfare of religion against science is to be guarded against in Protestant countries not less than in Catholic; it breaks out in America not less than in Europe. I might exhibit many proofs of this. Do conscientious Roman bishops in France labor to keep all advanced scientific instruction under their own control—in their own universities and colleges? So do very many not less conscientious Protestant clergymen in our own country insist that advanced education in science and literature shall be kept under control of their own sectarian universities and colleges, wretchedly one-sided in their development, and miserably inadequate in their equipment: did a leading Spanish university, until a recent period, exclude professors holding the Newtonian theory; so does a leading American college exclude professors holding the Darwinian theory: have Catholic colleges in Italy rejected excellent candidates for professorships on account of "unsafe" views regarding the immaculate conception; so are Protestant colleges in America every day rejecting excellent candidates on account of "unsafe" views regarding the apostolic succession, or the incarnation, or baptism, or the perseverance of the saints.—*Professor White, President of Cornell University*.

OBITUARY.—We have to record the death of Tom Mead the well-known Shakesperian actor. Mr. Mead died on Sunday at Islington. He was a histrion of the old school. He played leading parts with Phelps at Sadler's Wells, and gained a high reputation for intelligence and conscientiousness. Latterly he served under Irving. Mr. Mead was an earnest Freethinker who always avowed his heresy. He had many friends, but we fancy not a single enemy.

A VISION.

It is computed," says the *Echo*, "that 97,790 die, and 100,800 are born daily."

I began to reflect on the terrible amount of human suffering involved in all this coming and going, and then with the aid of David's "lamp to my feet" I followed "the departed" beyond the ken of the five carnal senses. "The spirit shall return unto God who gave it," says the preacher, and with the eye of faith I saw a continuous stream of human intelligences leaving this globe, moving, as it were by the law of gravitation towards a common centre—God. They were from every clime and nation under heaven—Esquimaux, Africans, Europeans, Hindoos, Arabs, Americans, Chinese, etc., all passing along the same road at the rate of 97,790 per day.

"As the tree falls, it lies;" so of this vast concourse—their minds unchanged—it was evident very few comprehended their new circumstances. A few, very few, indeed, knew "all about it"; they were bound for glory, but the majority, the "ninety and nine," with their old ideas, loves, hates, desires, and fears were impelled onward in utter amazement. At length they reached the throne, and "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened and I saw them judged." "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God," resounded through heaven's arches, and all heathens and profane persons, as Esau (who forgave a lying, deceitful brother who had injured him) were separated from the multitude like goats from sheep. "All liars shall be there," said the dread judge; and all the Americans and Chinese converts from among the crowd moved to the left. "Neither drunkards nor revilers shall inherit the kingdom of God;" and the "rulers of the waves," some hiccupping, with others still reviling, demanded justice, and asked God if it were right to "send them strong delusions (like the sciences) that they might believe a lie, and that they all might be damned," according to 2 Thess. ii. 11? But the inexorable judge proceeded:—"Thieves, covetous, extortioners, rebels, to the left; and parsons, paupers, landlords, and Home Rulers did the grand march past, with a "left wheel." They were soon followed by adulterers, etc., and then by all those who did not "rightly believe in the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ," who "divided his substance" or "confounded his person," all who were not "chosen elect," those who had faith, but not saving faith—these were all called forth to follow the rejected.

Then said Jesus to the one that remained: "Come up hither, thou blessed of my father, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you;" but to those on the left he said: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Then this vast multitude went "away into everlasting torment," some pleading ignorance, mental derangement, kleptomania, vicious nature inherited, over which they had no control, others pleading for dear ones on earth, who, unconscious of their danger were following their examples, while others were defying and deriding the good

God of all grace whose name is love, for damning them for his own glory.

As their shrieks, yells, and entreaties were choked in sulphurous smoke, I said with the scoffers of old: "Where is the promise of his coming" to put an end to this prolific creation of human suffering? And Peter answered (2 Peter, iii. 9), "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise . . . but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish;" but I said how can this be, seeing that 97,790 go through this ordeal every day (and the number is increasing by 10,000 daily) of whom so few "escape the damnation of hell."

HENRY A. ROGERS.

PROFANE JOKES.

The contribution box will now be passed round for the heathen fund, announced the minister. "Why, pa, you put that bad half-crown on the plate," whispered Miss Bagley. "That's all right," replied the father, "you don't suppose a cannibal knows the difference between that and a good half-crown."

An old gentleman, speaking to a young lady, and commenting upon her freshness and good looks, remarked, "Ah, my dear, may you long retain them! Yours is a happy period of life. You know nothing yet of the jealousies, the heartburnings, the contentions, the rivalries that beset the pathway of existence." "Don't I, though?" she interrupted. "I want you to understand that I belong to a church choir."

"When you say your prayers, Georgie, ask God to make you a better boy. You have been very naughty to-day." The youngster accordingly put up his petitions in the usual form, and then before closing with "Amen," he added: "And please, God, make me a good boy." He paused a second, and then, to the utter consternation of his mother, concluded with unabated gravity: "Nevertheless, not my will, O Lord, but thine, be done!" The mother knew not what to say, and very wisely she said nothing.

A story is told of a Sunday-school teacher in a certain backwoods settlement in a neighboring county, which is worth publishing. She had a new class of young scholars, the parents of which had neglected to give them any instruction in their catechism. Going to the first boy in the class she asked him who made him. He did not know. She told him God, and urged him to remember it. Of the next boy she asked who was the oldest man. He did not know, and the teacher told him Methuselah. So she went on down the class, asking each a question and giving them the answer. While she was thus engaged the first boy went to the bucket after some water. The teacher returned to the head of the class, and not knowing that anyone was absent, she asked the first boy who made him. Without hesitation the boy quickly replied, "Methuselah!" "No," exclaimed the teacher in astonishment, "God made you!" "No, he didn't," persisted the urchin, with confidence, "the boy God made is gone after water." The teacher gave up that class.

"BECAUSE THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO."

A Religious Song for Infants of All Ages.
PART II.

If men are ill and like to die
No skilful doctor must come nigh:
To call a good physician in
Would be a naughty wicked sin.
God's elders must anoint the man
With oil, and pray. This is God's plan—
I must rely on this, I know,
'Cause the Bible tells me so.¹

'Tis guaranteed by Truth divine
That devils enter man and swine;
And you or I can cast them out
By fasting and by conquering doubt.
And those who say this is absurd,
Mock and despise God's holy Word.
Devils can be expell'd, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.²

I can, if faith be found in me,
Make mountains leap into the sea;
And wither trees, as Christ has said,
And walk the waves, and raise the dead;
And poison cannot injure me,
And at my touch disease will flee.
All this is certain; this I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.³

If two of us, agreeing, pray,
God will do whate'er we say.
Oh! if two Christians could agree,
What wonders then the world would see
Oh! that one grain of faith were found,
That miracles might still abound,
As in dark times they did, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.⁴

I hate all thrift, I take no oath:
The Bible hath forbidden both.
Poor-spirited, absurdly meek,
Peace at any price I seek;
Inviting wrong continually
By bribing all who injure me:
For such are Christ's commands, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.⁵

I must bless rogues who'd cut my throat,
Reward the thief who steals my coat
Let all assailants go scot free,
Nay, help them in assaulting me;
And when they give my face a thwack,
Present unto their kicks my back;
And take alternate kick and blow
From every brutal-minded foe.⁶

Beneath the vilest tyrant's curse,
Though wife and child be slain or worse,
We must submit, and kiss the rod—
The powers that be are all of God.
Slaves, hug your chains; be curs sublime;
To fight for freedom would be crime:
Resist not evil; fight no foe;
Because the Bible tells you so.⁷

I may lead a wicked life,
And beat my children and my wife,
And cheat my friends and rob the poor,
And make their lives hard to endure:
If I believe, God pardons all.
So ere I die I'll on him call.
Then I shall go to heaven, I know,
'Cause the Bible tells me so.⁸

My life may be one round of sin;
A kindly act need ne'er creep in:
If I'm predestined to believe,
God's purpos'd grace I shall receive.
For heav'nly thrones 'twill make me fit,
Whatever crimes I may commit.
'Tis faith that saves, not deeds, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.⁹

Faith gives me wings; faith saves from hell;
If faith is in me all is well.
No matter what my sins below,
In heaven they are as driven snow.
Deeds of the deepest, darkest dye
Are innocence itself on high.
Faith so transforms our sins, I know,
'Cause the Bible tells me so.¹

So I'll believe and I'll obey
What God's conflicting Scriptures say.
For sceptics wise in their own eyes
Will feed the worm that never dies,
Burning, writhing, down in hell,
Where almost all mankind must dwell;
Since God saves very few, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.²

God plunges them in quenchless flame;
Glory to his holy name!
They shriek for ever in that fire;
Hallelujah! Strike the lyre!
Praise in the highest be to God;
For every flame 's a scourging rod!
All this will come to pass, I know,
Because the Bible tells me so.³

W. P. BALL

¹ James v., 14-15.

² Luke viii., 26-36; Mark ix., 23, 29. See also

³ Matt. xvii., 20; xxi., 21, 22; Mark xvi., 17, 18; xi., 23, 24; Luke xvii., 6; John xiv., 12-14.

⁴ Matt. xviii., 19.

⁵ Matt. vi., 19-34; v., 34, 3, 5, 39, 44, 45.

⁶ Luke vi., 29, 30, 37; Matt. v., 39-48.

⁷ Rom. xiii., 1, 2; Matt. v., 39, 44, 45; 1 Peter ii., 13.

⁸ Rom. x., 9; Mark xvi., 16; John v., 24; Luke xxiii., 40-43.

⁹ Rom. viii., 29, 30, 33; iv., 5; v., 1; ix., 16, 18.

¹ Isaiah i., 18.

² Matt. vii., 14; Rom. xiv., 23; Heb. xi., 6.

³ Rev. xxi., 8; xix., 3; Luke xvi., 23, 24.

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