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# THE FREETHINKER.

REGISTERED FOR]

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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## COMIC SKETCH.—XX.



JOHN BULL'S FRIENDS;  
OR, THE CONFIDENCE TRICK DISTURBED.

## THE LORD IN THE LORDS.

God Almighty has had a night in the House of Lords. His claims were discussed by his peers, who unanimously agreed that something should be done for him. But they were unable to come to any decision as to *what* should be done, and he was therefore dismissed with many fine compliments which would have delighted the king of Dahomey.

Lord Redesdale's little Bill met with an unhappy fate. His friends celebrated his lofty virtues, and praised his bantling as an object of consummate loveliness. They knew it was a thing of beauty, but alas! it could not be a joy for ever. It was too utterly good for this wicked world; and seeing what dreadful troubles awaited its progress through life, they insisted that it would be an infinite mercy to smother it at once. Poor Redesdale consented with a sigh; and after witnessing the painful infanticide, he went home, and had the knocker fastened up, and took to his bed for several days. He now goes about in deep mourning, and with a sorrowful look which shows that his heart is buried in the grave of his child.

His speech before the Lords of England about the Lord of Heaven was peculiar. He pleaded for the Christian God who had always been recognised by the law of this country. What a memory the poor man must have! The very Jews, who took the Christian God and murdered him, are admitted to our legislative house, whose proceedings are "conducted in accordance with the Christian religion." Lord Redesdale is altogether behind date. He imagines that things are as they were a generation ago, before the parliamentary

oath "on the true faith of a Christian" was abolished by both Houses with the full sanction of the Crown. These political Rip Van Winkles are inoffensive while they are asleep, but they are a frightful nuisance when they wake up and act on principles that are almost as antique as the Egyptian mummies in the British Museum.

His Lordship cited the recent return made to the Foreign Office of the forms of oath used in other legislative bodies, and besought England to follow the example of Denmark, Bavaria, Holland, and Greece. Why not imitate Timbuctoo at once? France, Germany, Austria, and the United States, the four greatest civilised countries in the outer world, have no compulsory oath in their legislatures. Had we not better keep company with them, instead of the petty kingdoms that Lord Redesdale holds up for our admiration?

"A man," said his lordship, "who came forward and took an oath in which he disbelieved, proclaimed himself a deliberate liar." Could there be a greater absurdity? There is no proposition affirmed in the existing oath. The words "So help me, God," are merely a form. An Atheist does not lie in uttering them; he is merely using an idle and meaningless expression. To him "So help me God," and "So help me Mumbo-Jumbo," are exactly similar, and he no more lies in saying either than if he broke a saucer in a Chinese court, or pulled a cow's tail among the Parsees.

If Lord Redesdale wants to rebuke deliberate liars, we recommend him to begin nearer home. Let him take up the question of *Shroton*, and deal with the thousands of clergymen who obtain livings in the Church by purchase, and yet when they enter into possession swear by the Holy Ghost that they have not been parties to the payment of a single farthing. Cleanse the Christian Church, Lord Redesdale, before you meddle with the conscience of Freethought. Pull that big beam out of your own eye before you trouble about the mote in ours.

Lord Shaftesbury delivered a very pompous speech. The "Earl of Whitechokerlea" maintained his ancient and somewhat musty reputation. He approved Lord Redesdale's object, but he thought they could serve the Lord better by sailing on another tack. In view of "the awful character of the times in which we live," he deemed it prudent to "remain content with what we have got." Any tampering with the oath would lead to its abolition. True, your lordship. The only way to improve the oath is to improve it off the face of the earth. Jackasses have a great deal of intelligence beneath their stolid demeanour, and your lordship appears to have imbibed a little prudence from the fine specimen which you received as a present, some years ago, from the London costermongers, and which you affectionately embraced as a donkey and a brother.

Atheists, said his lordship, are few, although they are formidable. We thank him for the admission. We are still more grateful for another admission. His lordship stated that while professed Atheists are few, "those who allow the existence of a First Cause, but deny his [its] intervention in the affairs of men, who admit no revelation of a future state or any system of rewards and punishments, may be counted by myriads." In other words, professed Atheists are few, but practical Atheists are a vast multitude. Practical Atheism is the only possible creed in an age of railways, ocean commerce, and electric telegraphs. The more man masters the forces of Nature himself, the less he thinks of any other master. The gods never served any other purpose than supplementing man's weakness.

The Duke of Argyll fastened on the weak point in Lord Redesdale's little Bill. The declaration of belief in "an Almighty God" would admit even the Red Indian; for according to this form *any* god would do—big or little, fat or lean, clean or dirty, civilised or savage. *The Almighty*



God was the person whose case was before them. The Duke then adverted to Judaism, and his observations on this subject were extremely amusing. "The Jews," he said, "do not believe in an Almighty God; they believe in their own Almighty God—the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; the God whose character and dealings with mankind is to them known; the God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." Is the Duke a subtle humorist? That Almighty God of the Jews was for centuries carried about in a box, and after it was lodged in the Temple he used to get out and sit on the cover. His dealings with mankind were all transacted through the Jews, and generally consisted in robbery, murder, and outrage. His pure eyes witnessed some of the vilest crimes that ever disgraced the earth, crimes wrought in his name, at his command, and under his personal supervision. And this monstrous old Jahveh is now God the Father of the Christian religion. It is astounding that a canny Scot, like the Duke of Argyll, should rake up the foul past of his own God Almighty.

The Duke was, however, canny enough to be sound on the main point. He concluded by stating that the only way out of the difficulty in the Lower House was "to allow an affirmation to be made instead of making the oath compulsory." As the peers loudly cheered this statement, we presume that they would not reject an Affirmation Bill. But how about the poor dear God? Well might his godship cry out—Oh Argyll, Argyll! Call you that backing of your friend?

The Bishop of London spoke like a Bishop; that is, like an enemy of mankind. He decided to vote against the Bill of his noble friend who had shown such "high principle, courage, and sense of duty." It would, unfortunately, exclude all Agnostics, who are not positive disbelievers in God, but whose faith is shaky, and who might not like to make an absolute declaration on the subject. He promised, however, to give a "more favorable reception to a Bill enacting that if any man publicly proclaimed by word or writing that he did not believe in God, he should be disqualified from sitting in Parliament." Very good. We hope the Bishops will always preserve this rigid attitude of hostility to progress. The less they bend the more easily they will break.

The Bishop "was not prepared to say that every Atheist was necessarily a dishonest man." Then why rob him of his political rights? Dishonest, forsooth! Is any Atheist in England half as dishonest as a Bishop of London, who keeps in the West-End and gets a Suffragan Bishop to look after the East; who takes ten thousand a year to preach the gospel of "Blessed be ye poor;" and who distributes the patronage of 175 livings worth £106,914 a year with the most scandalous disregard of every family but his own?

The rest of the peers we shall briefly dismiss. Lord Salisbury spoke in his usual vein of arrogance. He clearly showed his hatred of Atheists, but he was too cowardly to go further. He was as ever

"Eager to wound, and yet afraid to strike."

The Earl of Dunraven quizzed the House on the subject of definitions and examinations, and made perhaps the only sensible speech in the debate, with the exception of Earl Granville, who bore himself as usual, wearing the kid glove over the iron hand.

As for the poor Lord God, he came off very badly indeed. The debate did him more harm than good. When his fussy friends interfere again, they should invite him to come and state his own case, or else to send the affable Raphael, the eloquent Gabriel, or stern Michael with his flaming sword. Until then the Atheists are likely to gain every time the subject is discussed. Why does the Lord work through such paltry agents? Why doesn't he come down, if he still lives, and settle the matter once for all? His presence at Westminster is sadly needed, and all good Christians should pray hard for the second coming of the Lord.

G. W. FOOTE.

EGYPTIAN RELIGION AND CHRISTIANITY.—AN ADMISSION.—The early Christian Fathers, in perfect good faith, used similes and metaphors taken from the Horus myth to explain to their Egyptian converts the truths of the New Faith, and anxious to increase the points of contact between Egyptianism and Christianity, were not sufficiently exact in their definitions, and thus led the way to the introduction of subsequent errors.—*W. R. Cooper*, Secretary of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, "The Horus Myth in its Relation to Christianity," p. 62 (1877).

## THE ATHEISTIC PULPIT.—SERMON XXVII.

### GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES.

"He shall guide you into all the truth" (John xvi., 13)

(Continued from p. 91.)

(84) THE *Invisibles* were the disciples of Osiander and others who denied the perpetual visibility of the church; that is, they thought there was no visible church during the dark ages. But there was a church then as truly as at any time, only it was shrouded in the dense darkness itself had brought upon the world. The churches are rapidly becoming invisible now. Let them go into utter darkness.

(85) *Joachim*, Abbot of Flora, Calabria, in the 13th century, foretold the destruction of the Romish Church. He divided the world's age into three parts, the first imperfect age it passed under the reign of the Father, a ruler who seems to have made a mull of it; the second age spent under the Son, who seems to have been a chip of the old block; and the third age to be spent under the Holy Ghost, which Joachim was to usher in.

(86) The *Isochrists*, of the early churches held that the apostles were raised to equal glory with their master. As we do not know of any glory in the case, it is impossible to say if they were right or wrong.

(87) The *Luciferians* were a sect of the 4th century, and followers of Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari. I presume all who believe in lucifer matches and the devil are now properly denominated Luciferians.

(88) *Marcellus*, Bishop of Ancyra (4th century), so strongly opposed Arius that he ran into the contrary extreme, and held that the Son and Holy Ghost were only temporary emanations from the Father, to be absorbed again when human redemption was accomplished. They disappeared long ago, I may say, and the Father also.

(89) *Marcion*, son of the Bishop of Pontus, in the 2nd century, taught that there was a God superior to the creator, invisible, inaccessible, and perfectly good (perfectly good for nothing, I should say, if inaccessible). Jesus, he said, was God's son, but never born, though he died and rose again. He reports that when Jesus went to Hell and preached his gospel there, Abel, Seth, and other patriarchs paid no attention to him, but Cain and other wicked souls believed and went with him to Heaven. One little knows who one may meet or miss either above or below. Marcion showed some common-sense in rejecting the Old Testament and most of the New. He had many followers, and some of them proved courageous martyrs.

(90) The *Massalians*, of the 4th century, retired to the woods and *prayed without ceasing*. Catch our modern Christians doing that! They prefer concerts, excursions, croquet, chit-chat, and scandal.

(91) The *Melchizedekians*, of the 3rd century, held that Melchizedek was mediator of angels, and therefore higher than Jesus.

(92) *Mendicants* are begging Christians. What Christians are not so?

(93) The *Methodists* are pretended followers of John Wesley, except in his belief in witchcraft; but they long since drifted as far from Wesley's doctrines and practice as the Christians generally have from those of Jesus.

(94) *Millenarians*. This term embraced all Christians at one time. Jesus told his hearers that some of them should not die till they saw him in his kingdom, and told Martha that those who believed in him should never die, while the dead who believed (*sic*) should rise. The apostles believed in the speedy destruction of the world and the opening of the reign of Jesus for 1,000 years. Irenæus and Justin Martyr held this doctrine; indeed, the churches never gave up this belief till hope deferred made their heart sick—their lord did not come. They were quite willing, yea! ardently longing, to see the world destroyed for the sake of their brutal and ghastly crotchets. But since Secularism has made the world worth living in, the churches dread the coming of Christ more than any parties. It would, they think, be such a pity for him to come and upset all civilisation, as the Revelation shows he intended. They don't mind letting him tear heaven to tatters and kill the angels and saints who may be there; they won't grumble if he should turn "the river of the water of life" into the bottomless pit, and so put out the fire and drown the devil and his whole pack; but the earth!—they hope he will let that alone. Oh, my! An awful thought just strikes me! It

is probable that Jesus and his 10,000 saints did set out for earth nearly 2,000 years back; the sun attracted them as it does a comet; they rushed forward with terrific velocity, rounded the sun, crossed the earth's orbit in their outward journey from the sun, and now they are mixed up with a mass of meteorites which often descend to earth in showers, or, as solitary twinklers, "a moment seen, then gone for ever." This is the most feasible account yet given of the non-occurrence of the second advent. Ever since the first century the churches have expected it; and no doubt the Father and Holy Ghost have strained their eyes blind before now, looking out for their return to heaven with the spoils of earth. But the caravan is hopelessly lost, and its dust flies round and round the sun for all future ages!

(95) *Messrs. Muggleton and Reeves* were two inspired prophets in 1657 and onwards; in fact, they were the two witnesses mentioned in Rev. xi., 3-6, and whosoever opposed them were to be destroyed by fire (that is, curses), which proceeded from their mouths. Reeves was also Moses, and Muggleton was Aaron; and Jesus gave the former "understanding in the Scriptures above all men in the world; I have (says he) chosen thee, my last messenger, for a great work unto this bloody, unbelieving world." And yet Jesus has had many messengers since then. He never seems to know his own mind. Whom will he send next? From Moses to Newdegate and Randolph Churchill, Jesus has had armies of messengers, the maddest and worst of beings. Nobody else would have employed most of them.

(96) *Nazarenes* were very early Christians who used a gospel not now in the New Testament. This gospel is repudiated by orthodox Christians, though the wisest of them know not why. The Papist can assign as good a reason for the belief in purgatory as Protestants can for the reception of any book now in the Bible, or the rejection of any one not included.

(97) The *Nestorians* are followers of Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, who quarrelled with Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, in the 5th century, about things neither of them understood. One party held that in the Christ there were *hypostases*, which means persons and also *substances*. The reader will not expect me to explain. One party held that Jesus was a two-fold subsistence or substance, human and divine, but only one person; the other that he was of two substances and also two persons—that is, as far as either party could be understood.

"Strange such a difference should be  
'Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee!"

Perhaps my reader has met with the account of the six blind men of Hindustan, who went to see the elephant. The one, who ran against his side, declared the beast was like a wall; the second, who felt the tusk, vowed it was like a spear; the one that got hold of the trunk swore the elephant was like a snake; he who felt his knee avowed that the animal was like a tree; another, from an inspection of the ear, declared the blindest man could easily see that the subject of their investigation was very like a fan; while the sixth, who got hold of the tail, boldly averred that the elephant was "very like a rope."

"And so those men of Hindustan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong;  
Though each was partly in the right,  
And all of them were wrong!"

But divines are far worse, as the moral shows. They dispute about what they have never seen nor handled, of what they have no knowledge whatsoever.

"So apt in theologic wars  
The disputants, I ween,  
Rail on in utter ignorance  
Of what each other mean,  
And prate about an elephant  
Not one of them has seen!"

These six lines contain the history of Christianity; and they show that the Holy Ghost must be the worst of possible guides if he has guided the churches.

J. SYMES.

(To be continued.)

It being the Revision policy to soften down all the harsh statements of the old book, we expect that the Revisers of the Old Testament will state that Adam, after partaking of the produce of the tree of vitality, received word that his resignation would be accepted.

## ACID DROPS.

AT Caverigno, in Italy, three young virgins wedded to the Lord, have taken the disease of inspiration very badly. After carrying on like maniacs in the parish church, they rushed off to a house at the end of the village, barred themselves in, and swore never to touch food or drink again. As the local authorities were breaking into their castle, the leader of the three married virgins cried out "Back, ye children of the world! We are virgins and saints. Cursed be everyone who lays a hand on us." They were, however, dragged away to their homes, and the Lord never put in an appearance to help them.

WHAT a disgusting Church, to sanction such spiritual obscenity as the marriage of young virgins to the Lord! The only cure for these poor hysterical girls is a husband and two babies a-piece.

EARL PERCY'S unopposed election at Westminster cost nearly two thousand pounds. We can easily understand how W. H. Smith supplanted John Stuart Mill, and why the Westminster electors turned out the book-writer and put in the book-seller.

AFTER this disgraceful expenditure, Earl Percy stands up to champion religion and morality against the Atheist member for Northampton, whose opposed election cost less than two hundred pounds.

EMPEROR WILLIAM OF GERMANY says that the most important thing for the country is the fostering of a living religious spirit. The less Germany has of his "piety" the better. It is quite consistent with conspiracy against freedom, and we all remember how, during the great war, pious William sang to his pious consort at home in despatches from the seat of war:—

Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below;  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

MR. TOM COLLINS has made a personal explanation in the House of Commons. He took a favorable opportunity of disavowing Atheistic opinions, and said he was quite ready to subscribe the Athanasian Creed. His remarks were greeted with roars of laughter by the very same people who resisted Mr. Bradlaugh's entrance in the name of God. What detestable hypocrisy! Oh for an hour of Cromwell, and another Pride's purge! The House of Commons has sunk so low that it is almost a disgrace to be a member of it.

LORD HENRY CAVENDISH BENTINCK has been fined £1 and costs down at Cambridge for assaulting two policemen, and generally behaving himself like an aristocratic cad. His lordship pleaded his patriotic fervor. He heard some roughs giving cheers for Bradlaugh, and he responded by singing "God save the Queen." Lord H. C. B. has just a grain of sense. He sees that the Queen represents all that Mr. Bradlaugh opposes—land monopoly, hereditary privilege, and perpetual pensions.

AN inhabitant of Prince's Street, Oxford Street, inquires why the Salvationists are allowed to torture him and his family every Sunday from seven in the morning till ten at night. They sing, shout, howl, yell, and blow all sorts of instruments in diabolical discord. Why, asks the peaceful citizen, must I be subjected to this nuisance? Aye, why? Because these pious rowdies are Christians. If they belonged to any other creed they would be compelled to meet in a field far out of town.

WE have seen number three of the *Anti-Infidel*, a new Christian journal, published at Sheffield. The anonymous editor announces that he is prepared to deliver lectures against infidelity. If he speaks no better than he writes we imagine that he will get paid like the organ-grinders, simply to move on.

A NEW sect has arisen in Chicago. These latter-day fungi call themselves "The Overcomers." We trust they wont come over here.

THAT pugnacious organ of priestly pretension, the *Church Review*, calls the Church Association (Anti-Ritualistic) "that disreputable company." Such are the amenities of "Christian warfare."

ON Monday last the Earl of Whitechokerlea opened a church in Somers Town for the Rev. Zachariah Woffendale, late of the Railway Clearing-house. A Somers Town elder prayed for the earl, and asked God to strengthen him in body and in mind. Judging by his looks and speech he is much in need of being strengthened in both respects.

It was rather a joke. The cadaverous old earl said the new church would be a great garrison of aggressive Christianity against the Goliath of sedition and infidelity. Zachary isn't much of a fighter. He has not yet quelled infidelity in Somers Town, judging by the audiences at the Midland Arches. Another speaker said the "great garrison of aggressive Christianity" was to be "a home for working men." Of course they will bring their own mugs.

THE Earl of Whitechokerlea soon trotted off to the subject of donkeys, and here he was more at home. A long panegyric on that faithful animal came in with peculiarly appropriateness at the opening of a new church:—

" 'Tis a man to pity and not to hate  
He would be good if he durst be great.  
A difficult task he has planned to do,  
God he would serve and Mammon too.  
He goes to Court; but to make it right  
He'll bowl with Stiggins in barns at night.  
To feed six days on the very best  
He'll touch no food on the Sabbath dressed.  
When pressed too hard with claims at home  
Over the sea will his sympathies roam—  
In the Friendly Isles or the Caribbee,  
Where the Christian light burns dimmer,  
Is a field for the Earl of Whitechokerlea,  
Whose family name is Trimmer."

THE Duke of Argyll, following in the wake of Habakkuk, says the eyes of the Jewish God were purer than to behold iniquity. When "the old 'un" spoke for himself he said, "I make peace and create evil."

THE *Church Times* gushes over the the Blessed Trinity. "This mystery," it says, "lies at the basis of our Christian system. One God, and yet Three Divine Persons, each with the attributes of Divinity." One fiddlestick, and yet three violin bows, each with the attributes of a violin-stick. "It is true," says the *C. T.*, "some find this mystery a difficulty, but even Brahmanism has its Trinity." What an excellent reason! It is true, casting out devils is very absurd, but who can doubt the fact when they learn that even Africans believe in diabolical possession.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* is in doubt about the Channel Tunnel being a Christian undertaking. It says it is clear the Deity meant England to be an island. Are the editors aware that once England was joined to the Continent? If the Deity meant everything for what it turned out to be, what did he mean in making the editor of the *C. C.*?

W. S. LILLY has been writing again, this time to the *Spectator*, calling attention to "the hatred of religion" displayed by French Freethinkers. We need urge no heavier indictment against his religion than this of which he and the Catholic reactionaries complain so loudly. They have preached their religion for ages, and the result is, they tell us, that a large section of their countrymen meet it with "hatred."

THE Rev. C. Pritchard has travelled from Oxford to Northampton in order to meet the unbelief which he supposes to be so rampant in that Radical borough. He gave a lecture on the "Laws of Nature in relation to Miracles and Prayer." Being Savillian Professor of Astronomy, he mentioned the fact that the number of star suns in the Milky Way were computed at from thirty to forty millions, and that there were "as many milky ways in the universe as stars in the milky way." It was rather a downcome to hear that the Maker of it all had cursed a fig-tree and turned devils into pigs.

THE Rev. Samuel Wathen Wigg, curate of All Soul's, Northampton, has also been lecturing on "Unbelief," which he said "tainted the very air they breathed." What a pity it is the parsons can't put us out of the way.

CARDINAL MANNING, in his new work on "The Catholic Church and Modern Society," refers with satisfaction to the good old times when the State was subject to the Papacy. "The civil and ecclesiastical discipline was so coincident and concurrent that a heretic was '*vitandus*,' to be avoided by all citizens as by all Christians. He not only forfeited his civil rights, but was put beyond the pale and communion of human society. He was like the leper of Israel, whom no one could touch without being equally avoided. No one could give to the heretic fire or water."

ALAS! the priests cannot serve us so now. Their teeth are drawn, and their jaws can only mumble curses. Here is the way in which the Bishop of Santander has just been anathemising the Liberal writers of Spain. "May God Almighty curse these journalists with the perpetual maledictions launched against the devil and his angels! May they perish with Nero, Julian the Apostate and Judas the traitor! May the earthquake swallow them up alive! Let them be cursed day and night, sleeping and waking, in eating, in drinking and in playing; when they speak, and when they keep silent! May their eyes be blinded, their ears deaf, their tongue dumb! Cursed be every member of their body! May their sepulchre be that of dogs and asses! May famished wolves prey upon their corpses, and may their eternal company be that of the devil and his angels." Our army swore terribly in Flanders, but even the curse of Kehama was as nothing to this.

Never was heard such a terrible curse!  
But what gives rise to no little surprise,  
Nobody seems one penny the worse.

A TOBACCONIST in business off Chalk Farm Road has for some time past been frequenting the meetings of the Salvation Army. Quite recently he came home and informed his wife that the "wrath of the Lord was kindled against him" for selling his wares—viz., tobacco, snuff, cigarettes, pipes, etc.; and before his better-half could procure a policeman, he commenced to throw into the middle of the street all his stock-in-trade, much to the astonishment of passers-by. The poor fellow is now in Colney Hatch!

THE *Leeds Mercury* prints the following: "An old lady, the widow of a Wesleyan minister, died at Helmsley recently, and her friends wished her body to be laid beside that of her late husband in the consecrated portion of the parochial burial ground. Such obstacles to the realisation of this wish were interposed by the vicar, the Rev. C. N. Gray, that the relations had to content themselves by procuring a grave in the unconsecrated part of the cemetery. As the party of mourners were about to enter the burial ground by the ordinary gate, they were ordered to enter by a meaner door. This order was given by the vicar, because 'the passing of Nonconformist funerals over consecrated ground' might wound the feelings of church people!" The Rev. C. N. Gray, by his spirited conduct, not only saves the feelings of church people, but prevents a possible rumpus at the resurrection.

AN esteemed correspondent sends us, from the *Schoolmaster*, a list of the questions put to candidates for the Scripture prizes given by Mr. F. Peek and the Religious Tract Society. The first is "Write a life of Jacob, pointing out the besetting sins of his early life, and the lesson we can learn from his successful struggle to overcome them." Jacob's besetting sin seems to have been cheating, and we never read that he got over it. His upsetting sin was when he successfully struggled with God, or, as Adam Clarke says, the Lord Jesus Christ, who put his thigh out of joint. We mean to write his life in our "Bible Heroes."

THEN follows a question as to the meaning of "The Comforter." We take the comforter to signify a warm winter article made from the wool of the lamb of God. Its fashionable name is the Paraclete, from the Greek word *παρακλητος*, signifying one who bleats or pleads for another. The Paraclete, like the Messiah, is a little out of date.

A CURIOUS incident occurred in the City of London Court the other day during the hearing of a case in which a Parsee gentleman was called as a witness. He objected to be sworn either on the Old or New Testaments, and, not being a Mahomedan, he could not be sworn on the Koran. He mentioned, however, that he had a sacred relic about his person as a charm, and he thought by making a declaration, and holding the relic in his hand, and not concealing it, the act would be binding upon his conscience. Mr. Commissioner Kerr said, under the peculiar circumstances, he would be justified in taking the witness's declaration, if at the same time he held the charm unconcealed in his hand, and declared that he would consider the act sufficiently binding upon him to bear true testimony in the matter at issue. He always understood, however, that a Parsee was usually sworn holding the tail of a cow, which was a sacred animal in India. Holding a cow's tail is nothing to kissing the dirty greasy Jew-book which they offer to witnesses in English courts.

HENRY BIDGOOD, a few days ago, got confirmed in the parish church of Halberton. All the candidates adjourned to a public-house after the holy rite, and a few days after, at the Tiverton petty sessions, Henry Bidgood was fined ten shilling and costs for being drunk and fighting the police.

### THE LATE SAMUEL JOHNSON.

It is with deep regret that we learn of the death of the author of "Oriental Religions." American Freethought has lost in Samuel Johnson one of the ablest and bravest of her soldiers. We say this well knowing the many good men and true who remain. Though his name is but little known on his own continent, and almost unknown here, Mr. Johnson stood a head and shoulders above the mass of his fellows who bulk more largely to the popular eye, and he has done a work which will remain when the ephemeral literature of the day has passed into oblivion. For upwards of twenty years he devoted himself to studying the religions of the East. To this he brought a clear head and a broad sympathetic spirit. Two volumes only of his researches have seen the light, those on India and China, and in them the religions of those countries are treated, for the first time in literature, with entire fairness. Few studies contribute more surely to the downfall of superstition than that of "comparative religion," and to this study Mr. Johnson's contributions are among the most valuable in our time.

J. M. W.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher in Albion, N. Y., asked her class the question, "What did Simon say?" "Thumbs up!" says a little girl.

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

MR. FOOTE lectures three times to-day (Sunday, April 2nd) in the Assembly Room, Grosvenor Street, All Saints, Manchester. Morning, at 11, "Bradlaugh and Liberty;" Afternoon, at 3, "The Gospel of Freethought;" Evening, at 6.30, "An Hour with the Devil." Monday Evening, April 3rd, at Failsforth, on "Infidel Death Beds."

## MR. FOOTE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

April 9th, Middleton's Hall, Birmingham; 16th, Hall of Science, London; 18th, Walworth; 19th, Hackney Workmen's Club; 23rd, Liverpool; 30th, Hall of Science, London.

May 7th, Portsmouth; 14th, Plymouth; 28th, N. S. S. Conference.

June 4th, Glasgow; 11th and 18th, Claremont Hall, London.

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H. COLES wishes a copy of C. Hennell's work on "The Origin of Christianity." Any reader ready to sell the same will oblige by sending price to the Editor.

SPEED THE PLOUGH.—Thanks for your attention. "The Sinner's Friend" is hardly worth notice.

EDITOR *Truthseeker*, N.Y.—Are you sure "Priestcraft Exposed" is by J. Petty. It was published anonymously in England fifty years ago. Friendly greetings.

N. J. MEWETT.—Pious defaulters are too common for their cases to be worth recording save when of public interest.

A. SCOTT considers it curious that Holy Week should immediately follow All Fools' Day. We don't think it curious at all.

CHRISTADELPHIAN.—Do you not see that your arguments against a personal devil can be retorted against your belief in a personal deity. If you interpret some texts as meaning simply an evil influence, why should not Mr. Arnold interpret the Lord as the influence that makes for righteousness?

PESSIMIST.—Papers on Schopenhauer will be found in the *Westminster Review*, August, 1852, and January, 1876; *Contemporary Review*, February, 1873; and *Theological Review*, July, 1876.

A CHRISTIAN.—So you are born again! Old Bishop Warburton said the devil was man's midwife to the new birth.

WORKMAN.—Victor Schœlcher, the French senator, was born in Paris, July 21st, 1804. Early in life he distinguished himself both as traveller and literary man. In 1848 he took a subordinate part in the Government. On December 2nd, 1851, he appeared at the barricade of the Faubourg St. Antoine with his representative scarf. During the Bonaparte regime he retired to England, where he published several works on French politics. Returning in 1870, he was made colonel of the National Guard, and elected representative both for the Seine and Martinique. He was made member of the Senate in 1875. His advanced views have never been concealed.

TUTOR writes in regard to the religious teaching of Board schools: "There are many teachers who, like myself, groan under this tedious dogmatical twaddle; but we have no conscience clause, and have to wait for the good time coming when the Jew books shall cease from troubling and Jahveh be at rest (metaphorically laid like other bogies)." "Tutor" tells us that a friend of his saves 5d. per week, since now that he buys the *Freethinker* he can dispense with the poor jokes of the so-called "comic papers."

BOTH SIDES.—Canon Farrar's sermon on "Atheism" shall be dealt with next week.

ALF. H. JACKSON.—We will carefully read any paper you choose to send us; but exigencies of space frequently compel us to decline even well-written articles. Thanks for cutting.

H. TAYLOR.—We cannot find space.

C. B. B.—Thanks. Mr. Foote visits Plymouth in May, but he has no engagement in your district.

H. MORRIS.—Professor Tyndall's suggestion appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* eight or nine years ago. You can easily refer to it for yourself if you have access to a public library.

W. J. BROWN.—Mr. W. R. Bradlaugh's challenges are not of much importance. We have no reason to believe that he is at all competent to figure in a public discussion.

J. PRITCHARD.—It escaped our notice. Thanks.

H. WEBSTER.—Thanks. Cuttings are always welcome.

J. B.—A collection of such contradictions was made by Robert Cooper. You can obtain it at 28, Stonecutter Street. Price sixpence.

## SUGAR PLUMS.

MR. J. MAHAFFY has just issued a little volume on the "Decay of Modern Preaching." Mr. M. has discovered that the generality of preaching "is purely an amateur performance," and that "want of brains is a capital defect." These be piper's news. The Dutch, we believe, took Holland some time since.

THE *Theosophist*, in a review of Gerald Massey's "Book of Beginnings," says: "One thing we may at least say, that he has

traced, with minute painstaking, the Egyptian parentage of the whole array of Bible myths and miracles. The 'impotent attempts' of Bibliolaters to convert mythology into history, dignified with the astounding title of the 'Book of God,' provoke the full scorn of one who, like him, has industriously searched out the origin of Hebraic ideas. These attempts, he says, 'have produced the most unmitigated muddle of matter ever presented to the mind of man.' There has been no such fruitful source of misconception as this supposed source of all wisdom, designated the 'Book of God,' ignorantly believed to have been communicated to man orally by an objective Deity."

A SIMILAR testimony comes from a very different quarter. In an article on "The Great Pyramid," in *Knowledge*, March 24th, Mr. Procter says: "Our very religion has all its times and seasons regulated in ways derived from the astrological system of old Egypt. Our Sunday is the old Chaldaean and Egyptian quarter-month rest-day; and the Jewish Sabbath is this quarter-month rest-day associated with the belief in the malefic influence of the planet (Saturn), which formerly ruled the last day of the week (still called Saturday or Saturn's day). The morning and evening sacrifices of the Jews and their new-moon festivals were evidently astronomical in origin—in other words, astrological (for astronomy was nothing except as astrology to the old Chaldaean and Egyptians). The Feast of the Passover, however later associated with other events, was derived from the old astrological observance of the passage of the sun (the passing over of the Sun-God) across the equator, ascendingly; while the Feast of Tabernacles was in like manner ruled by the passage of the sun over the equator descendingly. Our calendar rules for Easter and other festivals would never, we may be well assured, have been made to depend on the moon, but for their original derivation from astronomical (that is astrological) ceremonial."

ONE of God's London houses has been the scene of a shindy. The pugilists had quietly taken Archdeacon Dunbar's chapel, to give a discourse from the text, "Hit his eye, Peter; be not afraid." They even had the audacity to utilise the altar rails instead of ropes. The Chief of Police, however, determined to sermonise himself on the text, "They shall be gathered together and shall be shut up in the prison" (Isaiah xxiv., 22).

THERE was a hubbub in the French Senate upon Victor Schœlcher proclaiming himself an Atheist, but the noise of the reactionaries was inefficacious to stay the Education Bill.

THE Ontario Legislature has passed an Evidence Amendment Act, permitting Freethinkers to affirm instead of taking the Christian oath.

DR. MOYER was arrested and tried in California for selling copies of Paine's "Age of Reason." Many of the jury were church members, yet they brought in a verdict of "Not Guilty."

WE are pleased to notice, in our esteemed contemporary the *Philosophic Inquirer*, that a Freethought Book Depot has been started in Madras. We should be prepared to back its influence upon the Hindus against all the missionary stations in the city.

MR. BENNETT happened to be in Bombay at the same time as Joe Cook. Joe tried his usual abusive tactics, but without success. He was so well exposed that on his succeeding lecture he was received with hisses even from the polite Hindus. The parsons will have to learn that they cannot preach their superstitions in any part of the world without meeting Freethought opposition.

THE Nottingham Freethinkers are making a fresh start. They have secured a room for Sunday meetings, and are getting a pretty good attendance. The Society will soon be in a flourishing condition, and be able to engage better premises if the members work together harmoniously. There are plenty of Freethinkers in Nottingham, and we look forward to a thorough revival of the cause in the second largest city in the Midlands.

THE Art Exhibition at the South London Free Library was visited last Sunday by a crowd of artisans, who showed a keen appreciation of the many fine pictures on view. Lord Shaftesbury will, of course, consider this a Devil's triumph.

## NEW TESTAMENT PAGANISM.

THE story of the miraculous birth of Jesus is manifestly based upon materials found in similar tales existent long prior to the origin of Christianity. Indeed, one might search long before one would find a tenet so generally recognised by the ancient world as that of the heavenly origin of their gods, kings, and heroes. It is not confined to one country or one people. It was believed all over the East. Buddha in India, Horus in Egypt, Confucius in China, Zoroaster in Persia, and a score or so of more minor

characters in Greece and Rome, were all credited with miraculous births. So that Justin Martyr, when he admits and asserts that Bacchus, Æsculapius, and others, were virgin born, only fights Paganism with its own weapons. But his attempted justification may in these days be looked at somewhat differently. It may even be turned against the Christian doctrine of the miraculous conception of Jesus. For, first, we may now urge that if these virgin-born gentlemen were so common in those days, why make such a fuss of Jesus having been so born? In this respect he was clearly no more wonderful or divine than they. And, 2nd, that as Christians believe all stories but their own to have been fraud, may we not fairly conclude that the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus is a fraud also?

Why should we believe this story and reject all similar ones as false? Only two out of the eight New Testament writers tell us the tale, and it is nowhere else mentioned or even hinted at in any part of that collection of books. And even of the two who tell us the story, one—viz., Matthew, comes to us in such a dubious form as to be absolutely worthless as evidence for so wonderful a tale. Matthew is said to have been written in *Hebrew*, but our Matthew was certainly written in *Greek*. That Hebrew Gospel, of which we certainly have some trace in history, did not, according to Epiphanius, contain this account. The question then arises whether this Greek copy is correct in asserting the miraculous birth of Jesus? This we do not know, and perhaps never shall.

Thus, then, the real evidence for this extraordinary matter rests upon the single and unsupported authority of Luke, who according to his own account, wrote after many others had taken the story in hand. But it can hardly be expected that we should accept his authority, however great it might be, on a matter which confessedly contradicts the universal experience of mankind. To do so would be to leave our reasoning powers at the shrine of Christianity. The Deity would never endow man with reason and then insult it by giving him such a religion.

But the source of such monstrous narratives is easily shown. And as a sample of what is possible in this respect we submit the following interpretation of an ancient Egyptian drawing as given by the late Samuel Sharpe, the eminent Egyptologist: On one of the walls of the Temple of Luxor there is delineated a series of events which so closely resemble the gospel account of Christ's birth that Sharpe is constrained to style it the Annunciation, Conception, Birth, and Adoration. First, there is the God Thoth, who is announcing to the maiden queen that she should "bring forth a son" who was to be a ruler in the land. Next we have the God Kneph (who corresponds with the Holy Spirit of the New Testament), and Athor, who both take the queen by the hand, and place in her mouth the symbol of life which was to be the life of the future child. Then appear the midwives in attendance upon her during her labor, rubbing her hands to ease her pains, while close by are the nurses with the child itself with its finger to its mouth. And, finally, we have a number of gods or priests [wise men] paying adoration to the newly-born child. (See Sharpe's "Egyptian Mythology," etc., pp. 19, et seq.)

Compared with the Gospel account the above is immensely older, so that it is certain the Egyptian artist was not indebted to Christianity for his materials. Indeed, the belief of the Egyptians in a supernaturally-born god living on earth can be shown to be not only before the origin of Christianity but even before the time of the first writer in the Bible. The myth of Horus satisfactorily demonstrates the truth of this, as we may one day try to show. Meanwhile, while such analogies to Gospel statements occur with such frequency among pre-Christian religions, is not the suspicion inevitable that the unknown authors of our Gospels attributed to Luke and Matthew simply reproduced old religious myths in order to excite the interest of the reader and increase the importance of Jesus? Such an explanation is much more in harmony with common sense than the blasphemous teaching that Jesus was begotten of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost. The mere fact of Christianity demanding from its believers such a complete abnegation of their reason only shows all the more clearly that such a system could never have come from an all-wise God. The believer in the virgin-birth of Jesus blasphemes the Deity and insults mankind by insinuating the sinfulness and impurity of the manner in which it has been ordained we should all commence our career in this world.

J. E. G.

## NOTES UPON INGERSOLL.

The following extract from "Hesperothen," the last work of Dr. Russell, the *Times* special correspondent, will be acceptable to some of our readers, as showing the great interest taken in "Pagan Bob" in the States. "June 14, 1881.—At Lamy, a station named after the good archbishop of Santa Fe, where we halted for a short time whilst the passengers of another train were breakfasting, a citizen came up to me on the platform and exclaimed, as if he were very much impressed by the news he was going to give, 'If you look in there, sir, you will see Bob Ingersoll at breakfast!' I asked whether there was anything very remarkable about the fact. 'Well, sir,' he said, 'he is Colonel Ingersoll, of whom you have heard. He is the most remarkable infidel of the United States, and I really think he believes what he preaches. A good man to look at, too, and, they say, first-rate in his family.' I had a glance at the believer in unbelief, and saw a very presentable-looking person, of fine appearance and good features, busily engaged in making the most of his time at one of the tables in the refreshment-room. He was the observed of all observers, and appeared to like it; and I understood from one of the crowd that he had just returned from inspecting some mining ventures in which he was concerned; for, if he does not believe in the world to come, he is credited with very strong faith in the excellencies of the possession of wealth in the world that is."

John L. Ingersoll, brother of the colonel, has addressed an open letter to Talmage, in reply to the statements made concerning their father and mother in Talmage's sermon upon the meanness of Infidelity. He says: "Now, reverend sir, will you be kind enough to tell your informant, for me, that he or she is a malignantly cruel, heartless, and infamous liar? Our father was poor; I will not deny it. In the days of my childhood a minister was forced to practise strict economy to support a family and educate his children upon a salary of 500 dollars per year. We had abundance to eat and were well clothed, and certainly no man ever better enjoyed ministering to the wants of his family than did our loved and honored father. I believe him to have been an eminently good and conscientious man—I do not say, faultless. As for Robert, I will say he was as good and obedient a boy as I ever knew; but all this is neither here nor there. He denies that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and gives his reasons. Here you take issue with him. Now, is it not possible to successfully combat his errors without opening the tomb and spattering with calumny our loved and honored dead?"

The following account of Ingersoll's home is from the editorial correspondence of the San Francisco *Argonaut* and is itself sufficient to refute the calumnies so industriously circulated by the clergy about "the champion blasphemer." Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll lives within a short distance of the Arlington, in an elegant and spacious dwelling, fronting on Lafayette Square. He keeps open house, dispensing generous hospitalities. There I have spent more than one pleasant evening. His family is composed of his wife and two accomplished and musical young lady daughters. There was a time—and I am old enough to remember it—when the Puritan family alone was held up as the model of domestic happiness, where around the family altar alone clustered all that could make life desirable. It was part of that tradition, which arose from a narrow and illiberal superstition, to send forth the impression that only in those families where religious observances, were practised, where professions of belief flowered and fruited in morning prayers, evening devotions, and Sabbath observances, are found the higher virtues, the purer and better life. It was asserted that in orthodox families alone are practised the charities and kindly sympathies that make life beautiful. This false old sham is passing away with a thousand other skeletons of a shadowy dawn. It has joined the procession of gaunt and hollow superstitions which a brighter intellectual morning light is driving out of the theological and ecclesiastical world. It is found that good little Sunday-school boys are liable to get drowned when they go in swimming week days about as often as wicked little boys who go in on Sunday. It has been ascertained that men and women may be very good citizens, be very honorable in their lives, very generous in their conduct, and fill useful positions in society without throwing around them the cloak of religious profession. It has been found that throughout our country there are happy homes, united families, loved and loving ones, gathered around a domestic altar raised to the worship of the unknown God. But in such households there are no subscriptions to formulated dogmas, no observances of worship and no lip-professions of religion. Such a family is that of which I have spoken. It is intellectual and hospitable, with a house filled with books, music, and musical instruments. The house is also filled with love and generous sympathy. On the centre-table lies a splendid edition of "Knight's Shakspeare," bound in one volume. In its leaves is a family record for births and deaths. On its side, printed in golden letters, is the inscription, "The Inspired Word." "And this," said Colonel Ingersoll, throwing over to me a handsomely bound volume of Burns' poems, "this is the family hymn-book." Beside these two most treasured books lay a complete edition of the works of George Eliot, whom Colonel Ingersoll declares to be the greatest mind which the English-speaking world has produced since Shakespeare. Our entertainment for the evening was

music and conversation. Our refreshments were generous. To the delightful punch which we punched with care were superadded the more homely drinks of sparkling cider and goblets of brimming buttermilk. If there be any law governing this household, save the unwritten one of mutual love and confidence, it seems to be that each and every member of it—from the baby girl who had her dolls, doll's trunks, picture-books, and toys on the drawing-room floor, to the stranger within their gates—may do as they please. When it was suggested that the little one had better go to her dream land upstairs, the colonel remarked that in his house there were no hours for children; "they go to bed when they are sleepy, and get up when they are not." It is one of his axioms in domestic government to let his children do just exactly as they please, on the theory that children governed by love, as a rule, please to do right.

## FREETHOUGHT GLEANINGS.

**OTHER RELIGIONS.**—The religious world has yet to learn and to accept as a very real fact, that outside the area of traditional Christianity, there is a religion by which other men, in other parts of the world, have thought of, and approached God; that neither outside the area of European culture has there been utter ignorance, nor outside the area of European religion has there been absolute religious darkness.—*Bishop Callaway*, "Comparative Religion" (printed for private circulation only), p. 24 (1874).

**MAUDSLEY ON MIRACLES.**—Every religion has had its miracles and its multitudinous witnesses to them. We do not believe it any the more on that account; we ought indeed to believe it rather the less, since the miracle is presumption, if not proof, of bad observation by the witnesses. The lowest religion will have the most miracles, a higher religion will have few of them, and the highest of all will probably have none at all. . . . The interest of miracles at this day, I take it, is not that which could attach to an occurrence out of the fixed order of nature, but that which attaches to the study of the defective, irregular, or actually morbid action of the human brain, especially under conditions of unusual excitement; it is not whether the body of a dead man which had lain in the grave until it had begun to putrify came to life again, but why people had said so. When the belief in miracles has become extinct they will be received by psychology into its domains, and they will be of lasting interest there. Indeed, it will be a most instructive study of the future to elucidate and refer to defective or morbid functions of the brain. Supernaturalism will take its proper place as an interesting chapter in psychology.

**THEOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS.**—Divines are very strict in demanding absolute demonstration from men of science and others, but we do not find them at all ready to furnish conclusions of similar accuracy regarding dogmatic theology.—"Supernatural Religion," vol. i., p. 36.

**THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE.**—The common sense or the common instinct of Christians in all ages and all lands has quietly but peremptorily put it aside, as not meant for use. Indeed, Christians have habitually fought from the earliest times just as savagely as Pagans. They have seldom dreamed even of confining themselves to self-defence—self-defence, indeed, being condemned just as decidedly as aggression. Nay, they have habitually fought in the name, and, as they firmly believed, in the cause of Christ; have gloried in the title of "good soldiers" of Christ; have died with priestly blessing and absolution amid the rage of conflict, confident that their reward was sure, and that angels would bear them straightway to the bosom of the beloved Master whose orders they had so strangely set at naught.—*W. R. Greg*, Introduction to the Third Edition of "The Creed of Christendom."

**EARLY METHODISM.**—A more appalling system of religious terrorism, one more fitted to unbinge a tottering intellect and to harden and embitter a sensitive nature, has seldom existed. The Methodist preached especially to the nerves. His favorite tenet was, that according to the Christian creed a harmless and useful life, an orthodox belief, and a constant attendance on the ordinances of religion, were together utterly unable to save men from an eternity of torture. With the most impassioned tone and gestures, with every artifice that could heighten the dramatic effect of his words, he expatiated upon the certainty of death, upon the terrors of judgment, upon the undying agonies of hell, upon the lost condition of mankind. These were almost constant subjects of his preaching, and he dwelt upon them till he scared his hearers to the verge of insanity, and engendered a nervous disease which propagated itself rapidly through the congregation.—*W. E. H. Lecky*, "History of England in the Eighteenth Century," chap. ix., vol. ii., p. 582.

**GENESIS AND SCIENCE.**—It is not my business, and does not lie within my competency to say, what the Hebrew text does, and

what it does not signify; moreover, were I to affirm that this is the Biblical doctrine, I should be met by the authority of many eminent scholars, to say nothing of men of science, who at various times have absolutely denied that any such doctrine is to be found in Genesis. If we are to listen to many expositors of no mean authority, we must believe that what seems so clearly defined in Genesis—as if very great pains had been taken that there should be no possibility of a mistake—is not the meaning of the text at all. The account is divided into periods that we may make just as long or as short as convenience requires. We are also to understand that it is consistent with the original text to believe that the most complex plants and animals have been evolved by natural processes, lasting for millions of years, out of structureless rudiments. A person who is not a Hebrew scholar can only stand aside and admire the marvellous flexibility of a language which admits of such diverse interpretations.—*Prof. T. Huxley*, American Address, pp. 19, 20.

## PROFANE JOKES.

THE following was overheard in the pit of the Opera House, Leicester: an old lady was loud in her comments on the performance, but the glories of the transformation-scene nearly took her breath away. "Eh, deary me!" she cried, "I should think Heaven was something like this. Look at the angels, Tommy." "But they ain't got no harps, mother," urged Tommy. "No," replied the dame, "that would be making it too like, and would be wicked!"

"I DON'T miss my church as much as you suppose," said a lady to her minister, who had called upon her during her illness; "for I make Betsy sit at the window as soon as the bells begin to chime, and tell me who are going to church, and whether they have got on anything new."

### ORIGINAL SIN.

ORIGINAL sin, by doom divine,  
The original pair infected;  
And yet original sin's not mine,  
My sins are all—selected!

AN old minister, a clergyman of the Church of Scotland, well known for his eccentricity and wit, was taking a walk one day in the outskirts of the town, when a couple of young lads descried the minister, and thought they would have some fun with him. They ran up to him and shouted, "Eh, meenister, the deil is dead!" The old man stopped, turned round to the lads, and looking pitifully at them, said in a sorrowful voice: "Ah, then, I'll just gang awa' hame, and I'll down on ma knees, and pray for twa fatherless bairns!"

DURING a lesson on the life of King David, a class of girls was asked, "Who killed the giant?" whereupon one replied, "Jack."

It doesn't look well for a churchwarden to take an umbrella to church, and carry it into his pew and hang to it. He should leave it out in the vestibule, with that supreme confidence that a man has when he bets on four aces.

### TO A MONOTONOUS PERSON.

ALTHOUGH, my friend, you're not to blame,  
In one thing, like the Lord, you're clever;  
To-day and yesterday the same,  
The same, I bet, you'll be forever.

"Do you think," asked a college student of a professor of theology, "that the lion and the lamb have ever yet lain down together?"—"I don't know," answered the professor, "but if they have, I have no doubt that the lamb was missing from that date." Dickens said that when the lion and the lamb lay down together, the lamb would be *inside*.

WE are sometimes so impressed by a fellow-man's estimate of his importance that we tremble at the mere suggestion of what might have been if the Lord had forgotten to make him.

A LITTLE fellow who knew Mother Goose better than he knew his Bible, was asked in his class, "Who were thrown into the fiery furnace?" This was too much for him. The question was passed. The answer came promptly, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." This was a mortification to the little fellow, and when the next question came, "Who put them in?" he answered with a jump, "Little Johnnie Green."

A GENTLEMAN who was a traveller for a large firm, and had a season ticket for the lines on which he travelled, was one Sunday in church, and during the sermon went to sleep. There happened to be a collection that day. The collector accordingly came with the box, and seeing him asleep nudged him, upon which the gentleman, waking up, replied "Season."

### MR. SYMES'S ENGAGEMENTS.

April 2, Claremont Hall; 3, Walworth; 8, Beddington; 9 and 10, Newcastle-on-Tyne; 16, Middleton's Hall, Birmingham; 23, Burnley; 30, Baskerville Hall. May 7, Hall of Science; 20, Middlesbro'; 21, Stockton-on-Tees. June 4, Liverpool.—All applications to be sent to Mr. JOSEPH SYMES, 142, Hagley Road, Birmingham.

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