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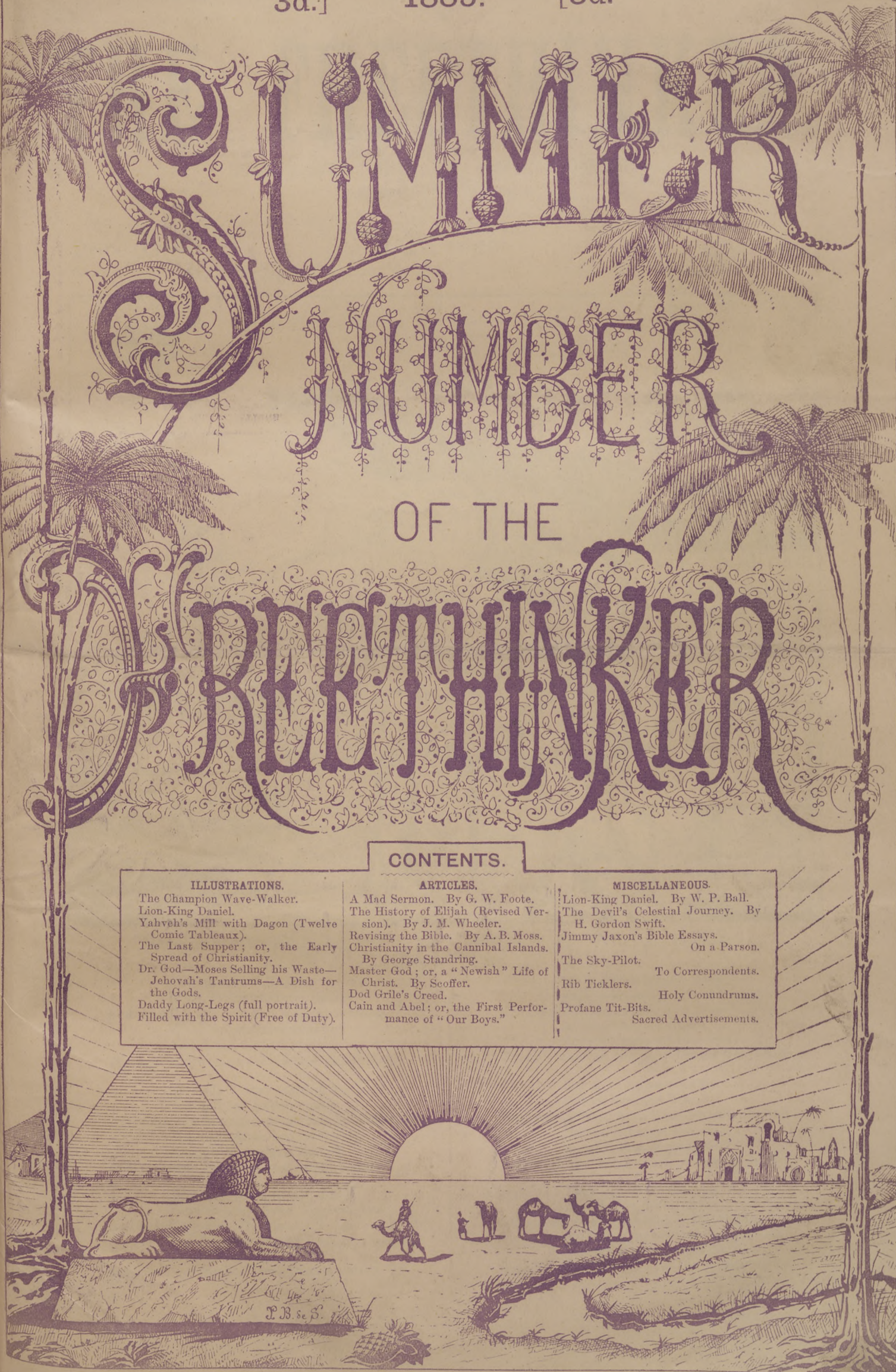
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THE SUMMER NUMBER
OF
THE FREETHINKER.

EDITED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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THE CHAMPION WAVE-WALKER.

(Echo—"Walker.")

It happened long ago
When times were not so slow
And miracles and wonders were abounding,
When angels danced about
And devils made a rout,
The men and women everywhere astounding.

Great J. C. then came down
Without his golden crown,
And found at first that no one would receive him,
Till marvels he had wrought
Enough to stagger thought
And forced the greatest sceptics to believe him.

He cured the deaf and dumb,
Fetched souls from kingdom come,
And healed the sick, the blind, the lame and halting;
Fed crowds of hungry souls
On three hot penny rolls
And herrings five of Simon Peter's salting.

He cast the demons forth,
East, west and south and north,
Their legions found from him there was no hiding;
At his almighty words
They all were off like birds
Though seven in one poor damsel were abiding.

But J. C.'s greatest trick
Did all creation lick
And yet he could have beat it had he chosen;
He walked upon the sea
As sprightly as could be,
Although the water's surface was not frozen.

They say he'll visit men
And do his tricks again
Before the final crash and conflagration:
And how the crowds will run
When water skating's done!
They'll need a pier to hold the British nation.

A Mad Sermon.

SEVERAL years ago a famous preacher went mad (if we may say so of a gentleman, who was always cracked), and was placed by his friends in a large private asylum. Under skilful treatment he gradually improved, and at length he so far recovered that his friends contemplated his removal. But a lucky accident revealed the fact that he was really still insane.

The chaplain of the establishment was taken ill one Saturday morning, and no clergyman in the neighborhood could be found, on so short a notice, to officiate for him the next day. In this difficulty the Principal suggested to the chaplain that the mad parson might be asked to occupy his place. He seemed to be quite recovered, he was a duly-ordained minister of the Church of England, and his sermon would no doubt have all the impressiveness of a farewell discourse. The chaplain readily assented to the proposal, and his substitute, who accepted the invitation with great alacrity, was very busy during the rest of the day with pen and ink, with which he blackened several sheets of foolscap paper.

Sunday morning arrived, and the new preacher looked big with inspiration. His face wore a mystical expression, and there was a far-away look in his large grey eyes. But at times a gleeful smile flashed over his features, wrinkled the corners of his mouth, and danced under his shaggy brows.

When the inmates of the asylum, or rather those who were fit to go to church, had all taken their seats, there was a hush of expectancy; although some grinned or frowned at the ceiling and others at their neighbors. Presently the Principal walked in with the mad parson, who looked as sober as a judge, and might have been taken for a model clergyman. The Principal entered his pew, and the chaplain's *locum tenens* went to the desk and began the service. He read the prayers and lessons and gave out the hymns with the most admirable propriety. His intonation and expression were worthy of a bishop, and the Principal congratulated himself on his happy escape from a serious difficulty.

But when the mad parson mounted the pulpit in full costume there was a peculiar twinkle in his eye that aroused the Principal's suspicion. He had observed the same thing before in several of his quiet patients when they were bent on some piece of subtle devilry. Yet it was too late to interfere, and after all he might be mistaken. Perhaps it was only a fancy, or a peculiar effect of the light upon the preacher's face.

For a minute or two everything flowed smoothly. The text was cited with excellent emphasis, and the first few sentences of the sermon were couched in unexceptionable language and read with professional gravity. But as he proceeded there was a change in his matter and manner. His insanity was evidently bubbling up from the depths, where it had lain so long concealed. Presently, a mad sentence sent two or three of the quicker-witted patients into a fit of laughter, and several of the sillier ones joined in the chorus through mere contagion. In vain did the attendants try to restore order; the mad parson grew madder every minute, and the patients laughed louder and louder as he poured along the full stream of his lunacy. The Principal rose and commanded him to desist, but he was deaf to the voice of authority, and indeed quite insensible to everything but his own performance. An attendant ascended the pulpit stairs, and was promptly knocked down with the Bible, and a second was served in the same way with the Prayer-Book. The Principal then ordered the church to be cleared, which was done with considerable difficulty, for many patients had by this time grown almost uncontrollable. When they were all removed an attack was made upon the pulpit. The mad parson sustained a long siege, and defended the citadel with remarkable gallantry. The stairs were so narrow that only one could mount them, and the attendants were flung down in rapid succession by the pious hero, who seemed full of the Spirit, and on excellent terms with the God of Samson. Two short ladders were then placed against the pulpit, and three attendants operated at once against the enemy, who was overpowered after a sharp struggle and ignominiously dragged away from the scene of his triumph.

The manuscript of his sermon was torn and mangled in the contest, but portions of it were still legible. We are

able to give a few specimens of this extraordinary discourse, which may be followed by others on some future occasion.

The mad parson's text was taken from Deuteronomy xxxii., 15: "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." His opening observations were addressed to the context, the occasion on which Moses spoke, and the sins of the Jews which he denounced. He then began his playful comments on the text in the following manner.

* * * * *

Various speculations have been hazarded as to the meaning of *Jeshurun*. The first part of this word, *Jeshu*, is a contraction of the common Jewish name of *Joshua*, which means, "Jehovah is his salvation." Our Blessed Savior bore this name, although we use the Greek form of *Jesus*, in order to invest the Redeemer with greater dignity; for there is something extremely familiar, and almost vulgar, in the name of *Joshua*, which, I remember in my childhood, was applied to the scavenger who emptied our dustbins, and who was vociferously accused by all the children of the parish of having inhumanly "skinned the cat," although I could never discover what particular member of the feline family it was that fell into his savage clutches. Yet as it was called "*the cat*," I presume it was an animal of distinction, and perhaps of universal reputation.

By rejecting the final letter *ain* from the Hebrew *Jeshua*, the Jews give the name a peculiar significance. In this curtailed form it means "his name and remembrance shall be extinguished." Those miserable, unbelieving, perditionous, yea let me say *damned* Jews, have docked in this way the name of our Blessed Savior, because, as they say, he was not able to save himself, and it is clear that God Almighty did not take the trouble to save him. Infamous wretches! Those who would dare to cut off the Redeemer's tail in this shameful manner deserve the hottest corner in hell; and bless and praise his holy name, the Lord is keeping it for them for ever. Reserved seats, numbered and booked.

The second part of *Jeshurun* is easily understood. Everybody knows the meaning of *run*. Resist the Devil and he will run from you; encourage him and he will run after you. You run for the policeman, run for life when a bull or a mad dog is at your heels, and run over when you are full of gossip and scandal. And well do I remember how I used to run when *Joshua* the scavenger threatened me with his shovel.

But it is difficult to understand why *Jeshua*'s name should be docked of a syllable and plastered up with *run*. Perhaps the operation left a running sore, or *Jeshua* himself ran away to escape further amputation. At any rate our hero was called *Jeshurun*, and that is enough for any believing soul.

According to our text, *Jeshurun* waxed fat. Holy Scripture does not say where, when, and on what. *When* is a hopeless question now. No man knoweth, not even the Son, but only the Father, and he is a long way off in heaven, in an asylum of his own. *Where* is a difficult, but still an easier question. It must have been some place in the East, where lunatics are very properly regarded as inspired, treated with tenderness and care, and venerated as the oracles of divinity. Yes, all holy spirits are mad, and God is the maddest of us all; witness Holy Writ, brethren, witness Holy Writ. Certainly *Jeshurun* never waxed fat in an establishment like this, where noble fellows such as ourselves are subjected to incredible privations. Only last week I was compelled to fast forty-one days and nights, which is the longest fast on record; for Moses and our Blessed Savior fell short of it by a whole day, and *Jonah* by thirty-eight diurnal revolutions in the whale's belly. *On what* is the third and last question. All the commentators are silent on this point, but they might easily have learnt the secret from King *Heglon*, or even from *Elisha*'s bears. Brethren, as we know to our cost, there is only one way of getting fat—namely, by good eating and drinking; whether we drink the winepress of the wrath of God, or eat our children in the strait siege, after the manner of the late Mr. Charles Lamb, who, when he was asked by a lady how he liked babies, replied, "Boiled, ma'am!"

The final statement in our text is intended as a trial of faith. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. Fat men, my brethren, are not fond of kicking, any more than they are of being kicked. Did you ever see a fat man playing foot-ball?

Never, never, never. A fat man cannot stand easily on one leg—unless he lean against a wall; and there is no wall in the text. Yet, brethren, how can you kick without standing on one leg. Peradventure you might stand on your head and kick with both feet at once, but there is no head in the text. Brethren, you are in a fog, as those who listen to sermons generally are. But I will dispel it. I will solve the riddle. Jeshurun was not a man at all, my brethren, but a baby; and he waxed fat, and lay on his back and kicked. Hallelujah! The doorkeeper will now go round with the plate. G. W. FOOTB.

The History of Elijah.* (REVISED VERSION.)

BEING a medium myself,† I am able to show how Elijah took to the prophet business, to explain his success in that profitable calling, and to elucidate several matters in the career of the sere and yellow seer which have been hitherto obscure. In the precious Bible Elijah is pitchforked suddenly upon the reader (1 Kings xvii., 1), as if he were a second Melchisedec, "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Heb. vii., 3). The rationalist will be relieved to hear that Elijah did not presume to emulate his Savior by dispensing with the services of a father. Although in after life he never alluded to his family, Elijah was brought up by pious and dishonest parents, of Tishbi in Gilead, who procured an uncertain livelihood by waylaying travellers. In pursuing this industry, Elijah's father got knocked on the head by one of King Omri's soldiers, and departed to Sheol. As for his widow, she ol-ways thought him "A bad 'un." She attempted to ease her soul and fill her stomach by manufacturing the celebrated balm or treacle of Gilead, but, thanks to the assistance of her son Elijah, the balm was found to operate so curiously upon the intestines of her customers, making them balmy, that she was incontinently stoned to death as a witch, in conformity with the divine law of Moses (Exod. xxii., 18).

Elijah, seeing that his father's vocation involved some danger, considered how he could gratify his predatory instincts with as little risk as possible. Now in those days the prophetic profession afforded a fine opening for an enterprising man. Not only was the blessing of the man of God eagerly sought and purchased, even by kings, and his curse dreaded in proportion, but he derived a tidy revenue from the presents brought by those who were more anxious about their future than their present.‡ The only outfit required was a rough garment or leathern girdle,§ a few conjurer's tricks and a large supply of impudence. Elijah trained a couple of jackdaws to sit on his shoulders and croak, whence arose the legend that he was fed by ravens. Meeting with some success, he determined to make a bold bid for fame by announcing to King Ahab that neither rain nor dew should be due for three years and six months except according to his word.¶ The king told him to get out, and Mr. Elijah thought it prudent to take his hook and fresh quarters with a widow at Zarephath. Here the prophet prestidigitateur exhibited a variation of the well-known inexhaustible bottle-trick, multiplying cakes and oil so exceedingly that the widow's son had a fit of indigestion, and would have died but for the prophet jumping on him three times, which shook down the cake and oil and restored the young man's life and the prophet's reputation. Emboldened by this success he challenged the rival prophets of Baal to a trial by fire, and like a cautious medium, chose his own "test conditions." He invited four hundred and fifty prophets to slay a bullock, cut it in pieces, lay it upon wood without fire, and then pray to their God to roast it, and he would do the same. Upon their complying, Elijah grinned and mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is engaged talking or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awakened."¶¶ They threatened him

with a prosecution for blasphemy, but though they cried aloud and cut themselves with knives, no fire came. Elijah now proceeded to business. He skewered his meat and placed it on the wooden altar, round which he dug a trench. Then said he, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood."* Now the artful card had provided four barrels of petroleum which he secretly ignited while pretending to pray. There was a Gehenna of a blaze, and all the people cried out that Mr. Elijah's god was the genuine article, and no mistake. "And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."† Jezebel, who like most queens, was fond of the priests, vowed vengeance for the slaughter of her favorites, whereupon Elijah, whose courage was not his strong point, fled for his life into the wilderness, where it is said he fasted, like Dr. Tanner and Jesus Christ, for forty days and nights and had an angel (in petticoats) to bake cakes for him. Elijah's next feat was to scatter by means of dynamite two bands, each of fifty soldiers, that were sent to arrest him. According to the Unrevised Version, this exploit was considered so meritorious by Jahveh that he forthwith sent horses and chariots of fire to carry Elijah straight away to heaven. The true story is that his trusted but baldheaded servant Elisha, having learnt his master's secrets, determined to adopt the prophetic business himself; and, in order to have a clear stage, quietly tripped up his master while crossing the Jordan. He gave out the tale of the celestial vehicle in order to account for the disappearance of the body and for his being found in possession of the prophet's mantle. This explanation is so much more in conformity with the known character of men of God, that it will commend itself to all rational minds. J. M. WHEELER.

Lion-King Daniel.

I'LL tell you a tale, which in part you may know,
Of Daniel the prophet who lived long ago;
Of Daniel the Jew boy who, Scripture agrees,
Got fat on spring water and munching grey peas.
Adopted by princes he grew and was grand,
And as premier and vizier he ruled all the land;
For he beat the magicians, the Persian divines,
In telling kings' fortunes by wonderful signs.
He interpreted dreams, raved prophetic prattle,
Had visions of crowns worn by ten-horned cattle;
Saw a clay-footed image struck down by a stone,
And the strangest imaginings ever yet known;
For by this kind of nonsense he rose and he ruled
The kings and the people he piously fooled.

But at last, in a most unfortunate hour,
The crushed opposition crept back into power.
Oh, why did Darius give ear to those men
And cast poor old Daniel into the dark den,
The dungeon of rocks, the imperial Zoo,
Where Daniel was left in a horrible stew,
Midst the livest of lions, all hungry, and wild
To dine on a well-fattened saint or a child.
They licked their huge chaps and stretched out their claws,
They wagged their tails as they opened their jaws,
Till Daniel fell down in a funk at the sight,
And called to the Lord in his terrible plight:
"Lord, chain up them lions; Lord send I may live,
And there's nothing, no, nothing, O Lord, I won't give!
If you'll stop the mad brutes, Lord, or strike them all blind,
I'll hang all the heretic Jews I can find,
I'll offer the best beasts that ever you saw,
I'll sacrifice all of my mothers-in-law,
I'll burn all the sceptics in furnace of fire,
And sing your sweet praise to the sackbut and lyre.
Oh, save your brave prophet from this sort of chace,
Or else, all your foes, Lord, will laugh in your face
For a helpless old fool of a foreign-built God
Who ought to be trounced well and birched with a rod."‡

Then Jehovah woke up on his well-tinselled throne,
And nodded his head at the piety shown;
And the promise delightful that pleased him the most
Was the savor, the foretaste, of heretic roast;
So he sent down to Daniel the Pigeon, the Ghost,

* Rightly pronounced E-liyah as in Hallelujah.

† Mrs. Fox Jenkin, the foundress of modern spiritism, once told me that I was so powerful a medium she could discern fire oozing from my finger's ends. This was probably the effluence of the Holy Ghost.

‡ See 1 Sam. ix., 7; 1 Kings xi., 3; Neh. vi., 12; Micah ii., 11.

§ 2 Kings i., 8; Zech. xiii., 4.

¶ 1 Kings xvii., 1; Luke iv., 25.

¶¶ 1 Kings xviii., 27.

* 1 Kings, xviii., 33.

† Verse 40.

Disguised as an angel, for God had not then
 Revealed him in person and power to men ;
 And it filled poor old Dan, I may say without flattery,
 As full as a hundred-celled Daniell's battery,
 As full of the surging electrical fire,
 Flashed straight down from heaven by spiritual wire,
 As were the Apostles on Pentecost's day,
 When the tongues of live fire gave a splendid display,
 Hissing and speaking 'midst fierce coruscations,
 Languages spoken of many odd nations.
 So doubtless the frolicsome wild-fire thus shed
 Played round about our Daniel's head,
 Invisibly, maybe, in daylight's glare,
 But plainly the fiery-tongued Spirit was there,
 Oozing from Daniel's red-hot fingers,
 Giving the lions' cold noses rare stingers,
 Beating the red-hot bar of iron
 With which professionals tame the lion.
 Thus only, at least, after studying the case,
 Can I explain feasibly what took place ;
 And though this explanation need not much fetter one,
 I challenge the parsons to give us a better one.

Why should not old Dan, like a cat in the dark,
 Give vent unto many a crackling blue spark ?
 Besides, we all know the electrical eel ;
 And prophets and parsons and saints, we all feel,
 Resemble such black slinky creatures a deal
 In slippery ways and in *shocking* behavior
 Inspired by the Ghost and condoned by the Savior.

With Daniel equipped thus, just fancy the scene !
 The prophet, a walking electric machine,
 Praying his prayer and reciting his credo,
 Full of the Ghost, is a godly torpedo :
 While the poor hungry lions, thus robbed of their dinner,
 Go sniffing around the old sanctified sinner
 And curse all the prophets from Daniel to Moses,
 As howling and raging they burn their poor noses
 On Daniel's long fingers, till, taught by disaster,
 They find the electrified saint is their master :
 And so by degrees they cease from their riot
 Retire to their corners and learn to be quiet.
 But he followed them up, did our masterful Danie',
 Till each one was as tame as a well-beaten spaniel.



Then he rested and dined, on a sausage, to wit,
 While Leo the first begged hard for a bit,
 And Leo the second joined Leo the third
 In suing for sausage though saint they preferred.
 Then he made them retire, he made them advance,
 He taught them to beg like a monk, and to dance.
 He trained them in trios, he trained them in troops,
 Made them leap o'er his shoulder and fly through big hoops.
 He envied the travelling showmen no more,
 For it struck him he had a big fortune in store.
 The biggest menagerie ever had been,
 The tamest of lionkind ever yet seen
 He swore should be his. As to rivals, why, darn 'em,
 He'd beat Wombwell hollow, and bankrupt old Barnum.
 Nay, he'd beggar old Booth, too, and lead men to Zion,
 By showing for coin a converted old lion,
 The Lion of Judah—in fact, they should all
 Howl chorus to hymns and should cringe and should crawl,
 And growl o'er their sins and so rise into grace,
 Cross their paws, oh, so saint-like, with joy in each face,
 And put on the genuine holy blue look,
 With eyes squinting heavenwards while he read the book ;
 And should pray—or pretend—and be humble and meek,
 Helping him do the saintly at so much per week.
 "The more beast the more saint"—that goes without saying,
 And we know that these brutes are much given to preying ;
 And whether 'tis spelled with an "a" or an "e,"
 The words are connected as close as can be.
 Thus Leo Britannicus prays while he preys,
 And the Lion of Judah had similar ways ;
 Holy Russia, the Bear, had the same holy game,
 And the Eagles, two-headed or not, do the same.
 Alike these carnivora, clench their mad claws,
 And pray as they prey, rending treaties and laws.
 So also the parsons, like talents displaying,
 Do both things at once : while praying they're preying.

Ah, beetles in broadcloth and kings clad in ermine
 Must be soon swept away as the worst kinds of vermin.
 For men as they boldly seek Truth the deliverer
 Kick forth black reptiles and crowned Carnivora.

Returning to Daniel converting his pets
 (Thus hoping to pay off his old prophet's debts)
 We see him still preaching—with help from some whips—
 To penitent lions who licked their burnt lips.
 Then he saw an old organ, that lay where it fell :
 There were several there and some costumes as well ;
 For in the good days of the Medes and the Persians
 'Twas one of the usefulest public diversions
 To throw organ-grinders infesting the street,
 To the lions below who, at least, had a treat.
 Then he donned the attire, hat and all, wouldn't doff it,
 Though he looked what he was, a mere grinning old prophet,
 Who needed no monkey to cut the right dash,
 Grimacing to children and seizing the cash.
 He ranged all his lions around him at noon,
 Took up the old organ and ground out a tune.
 When he saw they stood that, he knew they were tame,
 So he called for the king and lo the king came.
 Then Daniel went through the performance a bit
 While the gods in the gallery gazed on the pit.
 And much it astonished the old king Darius
 To see his huge lions so good and so pious.
 They howled to the anthem, they kneeled in the den,
 And when Daniel read collects they growled forth Amen.
 They behaved just like saints who are much more than
 seven,
 And of such, we all know is the kingdom of heaven.
 They couldn't speak plainly, so Dan made apology,
 But they wept and they winked o'er the blessed doxology.
 Their actions so fervid showed all who could see 'em
 How they loved the long psalms and the lovely *Te Deum*.



At "Lamb of God, I come to thee."
 They smacked their lips with toothsome glee.
 At Scripture tales of blood and slaughter
 They lapped as if the blood were water.
 At confession they hung down their heads in confusion,
 Moaning as if they feared prompt execution.
 But they danced a fandango to greet absolution.
 Thus they revelled in piety, kissing the host,
 A Salvation menagerie full of the Ghost.
 Delighted, the king condescended to stoop
 To kindly encourage the famishing troop

With the whole opposition, cast into the den,
 Fat wives and plump children as well as tough men.
 Thus, with virtue rewarded, the lions at leisure
 Tasted at last of the heavenly pleasure
 Which God always gives (see St. John's Revelation)
 To his beasts and his saints who in grand exultation
 Howl Hallelujah o'er shrieks and o'er woes
 Of burning and writhing and quivering foes.
 This seemed better, in truth, to the leonine muddle,
 Than swallowing Lamb of God and twaddle.
 They understood now this brand-new religion:
 'Twas much more than feasting on God's Holy Pigeon.



How Daniel was made the chief circus performer,
 Helped by Shadrach and Co., who, in places much warmer,
 Did good "biz" as fire-kings, I scarcely need tell:
 Suffice it to say now that all ended well.
 They travelled at times in the spring and the fall, }
 Gave a Sunday performance at Exeter Hall;

The tickets, indeed, were very high-priced,
 But holders in hundreds came in unto Christ.
 Thus converting the people by pious displays,
 Winning their coin by God's wonderful ways,
 They prospered, lived long, till the usual mischance;
 Then they died and were buried at Lyons in France.

But they died in the faith and, of course, went to glory,
Lions and all, and that ends my story.

But before I conclude my heretical rhymes,
I may mention one matter that touches our times.
Historical parallels Daniel could draw,
So he prophecied thus, and in vision thus saw:
As Daniel, of Israel, rose from the den,
So in Isles of the Gentiles shall rise a big Ben;
A Ben called D' Israeli shall rule o'er the wave,
Shall pass into power through a mongrel-held cave.
Educating his party with quips and with cranks,
Organising their efforts and taming their pranks,
Till his brutes shall perform well in disciplined ranks,
This Star out of Jacob shall rise into fame,
In the Shiloh of nations shall make a great name,
Bearing rule o'er the Gentiles, in mischief oft busy,
Magicians and dreamers both Daniel and Dizzy;
And the days that shall be ere the coming of Ben
Are a thousand, a thousand, four hundred and ten.
And in times and a half, on the seventy-seventh day,
The brass and the steel and the blood and the clay
That built the god Jingo, shall crumble away.
And the wonderful Stone that came forth to smite,
This Stone is a Glad-Stone and also a Bright.
So the words of the Seer are fulfilled in men's sight
(Unhappily, whispers the Zeit Geist, not quite).

W. P. BALL.

Christianity in the Cannibal Islands.

IN the autumn of 1878, business of a private nature caused me to sojourn for a few months in the only Christianised settlement in the Cannibal Islands. These isles, as the student of geography will know, are situated in the southern portion of the Pacific Ocean, latitude 17°, longitude 24½ by 15 inches. They are little known, as their commercial operations are as yet of an insignificant character, and it is seldom that ships call at their only port, Ilakkiwaku, on the eastern coast of the largest island of the group—Koko.

During my stay in that curious and unfamiliar region I had abundant opportunities of observing the customs and amenities of a very interesting phase of social evolution. I found that the principal island had only been under the influence of "civilisation" for twenty years, and a Christian mission had been the principal agency in effecting this revolution. Society in Koko presented the unusual and sometimes grotesque spectacle of a savage people passing through an early stage of development. Side by side with the symbols of Christian civilisation—churches, prisons, gin-palaces, Lock hospitals and bagnios—one saw a considerable portion of the community retaining many features of their primitive barbarism. One evening, when I attended divine service at the principal church, I noticed several native ladies whose sole attire consisted of a bead necklace and a pair of kid gloves. These artless daughters of the soil were, however, as deeply interested in their neighbor's adornments, and as expert in showing their own to the best advantage, as if they had been born in a Christian land and religiously trained from their childhood.

It was from the lips of a "converted" native that I gathered the greater part of my information respecting the history of the island. This man—whose aboriginal name was Ookee, but who, upon joining the Church, had abandoned it for the more aristocratic and elegant cognomen of Smith—had been for several years a deacon of the Church and was highly esteemed by his clerical superiors. When I first became acquainted with him, I frequently endeavored to draw him into conversation and to extract from him some details concerning the religious progress of his native isle. For a long time my efforts were fruitless. When the subject was broached he took refuge in an invincible taciturnity. At last, however, I succeeded in "drawing" him by inviting him to dinner and plying him steadily with the best Jamaica rum. Under the influence of a square meal and the generous spirit—which he imbibed in enormous quantities—the fountain of his soul was let loose, and he narrated to me some most interesting facts relating to the great changes that Christian influence had wrought on the island. *In summo veritas*, as the Latin proverb hath it; and I soon discovered, when Ookee, under the stimulus of liquor, unbosomed himself to me, that he was at heart a Pagan, and that his "Christianity" was a mere surface polish assumed for his own purposes. I will give the substance of his confession, which was interlarded with sundry phrases of native Kikapoo that I did not understand.

"Yes," he replied, in answer to a question, "I remember quite well the introduction of your religion into my country. Before that we had some happy times. We didn't wear any clothes, we didn't do any work, and we had no masters. The men hunted and fought, while the women provided our meals. I recollect the time when the first cargo of moral pocket-handkerchiefs reached Koko. A fat parson came over from some missionary society in England, and brought with him 1000 red pocket-handkerchiefs, with "Prepare to meet thy God—with Lord Shaftesbury's compliments" printed on them. This was

the thin end of the wedge. The innovation was bitterly resented by all sensible men. What did we want handkerchiefs for? We had been happy and contented without 'em and didn't require 'em. But the women were led away by the parson, and, dazzled with finery, fond of showing the red rags, went about with them on their heads, and sneering at those who didn't wear them. This caused ill-feeling in the tribe, and one night a party of us 'went for' the parson, killed him, cooked him, and made a good supper of him. This put a stop to the handkerchief nuisance for a time; but six months later *two* stout clergymen arrived. I, with several others, had shared the first man amongst us; and, as he cut up very juicy and tender, I had no difficulty in inducing them to make a meal of the second 'mission.' I thought we were safe then; but alas! it was not to be. The fate of the three parsons became known, and before the end of the year, a third party of missionaries landed on the island. This time there were six parsons—but they were all *thin*! There wasn't a decent meal for a man on any one of them, and I suppose that was the reason why they were sent out. They brought with them barrels of 'fire-water,' and plenty of gaudy gew-gaws for the women—lockets, necklaces, ear-rings, bonnets and so forth. These artful fellows were all armed with revolvers, never went out alone, and directed their attention to the ladies, whom they enticed by means of their trinkets. If we men said a word against the Christians, we were nagged by our women till the air was blue. By these means, aided by the fire-water, the six skinny soul-savers got a firm foot-hold on the island, and they soon set up a public-house and completed our demoralisation. They gave us gin and the gospel together, and any man who became 'converted' was able to get drunk for a week without cost. Very soon the traders put in an appearance, and swindled us out of everything we had worth exporting. I held out as long as I could, but at last I had to give in and be 'converted.' They made me a deacon, and sent me out preaching for five shillings a week and a pint of gin.

"It's all up with us now! Our men, who were once a brave and hardy race, are now a canting, lazy lot of humbugs; our women give themselves airs and walk about showing their bits of finery to their neighbors. Ah! Koko isn't what it was when I was a young man." Here my friend, overcome by his pathetic recollections, burst into tears. From the lachrymose he passed into the drowsy stage, and I could never induce him to resume his confidences.

My observations fully bore out the truth of Ookee's statements. The aborigines, under the combined influences of civilisation, Christianity and alcohol, had certainly degenerated to a very low condition when I knew them; and in all probability they will become extinct in the course of a few generations. But in their own primitive savage state they were not so despicable a race as they are now—the degraded hangers-on of a creed which they do not understand or care for, the dregs of a civilisation which they did not desire and to which they cannot reconcile themselves.

GEORGE STANDING.

On a Parson.

UNFORMED in Nature's shop while Stultus lay,
A cumbrous heap of coarse neglected clay,
"Pray, madam," says the foreman of the trade,
"What of you paltry rubbish can be made?"—
For it's too gross," said he, "and unrefined
To be the carcase of a thinking mind;
Then it's too lumpish and too stiff to make
A Pop, a Beau, a Witling, or a Rake.
Nor is it for a lady's footman fit;
For ladies' footmen must have sense and wit.
A warrior must be vigilant and bold,
And, therefore, claims a brisk and active mould.
A statesman must be skilled in various arts;
A mistress must have charms, a pimp have parts;
A lawyer without craft will get no fees:
This matter, therefore, will make none of these.
In short, I plainly think it good for nought;
But, madam, I desire your better thought."
"Why, Tom," said she, in a disdainful tone,
"Amongst the sweepings let it then be thrown,
Or make a parson of the useless stuff,
'Twill serve a preaching blockhead well enough."

EATING GOD.—A young Turk, brought to Paris, and falling under the influence of some of the doctors of the Sorbonne, was persuaded by them to turn Christian. After having been well instructed and catechised, he at last agreed to receive the sacraments of baptism and the "Lord's supper." The priest, however, to make everything sure and solid, continued his instructions, and began the next day with the usual question—"How many gods are there?" "None at all," replied the young man. "How? none at all?" cries the priest. "To be sure," said the honest proselyte, "You've told me all along there is but one God, and yesterday I ate him."

Master God; or, a "Newish" Life of Christ.

LITTLE Jesus was, like other children, born at an extremely early age. Most infants have two parents, but it is a-parent to everyone that this noble youth was an exception to the general rule. He only had a mother and a ghost of a father. Those who particularly wish to know how his birth was brought about must refer to the *Freethinker* Christmas Number for 1884. The subject is there illustrated very *ably*—though some might think disagreeably. Mary's husband, Joseph, knowing that he had no share in pitch-forking into this world little Jesus, had a terrible row with Mary, and broke up all the good home they had, which consisted of one table, a chair and a half, and an old French bedstead, besides a few small useful articles, such as a ginger-beer bottle, which was used as a candlestick, and half-a-dozen other utensils, too numerous to mention.

Of course, after this exhibition of Home Rule on the part of her husband, Mary had to find other quarters, and there being no nice workhouses, we are led to infer-Mary, according to history, took up her abode in a stable, and there our hero was born. Horses were his only neighbors, and they were real *neigh-bones*, too, although he didn't care a straw for them, and had half a mind to give them some chaff.

Joseph's uncalled-for temper had cooled down—he being quite ashamed of himself at getting in such a rage over so small an affair. He fully perceived that he had been evicted by the Holy Ghost, and thanked his lucky stars that he was allowed to act henceforth as caretaker of the Virgin Mary.

Directly it was convenient, Mary had to skedaddle with her child and Joseph to Egypt. Some say it was because Herod, who was nearly dead, had an idea that Master God would, when of age, do him out of his throne; and so, to avoid any unpleasantness to himself, ordered all children under two years old to be butchered. But that is an outrageous concoction. If Herod really wished to put Master God to death, he might have made him a present of some condensed milk, or have compelled him to be vaccinated. The real truth is, Joseph and Mary were awfully hard up, and they were merely sloping out of the way to avoid paying the doctor for his attendance. But better times were in store for them, as we shall presently see.

Strange to relate, whenever little Jesus was washed he kicked up a devil of a row, but an angel appeared to Joseph and Mary and told them not to be alarmed, and also informed them that they might make their fortunes by selling the water Jesus was washed in at 1s. 1½d. per bottle. This they accordingly did. All respectable chemists took it on. Marvellous cures were effected by it. Testimonials poured in from all quarters—prince and peasant acknowledging the benefits arising therefrom. It was a safe cure for gout, small-pox, rheumatics, measles, or leprosy. Mary and Joseph soon became rich, and there was such a demand for the stuff, that poor little Jesus was washed every five minutes. This was too much for him, so he resolved to put an end to the business. This he did by drinking all the water they washed him with. But Joseph and Mary were able to return to their native place and pay their debts with the money they had already acquired.

Holy writ says the child grew and waxed strong in spirit and the grace of God was upon him; but it forgets to mention such an important matter as whether he cut his teeth all right. No doubt this omission is quite accidental.

Rumor has it that he was a very greedy child, which his poor little brothers knew to their cost. They each had a feeding-bottle, but one was not enough for Master God; he, when his mother's back was turned, would take them from his brothers and put them all in his own mouth. He was actually so greedy that he would kick up a shindy if his mother put a larger mustard poultice on his brothers than she did on him.

He turned out to be a wonderful child, doing all manner of tricks. His parents exhibited him at different places, and so earned an honest penny. Master God could already work miracles, and his fame spread far and near. Hundreds of Gospels were written about him, and they tell of the many wonderful things he did.

It appears that a young man had been bewitched by a female, and had been turned into a mule. By hoisting Jesus on its back it instantly passed into human form. On another occasion a youngster named Bartholomew, at the point of death, was cured by merely laying him on the bed of Jesus and smelling his garments. Many little boys would rather die than undergo such an ordeal.

A girl who had her blood sucked out by Satan—(poor Devil he must have been dry)—and who looked like a "dead carcass," was cured by being presented with a swaddling cloth of little Jesus. What youngster would not prefer a clout from his parent to one from Master God?

As soon as he was old enough Master God had the run of the streets, making mud-pies and playing with dead cats, making them return to life, much to the disgust of the people who thought they were rid of them.

One day he, with other youngsters, made some clay figures of animals, and he actually made them walk and eat and drink. He also made some clay sparrows fly. In fact, he was up to all

manner of larks. Sometimes he had a game with organ-grinders, making them turn the handle the wrong way, causing them to play the tunes backwards, creating the most unearthly row.

Old Joseph, his supposed father, was by trade a carpenter, though not a very skilful one. He had a knack of making everything the wrong size, but Master God always obliged him by altering any article, in a moment of time, either longer, shorter, wider, or narrower—in fact just how it was required. Of course, Joseph, as a rule, tried to make things a bit too small, so as not to use too much wood, as he knew Jesus could so easily stretch a door, a table, or anything else for him.

On one occasion—according to rejected sacred history—Master God was playing with other boys on the housetops, and a lad was pushed over into the street and died. Master God was accused of the crime, but he caused the dead boy to speak and acquit him. Wouldn't some poor innocent devil under Mr. Binn's fatherly care like to have the same chance.

But one of the cleverest performances of Master God was when he dropped a pitcher of water and picked every drop up again, not leaving a thimbleful on the ground. As for the broken pitcher he scraped up twelve basketsful of fragments, and by a little jugglery joined them together again. Some might think this Yankee fiction, but it is really gospel truth.

He was sent to school, but the master discovered that he was, metaphorically, teaching his grandmother to suck eggs—Master God knowing more than he could tell him. At another school the master was about to strike him when he caused his hand to wither and made him drop down dead. It is marvellous that little Jesus was not at once dispatched to his ghostly father for such a performance as this.

But, as most people are aware, he was born under a lucky star, and was allowed to continue in his wild career. On one occasion Joseph and Mary lost him, and they got in a terrible stew, hunting all over the city and inquiring at the police-stations for him. He was at last discovered in the Temple acting as chairman for the learned doctors and bigwigs of Jerusalem. He cheeked his mother for looking after him, and Joseph pulled him home by the ear, much to Master God's displeasure, and caused him to exclaim, "Be easy, old man."

Some time after this he was "wetted down" by John the Baptist, at which performance his ghostly father publicly acknowledged his paternity; and it must now be admitted on all sides that the subject has become too sacred to be further dealt with by an irreverent and profane

SCOFFER.

Dod Grile's Creed.

THESE are the things in which we believe—a Trinity, three god united by a rope at the waist, that being about the only sort of *Tria Juncta in Uno* that our humble intelligence can accurately comprehend. This triple deity is flesh and blood, for spirit, if it is anything, is breath; and in this case the question, *Whose breath?* would be utterly unanswerable. The remission of sins—that is, after they had been painfully expiated in the person of the sinner. Otherwise we should have to relinquish a belief in justice. There is a heaven—the same as described by St. John. This is wholly uninhabited, except by the angels who were born there; for only a limited number of human beings have ever been good enough to go there, and these do not wish to spend an eternity of useless indolence. There is a hell; but its climate has undergone such a change in the last one hundred years that it may be called salubrious. In fact, it has been so modified in every respect that it is difficult to say what it is. These are the four cardinal points in our theology.

Ad rem we believe the doctrine of election without understanding it, and revere the doctrine of redemption without believing it. We believe the world was created out of nothing, but don't know how the nothing was held together, and don't think it could be done again. We believe in baptism, for we have seen it done. We believe in divine mercy, without wishing to take any of it. We think the patriarchs were an honest and worthy lot, who have been shamefully misrepresented. We admire the wisdom of Solomon, and wish he had chosen to display it; and are amazed at the miracles of the prophets, so little inferior to those of our own *prestidigitateurs*, and in some respects superior to the corresponding ones of their heathen predecessors and contemporaries.

Of the four evangelists, we have most confidence in John, because the gospel bearing his name was written some hundreds of years after the others, and contains some facts not previously attainable. And finally we believe that Jesus was the son of David, because two of the evangelists trace the descent of his adopted father directly from that person. From this brief and imperfect statement of our theological position, our biographer will have no difficulty in classing us. A man who believes in everything that anybody else does, can be only a Pagan.

THE next man stepped up. "Well, sir," said the irritated agent, "whereabouts is your d—d grist-mill?" "I, sir," was the meek reply, "am the rector to whom you wrote about conducting service next Sunday."

YAHVEH'S MILL WITH DAGON.

See 1 SAMUEL IV. and V., and
"GOD IN A BOX," by G. W. FOOTE.



1. God in the Box.



2. The Ark captured.



3. In Dagon's Joss-House.



4. Yahveh introduces himself.



5. Two of a Trade.



6. Two to one on both.



7. In chancery.



8. Taken in and done for.



9. Indigestible.



10. Dagon corpsed.



11. Daylight again.



12. Yahveh's triumph.

THE LAST SUPPER;

Or, the Early Spread of Christianity,



AUTHORISED VERSION.



REVISED VERSION.

A GREAT SINNER.—An old negro named Pete was very much troubled about his sins. Perceiving him one day with a very downcast look, his master asked him the cause. "Oh, massa, I'm such a great sinner!" "But, Pete," said his master, "you are foolish to take it so much to heart. You never see me troubled about my sins." "I know de reason, massa," said Pete. "When you go out duck-shooting and kill one duck and wound another don't you run after the wounded duck?" "Yes, Pete." And the master wondered what was coming next. "Well, massa, dat is de way wid you and me. Ole Satan has got you sure; but as he am not sure of me, he chases dis chile all de time."

TALMAGE ON THE PRESS: "The newspapers of the future will be the right wing of the apocalyptic angel; and the cylinders of the Christian printing press will be the front wheels of the Lord's chariot."—Talmage. Meanwhile, newspapers may be used for covering pantry-shelves, as usual.

The story is told that a certain man in Alabama desired to join the Episcopal Church. The rector questioned him as to his religious views, and, finding that he had no adequate idea of the obligations he was about to assume, advised him to wait until he had more fully studied the subject, whereupon the man turned away, with the remark: "Very good; then I'll join the Free Masons."

The Devil's Celestial Journey.

The Devil once wanted a holiday trip,
 So he called for his best pair of pinions;
 Cried he in high glee, "Up to heaven I'll skip
 And look through old Jahveh's dominions!"
 Then he gathered together his favorite imps
 And his plan he indulgently stated;
 And the prospect of catching of heaven a glimpse
 Made each little demon elated.
 The news spread throughout the wide kingdom of hell,
 And the Devil assembled his legions
 To bid them a fatherly, loving farewell
 Ere he mounted to much colder regions.
 With dignity curled he his tail sleek and long
 As upward through hell's smoke he darted;
 Then he and his sooty and devilish throng
 On their journey celestial departed.
 Up, up they flew through the dark boundless space;
 Onwards past sun, star and meteor,
 But they could not yet find of heaven a trace
 Or the gate that was kept by Saint Peter.
 But at last they caught sight of its light far ahead
 And the angels like moths flying round it;
 "We're at heaven at last!" his black majesty said
 (Though the Devil but knows how they found it).
 Saint Peter was snoring, so irksome and stale
 Was his duty an imp had to shake him,
 But not till the Devil applied his sharp tail
 To his hindermost parts, did they wake him.
 The heavenly gate-keeper rubbed both his eyes,
 Then, catching a sight of the Devil,
 So taken aback was the saint with surprise
 That he nearly fell prostrate and level.
 He had seen some queer customers, too, in his time
 Since he'd held the gate-keeper's position,
 And millions dyed deep in the blackest of crime
 Had knocked at his gate for admission.
 Whoever had knocked, were they nigger or Jew,
 He had ne'er been the slightest amazed at;
 But none half so black as this devilish crew
 Had his saintly eyes e'er before gazed at.
 This grim sooty legion quite took him aback
 (Saying naught for their impish behavior)
 Thought he, "beyond doubt they're a little *too* black"
 To be rinsed in the blood of the Savior."
 But the Devil was not to be turned by a saint,
 And much less a saint like Saint Peter;
 So he whipped him aside; thought the saint he should faint,
 For ne'er was a movement done neater.
 Then the Fiend once again put the point of his tail
 To his nethermost quarters and stung him;
 Nor heeded his piteous, unsaintly wail
 As over his gate-post they swung him.
 Then the Devil stalked through with a dignified pride,
 And his imps followed closely behind him;
 To lead him to Jahveh he wanted no guide
 As he knew very well where to find him.
 For heaven's topography still he knew well;
 Indeed, he at home felt in heaven,
 Though ages had flown since from here down to hell
 By Jahveh's hot wrath he'd been driven.
 He leisurely sauntered towards the White Throne,
 Whilst angels before him went fitting;
 And stalked just as though heaven's realms were his own
 Up to where Omnipotence was sitting.
 No page to announce him did Satan require
 But, striking an attitude tragic,
 He enveloped himself in a sheet of blue fire
 By means of his demonish magic.
 "Who the devil are you?" the Almighty one gasped
 As he grabbed at the Ghost to support him,
 And the fleece of the Lamb he so nervously grasped
 That he down to his shanks nearly brought him.
 "Omniscient One, thou hast guessed quite aright,"
 Said the Evil One, bowing politely.
 Then each little devil as black as the night,
 Like their master before them, bowed sprightly.
 The Omnipotent Deity's form seemed to quail,
 And his few hairs affrighted up started.
 It seemed that the Lamb was about to turn tail,
 While the Ghost appeared quite chicken-hearted.
 Then the Deity put on a faint sickly smile
 'Twas a smile of assumed approbation—
 As he said, "Has the Devil then turned from his guile
 To at last seek the blood of salvation?"
 "Well no, not exactly," the Evil One said,
 "But, you see, having both time and leisure
 I thought 'twas near time that a visit I paid;
 And believe me, it gives me great pleasure.
 It is not very much of these regions I learn
 As we don't often visit each other,
 But I pray that my visit you'll kindly return
 And our difference endeavor to smother.

I am sorry my visit will have to be brief,
 For staying is out of the question—"
 (Then the Deity gave a deep sigh of relief),
 "But I've come just to make a suggestion.
 Then hear, thou Omnipotent, think me not bold
 For this sweeping assertion thus making,
 But I know you are now getting feeble and old—
 'Neath the weight of your burdens you're breaking;
 And I most humbly venture to say that your reign
 Has of late been so full of disaster—
 Pardon I crave if I put it too plain—
 That the universe wants a new master."
 At the Evil One's words the poor Ghost looked aghast;
 Thought the Deity: "Impudent Devil!
 I wish that my prime and my power were not past,
 I would just teach you how to be civil!"
 But the Devil waxed warm in his stinging address—
 He feared not Jah's impotent thunders;
 Said he: "If you're honest I'm sure you'll confess
 That you've made some most ungodly blunders.
 Ever since you created that earth down below,
 Which you did in a most bungling fashion,
 It has seen as much trouble and evil and woe
 As might bring forth a demon's compassion.
 Indeed, I may say even my heart has bled—
 Tho' I'm "nick"-named the Demon of Evil—
 For famine and bloodshed on every side spread
 Can soften the heart of a Devil.
 Persecution and bigotry still far from dead,
 By priestcraft's fanatical minions
 Fearless men to the gaol and the dungeon are led
 For expression of honest opinions.
 With earthquakes, eruptions and famines, of late,
 And Humanity almost despairing,
 Your handiwork's in a most muddled-up state,
 And, I think, wants a little repairing;
 So, as you're now feeble, I beg to suggest
 That you'll very soon think of resigning.
 'Tis time that Omnipotence took a long rest,
 For your strength and your power are declining.
 Since creation began you've been always unfit
 To fill such a dignified station;
 So, ere you get forcible notice to quit,
 Just send me your signed abdication.
 I further suggest—and I think you'll agree—
 That the Devil himself could do better;
 So please hand your royalty over to me
 And I'll rule like a God to the letter."
 Each word from his lips like a galvanic shock
 Through heaven eternal vibrated;
 So fluttered and scared was the heavenly flock
 That its chorus of praise quite abated.
 All the hosts of the Lord, in affrighted dismay,
 Of a sudden their "holies" ceased singing;
 The trumpeters stopped their monotonous bray
 And the harpists their dismal "ting-tinging."
 The Almighty One's cheeks were ashen and white,
 His omniscient eye fiercely glaring,
 And he gasped in his rage something far from polite
 Which suspiciously sounded like swearing;
 He fumed in his wrath and at last roundly swore;
 Then in vain shrieked for David so doughty
 To kick this black Devil from heaven once more—
 But, alas! he was aged and gouty.
 "Then unloose the Beast!" screamed out Jahveh again;
 "Good Beast! go, tear him and seize him!"
 But the Beast only growled—he could see very plain
 That the Fiend would be too tough to please him.
 The Devil complacently looked on the while
 At all heaven's unholy confusion,
 Then said he, bowing low, with an amiable smile:
 "Believe me, I meant no intrusion;
 And your godly forgiveness I most humbly crave
 For offering such a suggestion—
 But I beg, ne'ertheless, that you'll just kindly save
 My proposal for future digestion.
 And now," said the Devil, "I bid thee farewell,
 Though the parting will terribly grieve me—"
 Shrieked the Deity's voice, "Go to hell! Go to hell!
 Black Fiend, of thy presence relieve me!"
 "Thy will shall be done," and the Fiend bowed again;
 "But I beg you'll remember my warning:
 Mankind now is cursing your imbecile reign,
 Your name with strong blasphemy scorning,
 While preachers of progress and freedom below
 To me every homage are paying;
 And to you it may be interesting to know
 That all earth I am virtually swaying.
 Remember, your rule must soon come to an end,
 For blasphemy falls on you thickly.
 So take the advice of a well-meaning friend—
 Resign, or else die very quickly!"
 With a grim fiendish smile on his black sooty face,
 And with eyes bright as red molten lava,
 He mockingly bowed to the White Throne of Grace,
 Then passed from the presence of Jahveh.

And departing, the Devil, with all his black throng,
 Left a stench most infernal behind them ;
 The angels turned faint, for the fumes were so strong
 As almost to choke and to blind them.
 The Deity held his celestial nose
 'Tween his infinite thumb and forefinger ;
 Anathemas loud to his lips then arose,
 For hell's sulphur persisted to linger.
 In a rage then he tore the scant locks which he wore,
 And the Devil his curses flung after ;
 But drowned were the spluttering oaths which he swore
 In distant, re-echoing laughter.

H. GORDON SWIFT.

Revising the Bible.

SCENE—Jerusalem Chamber ; Revisers seated round table.

1st Reviser. I think in our revision of the Holy Scriptures we should adhere as closely as we can to the authorised version, lest it should be said that we are seeking to reconcile its statements with those of the infidels.

2nd Reviser. What of that ? We must try and make Genes's a little more in harmony with modern science. With that view we must knock out all the statements of a contradictory and absurd character !

3rd Reviser. What, do you suggest that the Holy Scriptures contain anything in the nature of an absurdity ? Some of its declarations I am prepared to admit look contradictory, but I believe that they are susceptible of a very clear explanation—in the spiritual sense. I am amazed at our friend suggesting that we should make material alterations in the text.

2nd Reviser. All I say is that we should be guided by the result of the researches of men of science, and scholars of the highest repute. For my part I think Darwin is a better authority on the evolution of man than Moses.

4th Reviser. Now I call that downright blasphemy.

5th Reviser. "The heterodoxy of one age is the orthodoxy of the next."

1st Reviser. Why that is positively a quotation from Dr. Arnold's freethinking son, Matthew Arnold. In this holy undertaking of ours, I think that all infidel authorities should be eschewed ; we must rely upon our own erudition and wisdom in the performance of our solemn duty.

2nd Reviser. Well let us begin.

1st Reviser. So be it. I will commence by reading the first chapter of Genesis, and whenever any member of the Committee suggests an alteration we will consider it. Now the first verse of Genesis reads : "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

2nd Reviser. I think that verse needs alteration.

3rd Reviser. Indeed ! how ?

2nd Reviser. Why its meaning is not plain. In the beginning of what ? Time ? How could you have any time, before anything was in existence, and it is a contradiction in terms to say "In the beginning" in reference to God, because God is eternal.

5th Reviser. Moreover, I find that the Hebrew word "create" is precisely the same word that is subsequently used as "make"—and modern science does not regard creation in the sense of origination of substance as possible.

1st Reviser. These objections seem to me as not only trivial and hypercritical but absurd.

Other Revisers (in chorus). Yes, absurd ! blasphemous and dangerous.

2nd Reviser. I must confess that I do not take that view of my learned friend's objections. What he says seems to me reasonable enough.

Other Revisers. Nonsense. They are monstrous !

2nd Reviser. And I say more. I say that the cosmogony, the astronomy, the geology and the biology of Genesis must be altered.

5th Reviser. And I support my learned friend. For instance the 3rd verse makes God create light on the first day and the 16th verse makes Him create the sun, moon and stars on the fourth.

1st Reviser. I must appeal to my learned brothers—servants of the living God—as to whether we shall listen to these impious remarks. We have met for a most serious purpose.

Other Revisers (in chorus). Most serious !

1st Reviser. And we ought not to be diverted from our path by such unseemly remarks as these.

2nd Reviser. Yes, I know we have met for a serious purpose and that's why I want the revision to be a real one. We don't want to trim and polish phrases—we want to make the text reasonable and in conformity with modern knowledge.

3rd Reviser. This is horrible, most horrible. I think we had better adjourn the meeting until our learned brother's feelings have cooled down.

2nd Reviser. My feelings ! Why I am as cool as a cucumber—I mean as cool as a— a bishop towards his poor curate.

3rd Reviser. That remark is most insulting and uncalled for.

2nd Reviser. Not so. I only meant it in a spiritual sense.

5th Reviser. Well, if my learned friend's mind is a little heated mine is not, and I do not hesitate to say that I regard Genesis as it now stands as one mass of contradictions and absurdities. For instance, in the 1st chapter, birds and beasts are made before man ; in the 2nd, man is created before birds and beasts ; in the 1st chapter again the fowls of the air are created out of the waters, whereas in the 2nd they are created out of the ground ; in the 1st chapter also a number of men and women are created, while in the 2nd God creates the first man and the first woman.

1st Reviser. All these trivial remarks are taken from the writings of that Kaffir of a Bishop, Colenso of Natal—

2nd Reviser. Don't call the late Bishop of Natal a Kaffir—a greater, a kinder, a nobler man never lived.

5th Reviser. Hear, hear !

2nd Reviser. And now I am about it I may as well say that I regard the story of the "Fall of man" as an allegory ; "Noah's flood" and the "Tower of Babel" as stupid stories ; Jehovah as an ignorant and barbarous creation of a savage mind, and all the wicked and licentious expressions in the Bible as the outcome of a people steeped in vice and superstition.

3rd Reviser. My lords and gentlemen, this blasphemy is terrible—it will drive me mad.

Other Revisers. It will drive us all mad. (A knock at the door is heard).

Enter Mr. Bradlaugh (accompanied by two of the Revising Committee). Mr. Bradlaugh. My lords and gentlemen, I am sorry to interrupt you but these two learned gentlemen have lost their way and asked me to conduct them to Jerusalem Chamber.

1st Reviser (to Mr. Bradlaugh). The full committee of revisers are here, sir.

Mr. Bradlaugh (in amazement). What do I see ? Mr. Foote and Mr. Wheeler. Good gracious ! You have come to the wrong meeting. Our meeting is at the Westminster Palace Hotel, over the way—where we shall revise the principles of the National Secular Society.

(Exit Messrs. Foote, Wheeler and Bradlaugh chuckling).

The Committee then solemnly continue the revision of the Bible.

A. B. MOSS.

The Sky-Pilots.

Who are so humble and so meek,
 Of foes they never evil speak,
 But always turn the other cheek ?
 The Clergy.

Who give their goods unto the poor,
 And dreadful sufferings endure
 Their hope of heaven to secure ?
 The Clergy.

Who from all Mammon-worship shrink
 And care for neither meat nor drink,
 And never for the morrow think ?
 The Clergy.

Who, looking on their lives as dust
 Content with water and a crust,
 Are never "fashed wi' fleshly lust ?"
 The Clergy.

Who live to preach and fast and pray,
 And sky-wards pilot us the way,
 And hardly ever go astray ?
 The Clergy.

BISHOP HORSLEY one day met Dr. Monsey in the park. "These are very dreadful times," said Horsley, "not only do Deists abound, but—would you think it, Doctor?—some people deny that there is a God." "I can tell you," replied Monsey, "what is equally strange. Some people say there are three." Horsley immediately walked away.—*Rogers's Table Talk.*

DR. MONSEY wrote for himself the following epitaph :—

"Here lie my old bones—my vexation now ends :
 I have lived much too long for myself and my friends.
 As to churches and churchyards, which men may call holy,
 'Tis a rank piece of priestcraft, and founded on folly.
 What the next world may be never troubled my pate ;
 But be what it may, I beseech you, O Fate,
 When the bodies of millions rise up in a riot,
 To let the old carcase of Monsey be quiet."

—Book about Doctors.

SCENE—Deck of the "Columba." English Tourist (who has noticed "G K" in large letters on the sails of some Greecock fishing boats, to intelligent Highland boatman) : "Can you tell me, my man, the meaning of the 'G K' on the sails of that boat ?" I. H. B. (after gazing earnestly at it) : "God knows !" The English tourist takes out his notebook and writes it down.

COMIC BIBLE SKETCHES.



DOCTOR GOD.

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, as he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof."—GENESIS ii., 21.



MOSES SELLS HIS WASTE.

"And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him."—EX. xiii., 19.



JEHOVAH'S TANTRUMS

"He hath shewed strength with his arm . . . He hath put down the mighty from their seats."—LUKE i., 51, 52.



A DISH FOR THE GODS.

"And the Lord smelled a sweet savor."—GENESIS viii., 21.



DADDY LONGLEGS.

“Neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool.—MATT. v. 34, 35.

Holy Conundrums.

Apropos of Anglicised French, why would the “evil one” make a good husband?—Because the deuce can never be tray!

Why was the whale that swallowed Jonah like a milkman who has retired on an independence?—Because he took a great profit out of water.

Why is the Lord like a rouge pot?—Because David says “he is the health of my countenance” (Psalms xlii., 11).

How were Adam and Eve prevented from gambling?—Their pair o’ dice was taken away from them.

Who took in the first newspapers?—Cain took “*A Bell’s Life*” (Abel’s life) and Joshua countermanded the *Sun*. Satan took in the *Christian World* and showed Jesus the *Globe*.

Why was Noah obliged to stoop on entering the Ark?—Because, although the ark was high, Noah was a higher ark (hierarch).

In what place did the cock crow so loud that all the world heard him?—In the ark.

What animal took the most luggage into the ark, and which the least?—The elephant, who had his trunk; while the fox and the cock had only a brush and comb between them.

Why did Moses prohibit pork?—Because Noah cursed Ham.

To what tribe did the Wandering Jew belong?—Gad.

Name an old Testament fish-breeder. — Nashdon, for he begat Salmon.

What is the difference between Abimelech and the Earl of Shrewsbury?—One’s the son of a high tub (Ahitub), the other’s the son of a tall butt (Talbot).

Why are free sittings in church very immoral?—Because you are then made good for nothing.

If you wish a religious man to go to sleep, by what imperial name should you address him?—Nap-holy-un.

If a man becomes surety for the reappearance of a prisoner, why is he like the most extraordinary ass that ever lived?—Because he acts the part of the donkey to bail-em (Baal-an).

What’s the difference between Hagar starting into the wilderness and a boy going to learn French?—One was going to leave Abraham, the other to leave Isaac (Levisac).

Who was Jonah’s tutor?—The whale that brought him up.

What is the first and only instance on record of one fruit anathematizing another?—When the apple d—d the pair.

Who had the first free entrance into a theatre?—Joseph, when he got into the pit for nothing.

Who was the fastest woman mentioned in the Bible?—Herodias, when she got ahead of John the Baptist on a charger.

What was the difference between Jacob and a small musical instrument?—One was a sharp Jew and the other a jew’s harp.

Cain and Abel;

OR, THE FIRST PERFORMANCE OF "OUR BOYS."

SCENE—*Field of vegetables. CAIN digging up potatoes, etc. Country inn in the distance.*

Enter ABEL (*smoking a pipe*). Hallo, Cain, you're working rather late this evening. Why don't you leave off and come and have a mug of ale down at the "Cherubim."

CAIN. I'm doing a little overtime; I'm working for the Lord just now.

ABEL. What do you mean by working for the Lord? Have you joined the Salvation Army?

CAIN. No; I'm gathering these to offer as a sacrifice to God. You know who I mean—that individual who made dad and mother.

ABEL. What's the use of wasting good vegetables on him?

CAIN. They won't be wasted if I get a hundredfold their value in return. You know dad has often told us it's best to make it right with Mr. Jehovah.

ABEL. I have heard dad say something about being on the safe side of him as did the six days' hard labor.

CAIN. Well, I'm going to offer him these vegetables as a sacrifice—a real sacrifice too—(*shows ABEL a few bad potatoes, two diseased carrots and a yellow cabbage*)—and doubtless I shall get something in return for them. Anyhow, I shan't be much out of pocket if I don't. I think I can spare these.

ABEL. Spare them? I should think you could! You know your book—you wouldn't make a bad parson.

CAIN. I don't mind if he sends me a better field of vegetables next year.

ABEL. Perhaps he might. Your idea of offering a sacrifice is not a bad one—so hold hard a minute, Brother Cain, and I'll offer up a sacrifice also. I've got a chicken as died of croup this morning and a couple of old ducks as ain't no use; so wait while I go and fetch them, and we can offer our sacrifices at the same time.

CAIN. Well, make haste then. But it's hardly fair. I thought of the dodge first. You're always getting the best of me.

(*ABEL fetches his dead hen and two ducks almost ditto.*)

CAIN. Why didn't you bring some disinfecting fluid with them?

ABEL. There's beauties for you! (*Shows hen and ducks to CAIN*). They'd fetch seven and sixpence at the market.

CAIN. I must say they look pretty specimens to offer to your maker.

ABEL. They're quite as good as your stale vegetables. I'll bet you two quarts of ale and a cigar that my sacrifice will please Jehovah better than yours.

CAIN. Right you are, brother, and none of your hanky-panky tricks if you lose, pretending you've put all your money in the missionary box.

ABEL. I've got some bits of wood and put my sacrifice on them the same as you have, but I've brought safety matches that light only on the box. What shall I do?

CAIN. Got a light from mine. My wood burns all right, but the vegetables won't flare up.

ABEL (*gets light*). Ah, don't mine burn beautifully! Plenty of fat in mine. Look! look in the sky, Brother Cain. See how the Lord is smacking his lips at my nice poultry. It was a very good idea of yours, this sacrifice business. God will always look after my welfare now.

CAIN. O lor', O lor', I can't make mine burn at all. These vegetables are so deuced damp.

ABEL. I told you they were half rotten. Look how the Lord turns his nose up at them, Brother Cain. I've won your bet. Mr. God only cares for a sacrifice of flesh. (*Chuckles*).

CAIN. Then he shall have your flesh! (*Hits ABEL with a hoe*).

ABEL. Murder! police! Murder! police! (*He dies*).

CAIN. O, what have I done? Slain my only brother—in fact, the only person in the world except my parents. I must at once skedaddle, or the police will be after me. Before one hour has passed, reward bills, offering £100 for my arrest and free pardon to any accomplice will be posted in every road, street and alley. Oh, it is too horrible to contemplate. I must take the midnight express to Nod—for I am truly a marked man. (*Exit*).

Enter JEHOVAH (*chuckling*). Ha, ha, ha! Don't my plans work well? Ha, ha, ha! Poor old Adam and Eve, many years ago, fell nicely into the trap I set for them with the tree of knowledge; and now their son Cain has done just what I intended he should do—kill his brother. Didn't I know—being omniscient—that he would get in a desperate rage if I rejected his sacrifice and accepted his brother's? Ha, ha, ha! Cain, you are truly a marked man, and future generations shall also be a mark for my caprice—for everything I make is for my own pleasure and amusement.

SCOFFER.

Jimmy Jaxon's Bible Essays.

No. 1.—ADAM.

ADAM woz the fust man that woz never born. E ad no muther to spank him and send him to skool bored with a fleec in iz eer cause e checked her like that ikey boy Geesus did his muther wen shee wouted to get some whine out of im at caner inn galleyca. E kum in2 the wuld full grown; 2 hymn boyoodz trubbles woz never noan. E never ad no meezlz and e never ad to be vaxinated or inn spected. E ad no boots to kleen and no cloze to brush, and no skool bored orficer to chivvy im out of iz play makin mud pizes like e woz made ov hymnself. E ad all the Annemals their woz to play with and wen he cauled um nainz thay let im. The big live lion diddunt bite hymn wen e pulled iz tale, and the donkey diddunt kik hymn. The horsetritches run raices with the crockerdyles and awlwerz 1. They all giv im rides round the garden, and they woz awl nice and taim and et apl peelins out ov iz and. Doant i wish i Adam. Woodnt i trot um round the playground and set the ipper potter mouse on2 the skool-master and the polor bare on2 the parsun like Elijer's bare wot gobbled up fortea 2 childern who woz ownly inn the furst standard and addunt ad no guvverment grant wich woz very rong ov the profit. Thee Ammiimals woz very appy xsept the cannul wot had the unup and the drummy dairy wich ad 2. And they woz awl pieceable and didn't tare 1 anuther in peaces like thay doo now caws thay doant no know bettor. The 2 kats diddunt skratch Adam wen e put them down the chimbley and the more kettles e tied on2 the dawg's tales the more thay wagged um and winkt thare ize at im. The liun and the yooney korn never thort ov fitin 4 the crown like men doo now daze 4 the shillin. Adam diddunt no ow 2 go a-fishin beecaws the perth woodnt bite the wurm and the pike woodnt swoller litl fishiz. The shark nibbld C-wood 4 iz dinner and the griller chewd terbacker insted of chokin litl boiz and gurls. The tyger livd on cabbage leevz and sermons insted ov live lam, and the kannibles ad never erd ov roast mishunary or pickld parson. The wospz never stung know 1 and the mosque eaters never bit nobody. Them times woz appy wumz, and Adam cood play tip-cat awl day without phear ov emy perleeecan or braking a winder and arving orl iz skanty pockit munny stopd buy crewel parents 2 pay 4 the paultry d—idge dm. Butt a lass! thare cum a woomun and a snaik 2 bee continyood inn hour neckst. Pleez toetcheer ive fild mi slait. Can i go and play, and rite again anuther day?—Ewer prommissin pew-pil,

JIMMY JAXON.

No. 2.—ADAM AND EVE.

ADAM woz wel orf ownly e didn't no itt. E ad plenty ov ror turnups and sour crab-appuls 2 eet and a ole rivver of Pison 2 drinc. But e ad know gun to go a-shootin the sparvers with and know 1 2 tork 2 im but parrots and snaik and gee-over. Sew ther laud worted im 2 marry a munky, and wen Adam woodn't, e cloroformed im an sent im 2 sleep and 2 slumber, wile e akted the sawbones and took out 1 ov Adam's side ribs buy a very clever serjicle opperashun wich ad never bin dun b4. Then the laud took the rib in iz and and lookd very ard at it till e maid it gro in2 a butiful wooman aiged twenty yeers old with long air and know cloza 2 ware, wich woz a grate shaim. Then Adam woke up, and Mr. Adam and Miss Eve became grate friends, and the laud borrered a prarc-book and a parsun's gound, and marrid them 2gether. Thair woz know kards and know kaaridgiz at the weddin. 1 day Mrs. Eve left Mr. Adam diggin portaters, and told im to get dinner wile she went a-blackburying by herself 4 a chainj. And it cum 2 pass that she mett a snaik, and she woz-zunt az frightend ov snaik as winmin ar now-a-days, and didn't skream caws thair woz know 1 neer, and it woz know yooce.

This Sir Pent woz an amoozing cuss. E danced along on the tip ov iz tale and walked on iz ed and torked therteen 2 the duzzen. E woz so artful e got Eve 2 eet a apel—a Ribston pippin, two-a-penny sort; and she wozn't greedy, so she giv Adam a bit. This upset the apel-cart, and everything all went rong immedjately. The wild beasts began to ror and 2 tare each other 2 bits like the apel that woz Eton. Nuthin ever dyed or woz ill, or woz wicked before Mrs. Eve nibbled the apl; but as soon as the faitel bite took plaice, the wolp swollered litle Red Riding Hood, and the alleygaitor brekfusted on dux and worter-rats. Awl at wunce the spyders cort flys and sukt thair blud, the swollers swollered the spiders, the horks tore the swollers, the egal kild the hork, and the litl man wot ad a litl gun shot the egal. They awl prayed on lanuther and the parson prayed on man. Wot a big mirrykle to be sure! The shark in the see a thousand miles orf new awl about it the instant Mrs. Eve taisted the 4bidn phroot, and e gobld the poor inmercent sprats and bloters buy the duzen in conseckwence, awl throo robbin Geewer's litl orchurd just 4 wunce. But it don't maik no difference wen Billy Brown goze orchurd robbin. Y don't mirrykles apn nourdaiz?

JIMMY JAXON.

"Do you know Jesus?" said a sky-pilot to a miner in the "black" country. "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus?" replied the miner in a thoughtful manner. "Oh, there is no man of that name working in this neighborhood. If there was, I should be sure to know him."

To Correspondents.

HOLY MOSES.—You are a nice party to boast of meekness. How about your treatment of the Midianites?

J. PANDERA.—What you allege as to the consent of the lady does not exonerate you, but rather bears out the statement of the "Sopher Toldoth Jeshu."

JEREMIAH.—Your lachrymal effusions are unsuited for our columns. Try Thwaites's Liver pills.

TOBIT, BARUCH, ESDRAS AND CO.—Your complaint that no notice has been taken of you by the Bible Revisers shall be forwarded to the proper quarter.

PARACLETE.—No, we haven't forgotten you. Somehow we always think of you when we see either a parachute or a pigeon. We will excuse the very rough spirit-drawing of a death's head and cross-bones which you send us, if you will only explain the family relationships of the household to which you belong. With the son a woolly young lamb, and the father presumably a curly-horned ram, are *ewe* the dam, the mother of the interesting infant? Father, mother and child seem to us the only trinity we can understand. And when you figure as the Comforter are you made of lamb's wool? And is this wool shorn from the junior sheep and knitted by his mamma, or is it a Trinitarian mixture of the three sorts?

BRETHREN OF J. C.—Sorry to hear you are in so warm a place. But what else did you expect from your goody-goody brother? You know that Scripture tells us you did not believe in him, and he that believeth not shall be damned. We quite agree that his conduct is very unbrotherly, and you did quite right to ask for our aid when your appeals and your sisters' entreaties proved vain. Freethinkers are the only people that will help you. They are demolishing hell as fast as possible. We will print a copy of this number on asbestos paper for your especial perusal at your leisure.

DANIEL.—We sympathise with you in your indignation at the refusal of the Revisers to include our inspired narrative of your adventures in the canon of Scripture. Your account of the subsequent fight in heaven between your converted lions and the beasts around God's throne is very interesting, but if we sent it to the old fogeys they wouldn't believe it till it was two thousand years old. We should like to have seen the beasts who are all eyes contending with your lions all claws and teeth. Next time you match them for a fiver you might send us a ticket.

JACOB.—Try it on with a Christian. You only waste your time in trying to wheedle a Freethinker into a better opinion of your conduct. We don't care if you have swindled J. C. out of his birthright and stolen the old man's thunder-bolts. We shall set Esau on to you if you don't subside. We do not want your mess of pottage, nor any other mess. We should be glad, however, to see that ladder. By the way, how much did you realise for those gods the youngest lady of your harem stole from her dad?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT.—Do we think you fit for the Premiership? Decidedly not. But if the Claimant retires you might take up the running. You are wonderfully like him, especially about the cheek.

THE MAHDI.—Glad to hear from you. Can you make use of a few missionaries, fresh or potted?

GENERAL BOOTH.—Sorry to hear business is so dull. Why not ask the Lord to lend you a few cherubim for your processions? If the game gets played out, apply to Barnum. He would certainly find you a place in the advertising department. But perhaps you have something laid by for the rainy day.

YANVEH.—Surprised to hear that you are alive and kicking. We thought you were dead. Of course your portrait in the Dagon sketches is not flattering. We never intended it to be. We treat you all alike. It is no use grumbling and growling now. If you had sent full particulars of the struggle earlier our artist might have incorporated them in the series. As to your threats, we despise them. No one cares for you now.

MARY.—If Gabriel did promise marriage, that doesn't excuse you. The mother of God ought to set a better example. If your position hadn't turned your head you would have been ashamed to present to your husband a son of which he was not the father.

ESAU.—Sorry to hear of your misadventures. Why didn't you wring the rascal's neck? We know of no cure for hairiness except a razor or tweezers. But there are several recipes for your brother's complaint—we mean his smooth skin, not his smooth tongue. Professor Elisha's bears' grease is a wonderful specific.

C. H. SPURGEON.—Too long for our columns. Your jokes are always welcome, but your articles are tedious. Can we recommend a cure for the gout? Yes. Live on a hundred a year and earn it. Sorry to hear the Revised Version injures your business by changing the "tabernacle of the congregation" to the "tent of meeting." Why not drop the Tabernacle and run a Tent? For further information consult Booth.

DAVID.—Decidedly not. The man had a wife, not to mention daughters, and that was a very good reason for not sending you an invitation.

SOLOMON.—Your verses are very good, but we cannot venture to insert them. The *Freethinker* circulates among ladies and young people. Try the *Christian World* or the *Rock*.

MOSES.—What you saw in the cleft of the rock is difficult to describe in prose or verse. Try a sketch and send it to Judge North. If you write again kindly tell us what you did with Joseph's old bones. A correspondent in the marine-store business wishes to purchase them for his shop window.

JONAH.—Too fishy.

TALMAGE.—Your sermon on Balaam is convincing. We believe the Lord *did* open the mouth of the ass. Your orifice is evidently miraculous.

JOSEPH PARKER.—No doubt you are the greatest preacher that ever lived, but as J. C. was in the same profession you might have toned it down a little. Modesty is not your strong point, but remember Hamlet's advice—"Assume a virtue if you have it not."

TEETOTALLER.—A capital suggestion. No doubt when Paul advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, he meant it for external application. But Timothy was probably a thin man. Some stomachs are so fat that they can only be got at from the inside. In that case, would you advise the patient to swallow a bottle of sherry and a yard of flannel?

PAPERS RECEIVED.—Holy Ghost's Gazette—Angelic Recorder—Gossip from the Throne—Messianic Monthly—Hosannah Advertiser—Armageddon Almanac—Devil Dodger—Bible Tit-bits—St. Paul Pry—Heavenly Lyre—Jehovah's Police News—Jerusalem Journal—Ire Ish-Mail—Sporting Prophet—Gehenna Scorchers.

Rib Ticklers.

A NOD corner.—The family pew.

MAMMA: "Yes, my child, we shall all know each other in heaven." EDITH: "But, mamma, we can make believe to be out when some of them call, can't we?"

"WHAT," asked a visitor at a Sunday-school, "is meant by salvation?" The answer came at once: "Please, sir, I know; a big drum, and lots of women in strange bonnets 'ollarin'."

ROGERS, the poet, was observing one day to Mr. Sydney Smith that he should not sit again for his portrait unless he was taken in an attitude of prayer. "Yes," said Sydney, "yes, with your face in your hat."

THEY are expecting the minister to dinner. "Is everything all ready, my dear?" asked the head of the house. "Yes, he can come now as soon as he likes." "Have you dusted the family Bible?" "Goodness gracious! I forgot that."

A DIVINE, noted alike for his wit and his bad penmanship, was unexpectedly detained out of the city and telegraphed: "Train delayed. Read Colossians ii., 5." This the telegraph operator rendered—"Trains delayed, Road collisions. Two fires."

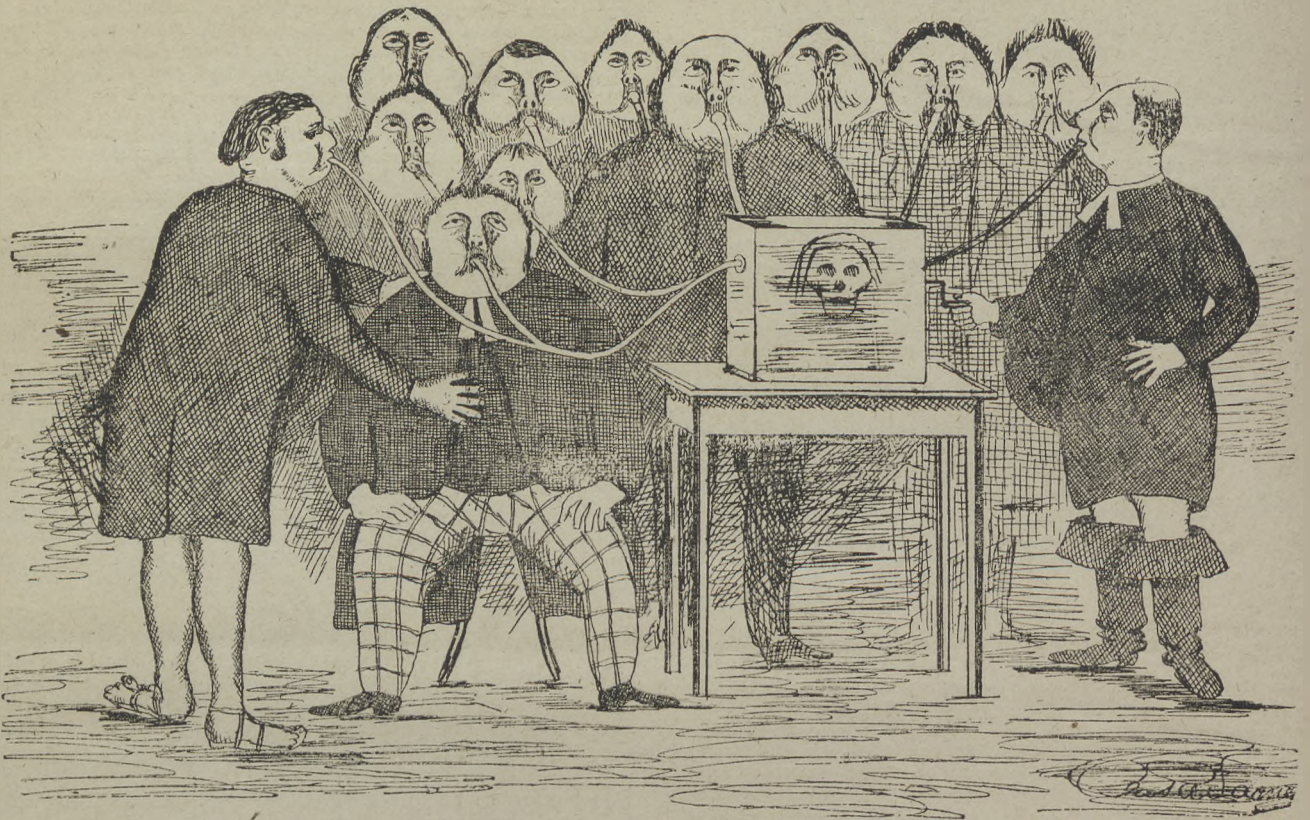
A PREACHER was holding forth to a large audience at Fort Scott, Kansas, and announced for his text, "In my father's house are many mansions." He had hardly finished speaking when an old coon stood up and said: "I tell you, folks, that's a lie. I know his father well. He lives about fifteen miles from Lexington, Kentucky, in an old cabin, and there ain't but one room in the house."

"WHAT are you waiting for?" said a parson to an Indian who had paid him money. "Receipt," said the Indian. "A receipt," said the astonished sky-pilot, "why do you want a receipt? Is not my word good enough for you?" "Ah," said the Indian, "but s'pose maybe me die: me go to heven; me find de gate locked; me see 'postle Peter; he say, 'Kiser, what you want?' Me say, 'Want to get in.' He say, 'You pay parson that money?' What me do? I hab to hunt all over the oder place to find you." He got his receipt.

BEFORE THE FAMILY.—An amusing story is told of a lady, a Roman Catholic, who in her last illness promised to leave a sum of money for charitable uses. When she was dying she begged the priest to come nearer to the bedside, and gasped out, "Father—I've—given—you——" "Stay," said the priest, anxious to have as many witnesses as possible to the expected statement, "I will call in the family;" and, opening the door, he beckoned them all in. "I've given you," repeated the old lady, with increasing difficulty, "given you a great deal of trouble."

In a village church in one of the midland counties, the vicar, before the morning service, requested the curate to give out a notice about baptisms, and another about some new hymn-books. In making the announcements the curate reversed their order, and read as follows: "For the future 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' will be used in this church." "There will be a baptism of infants in this church on Sunday next. All parents wishing to have their children baptised must send in their names to the vicar before Wednesday." The vicar, who happened to be somewhat hard of hearing, noticing that the curate had ceased, and not observing that the order of the notices had been reversed, then rose and gravely added, "And I should further like to mention that those who wish to have some of the latter can, on applying at the Vicarage, obtain them for one shilling each, or with extra strong backs for eightpence."

A SAILOR, whose ship was anchored in the harbor at Liverpool, got leave to go ashore on a certain occasion. The day being "the Lord's" (as if they were not all of them "the Lord's") the shops were mostly shut, and our sailor being hard up for a tot of grog, and having no money wherewith to procure any, resolved to raise the wind somehow or other. So he followed some women and children into a church, and took a seat. Presently he observed a man take a money-box and go round collecting money. He took a box and went round also. The pious people were highly pleased to see a sailor so holy as to go round collecting money for the blessed poor, so they contributed more liberally than usual. His box being soon filled, he put the money into his pockets, put the box back, and was walking away, when a holy loafer tapped him on the shoulder and whispered, "My good man, you will have to give up that money." "Why should I give it up? I collected it myself, and the people gave it to me voluntarily. Why, then, should I give it up?" "Oh, but you'll be damned if you don't." "I'll be damned if I do!" said the ancient mariner, walking off to help himself to a "wet." The "holy" loafer was quite flabbergasted.



FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT (Free of Duty).

"Be not drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the spirit."—Eph. v., 18. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts ii., 4.

SACRED ADVERTISEMENTS.

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