

SUMMER NUMBER

OF THE

CHRISTIAN

CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

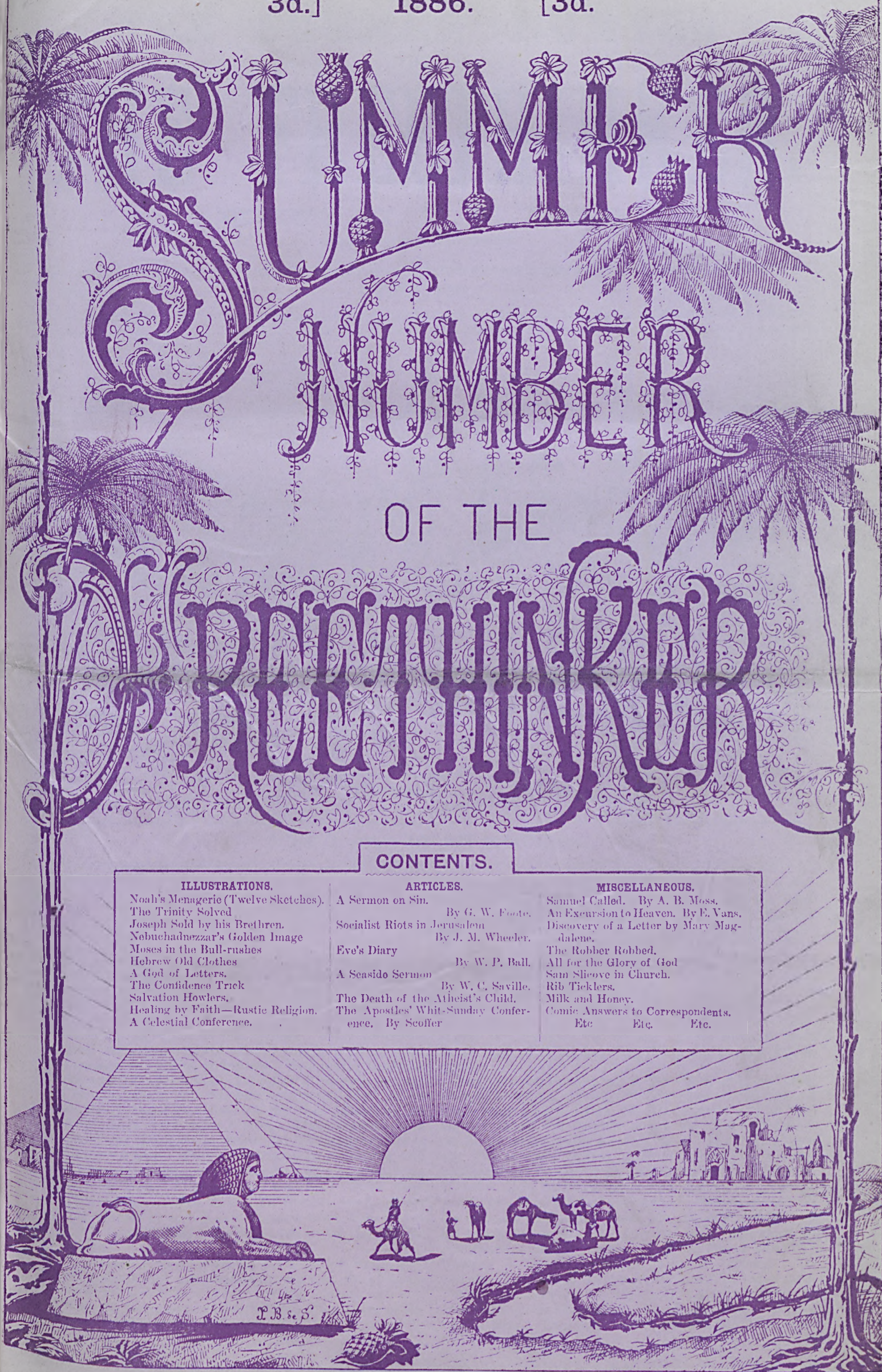
Noah's Menagerie (Twelve Sketches).
The Trinity Solved
Joseph Sold by his Brethren.
Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image
Moses in the Bull-rushes
Hebrew Old Clothes
A God of Letters.
The Confidence Trick
Salvation Howlers.
Healing by Faith—Rustic Religion.
A Celestial Conference.

ARTICLES.

A Sermon on Sin.
By G. W. Foote.
Socialist Riots in Jerusalem
By J. M. Wheeler.
Eve's Diary
By W. P. Ball.
A Seaside Sermon
By W. C. Saville.
The Death of the Atheist's Child.
The Apostles' Whit-Sunday Conference. By Scoffer

MISCELLANEOUS.

Samuel Called. By A. B. Moss.
An Excursion to Heaven. By E. Vans.
Discovery of a Letter by Mary Magdalene.
The Robber Robbed.
All for the Glory of God
Sam Slieve in Church.
Rib Ticklers.
Milk and Honey.
Comic Answers to Correspondents.
Etc Etc. Etc.



THE SUMMER NUMBER
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JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BRETHREN.

A Sermon on Sin.

ABBREVIATED FROM THE REV. JOSHUA GRUMPUS.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—The subject of our discourse this evening is Sin. It is one you are all conversant with, for “all have sinned.” Nay, ye were all “conceived in sin” and “shapen in iniquity.” Every thought and imagination of your natural hearts is evil. There is not a clean spot in the whole of your systems. From the crown of your heads even unto the soles of your feet, ye are reeking masses of spiritual corruption. This horrid condition is the result of Adam’s fall. The father of our race, tempted by his wife, who in turn was tempted by the Devil, ate an apple six thousand years ago, and for that offence all his posterity have come under a curse. Many sceptics have declared that this doctrine makes the Almighty act like a madman or a fiend. They doubt the justice of blaming, and still more of punishing, any person for a sin committed long before his birth. Presumptuous wretches! God’s ways are not our ways, and if, in a single instance, we found the divine wisdom in accord with common-sense, that part of the holy volume would immediately fall under the gravest suspicion.

The father of sin is the Devil. For some inscrutable purpose, which it were presumption to pry into, the Almighty allowed the Evil One to seduce our first parents, and sow in them the fertile seeds of original sin. This is one of the deepest verities of our faith, and all who doubt it will be

eternally damned. Yet, alas, in this sceptical age, there are many who laugh at this great truth, who regard the Devil lightly as a mere superstition, and playfully call him Old Nick, Old Harry, Old Hornie, Old Long Tail, and so on. Miserable creatures! They laugh now, but how will they yell with agony when the Fiend clutches them, and drags them down into the lake that burneth with brimstone and fire! Brethren, above all things avoid laughter. God hates it. It is the first step to hell. Whenever you see a man smiling at any article of our holy religion, mark him at once as a brand for the burning. Broad faces are worn by the sons of Belial, but long faces are a sure sign of grace.

Many sins are enumerated in the Bible, such as lying, theft, adultery and murder. But these are not the greatest sins. They chiefly injure our fellow-men, and do not directly affront the majesty of heaven. For this reason our divine father readily forgives them. How many liars and thieves have become glorious saints! How many adulterers and murderers are now sitting on the right hand of God! Holy Scripture teems with illustrations. Though your crimes be of the greatest enormity, though you corrupt the innocent, oppress the weak, rob the poor, and despoil the widow and orphan, you may purchase forgiveness by repentance. But how different is the sin of infidelity! Unbelief is the thrice-distilled poison of iniquity. Remember our Blessed Lord’s denunciation of Capernaum. The inhabitants of that city rejected him though he wrought miracles to attest his mission. No other crime is alleged against them. They may have been, and probably were,

honest and respectable people. Yet our Savior declared that it should be worse for them in the day of judgment than for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Let me implore you then, beloved, to avoid the sin of unbelief. It is worse than the most unnatural vice. It is the last step on the brink of the abyss. If you must give a welcome to sin, bid it "take any shape but that."

A still darker sin is the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which there is no forgiveness in this world or in the next. Brethren, are any of you guilty of this sin? The Lord only knoweth rightly, for the exact nature of the unpardonable sin has never been revealed. Some eminent divines think it is apostacy, others presumptuous sin, and others a wilful rejection of the gospel. These various conjectures of fallible men may all be wrong, and perhaps it is a sinful arrogance to speculate on this sublime mystery. Yet, with a trembling reverence, I venture to cast out a suggestion. Belief is necessary to salvation, the gospel must be preached before it can be believed, and there must be ministers before it can be preached. Does it not seem, therefore, that the maintenance of God's ministers is of primary importance? And may not the sin against the Holy Ghost consist in the refusal of tithes, church rates, or other emoluments, to the preachers of the Word? This view is countenanced by the story of Ananias and Sapphira. They were destroyed for "lying unto God," but we may reasonably suppose that their miserable fate was partly due to their having lied about the proceeds of the sale of their property, which should have been devoted to the Church. Had they told a falsehood about any other matter, their punishment would surely have been less sudden and summary. Oh, beloved, ponder this pregnant passage of Holy Writ, till it becomes a beacon of warning against the awful sin of prevaricating with God, and withholding their due from his ministers.

Brethren, I am also of opinion that Blasphemy is a form of the unpardonable sin; and, indeed, our blessed Lord uses that very word in describing it. Blasphemy! What an awful word! It makes the flesh creep and the blood run cold. This terrible sin, beloved, does not simply consist in cursing and swearing, or taking God's name in vain. Such levity is indeed wicked; but it is, after all, one of the minor sins, and it must frequently be winked at as a concession to human weakness. It is often no more than a thoughtless ejaculation, and perhaps the fact that the Almighty's name unconsciously springs to the lips on such occasions is a tribute to the instinctive piety of the heart. Blasphemy is a more deliberate offence. As all the fathers of our Church have taught, and as the civil law declares, it consists in speaking disrespectfully of the Trinity, and bringing the Holy Bible into disbelief and contempt. Alas, beloved, this grievous sin increases daily in our midst, and shameless blasphemers raise their impudent heads on every side. If we teach them they discuss with us, if we denounce them they laugh at us, and if we imprison them they revile us. Senseless and obdurate wretches, they will hereafter experience the terrors of God's wrath in the fieriest depths of hell. Not only do they mock the sacred wonders of the Scripture, and wax merry over the profoundly instructive histories of Samson and Jonah; they even indulge in unspeakable jests on our Savior's immaculate conception, deride his miracles, and pour contempt on his glorious resurrection and ascension. The Lord God Almighty they call Old Jahveh, our Savior himself is familiarly called J. C., and the Holy Ghost is jocosely styled the foggy member of the Trinity. Nay, in one compendious blasphemy, the blessed Trinity has been called a three-headed wonder. Still worse remains, beloved, although you might think it impossible. There is a low, coarse, vulgar, indecent, obscene, blasphemous, infamous print, which I will not honor by naming. Its editor has already tasted imprisonment, but his stubborn spirit is unsubdued, and he persists in his evil course. Ridicule, sarcasm, irony, every miserable weapon of infidelity is employed against our holy faith; and caricatures are published of the very Godhead itself. Oh, beloved, let me implore you not to glance at this dreadful publication. Hesitate and you are lost. It fascinates like a serpent, only to destroy. Once under its malign spell, you will blaspheme with the worst of them. Your doom will then be certain, and Hell will be your portion for ever.—And now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be endless praises, evermore. Amen.

(Reported by) G. W. FOOTE.

Socialist Riots in Jerusalem.

UNDER the heading "A Bethlehem Scandal" we presented to the readers of our last Christmas Number a translation of a portion of the *הימים ירושלם* or *Jerusalem Chronicles*, dated Tebeth 10, 3761. We now offer an equally authentic translation from the same paper, dated Nisan 13, 3794. The original is in the possession of the Christian Evidence Manufacturing Society.

"The large concourse of faithful Hebrews, who from all parts of the country attend our holy city at this season of the year, for the purpose of celebrating our holy Passover, were yesterday disturbed by a fanatical riot of so violent a character that it is only too likely to draw upon us the displeasure of the Roman government as well as the vengeance of the Most High. A crack-brained carpenter from Nazareth, a place proverbial for ignorance and rude superstition, has it appears for some time past been disturbing the province of Galilee, preaching and teaching both in the synagogues and elsewhere, the coming of the kingdom of God. Probably he found it profitable to relinquish the plane for the pulpit. Anyhow, he has acquired a considerable following, of whom he has appointed twelve leaders, promising them each thrones wherefrom they shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel. His doctrine is somewhat difficult to understand, as he mixes up the ethical teachings of the Essenes with those of the school of Hillel and with mystical parables. He appears to teach a community of goods as well as to enjoin celibacy and encourage bodily mutilation. He openly avows he has come not to bring peace but a sword, and that he will set a man at variance against his father and a daughter against her mother. He arrogates the title of judge of all mankind, and threatens with damnation all who do not believe in him. The mob are attracted by his preaching woe to the rich, and exhorting them to sell all and give to the poor. It would appear from all that can be gathered from his preaching that enthusiasm has been carried to the point of absolute insanity. He has actually been known to curse a fig-tree for not bearing figs out of season. That he is mentally afflicted is the opinion of his own friends and relatives, who have indeed vainly sought to restrain him. This is the only charitable construction to place on conduct resulting in such brawls as those which disgraced our holy city yesterday.

"This inspired carpenter has recently come southward and taken up his residence at Bethany, where he has been attended by his deluded followers, including women, who not only minister to him of their substance, but perfume him and kiss his feet. Yesterday, availing himself of the concourse of Galileans, who have come to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival, he sent some of his followers to requisition an ass. The police as usual were conspicuous by their absence. Mounted on this stolen donkey he employed it by riding ostentatiously into the city, in order, it is said, to fulfil a prophecy spoken by Zechariah. His wild devotees spread palm branches in his path, and a rabble followed with uproarious shouts of "Hosanna to the son of David," and other blasphemous cries. Upon being remonstrated with, their ringleader gave a proof of his insanity by remarking that if they were silent the very stones of the city would cry out. Attended by the mob he made his way towards the temple. As our readers are aware, at this time there are a large number of persons around the court of the Gentiles, some with doves and cattle for the sacrifices, others prepared to change the Roman coins into Jewish money, since by our law no effigy of Cæsar is permitted to defile the holy temple. To these stalls the mob was directed. The ringleader, now dismounted, acted in a most violent and outrageous manner, well calculated to promote both robbery and breach of the peace. Seizing a whip of small knotted cords from one of the drovers, he precipitated himself upon the stall-keepers and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, while his followers were busily occupied in profiting by the scramble. The uproar and confusion may be imagined. Some elders ventured to remonstrate with these apostles of anarchy, but the crack-brained carpenter declared he was the Messiah and offered, if they would pull down the temple, to rebuild it in three days. It appears that while all this tumult was going on in Jerusalem, the Chief Commissioner of police had carefully sent the whole of the force to Jericho.

"We learn as we go to press that the crazy carpenter has been arrested on a charge of blasphemy. From what we have heard of the case it would seem that he is rather a fit subject for a commission *de lunatico inquirendo*."

J. M. WHEELER.

An Excursion to Heaven.

ONE day, whilst torn with pain, I thought,
A God there is or may be;
'Twill pay me to be "born again,"
And be once more a baby.

But how am I to do the trick?
God surely knows about me;
He won't believe that I repent,
He certainly will doubt me.

I've passed the "midway of our life"
As Infidel or Sceptic;
And now I've thoughts of "Christ" and "Heaven,"
I've gone so damned dyspeptic.

And so I thought, I'll read the book,
The ever blessed Bible,
And learn therefrom the way to heaven,
Recanting the foul libel

I echoed with the other fools,
There is no God or Devil;
I'll ferret out the "narrow path"—
I hope it's nice and level.

Reading, I thought, would give me light
To save from further sinning;
To "make assurance doubly sure"
I'd start from the beginning.

I opened then at Genesis,
And read through the first chap'te
"I don't quite see it clear," I said,
"In childhood I was apter.

"I'm bound to act both fair and square,
This is no trifling matter:
Both God and Devil want my soul,
And I must cheat the latter."

And so I started once again,
With brain in best behavior;
"I'll go from first to last," I said,
"And find my soul its Savior."

I went right through the first once more,
Much slower than I reckoned;
And then—I feared to stop and think—
Went full tilt at the second.

I skipped no blessed holy word;
O'er every verse I pondered;
And then I shut the Book Divine,
And last, I know I wandered!

I soon recovered and went to bed,
With brain and heart both fluttering;
"I can't make head or tail of it,"
I dimly remember uttering.

My soul, by reading so perturbed,
Left its clayey habitation,
And soared through the ether to God himself,
To ask for an explanation.

And there was God, the Three in One,
The incomprehensible Trinity;
You'll admit it was awkward addressing there
This mystical Triune Divinity,

When I tell you they changed and changed about
In a way that lacked nought of variety;
There was only one, and yet there were three—
I was in a state of sobriety.

You need not question that certitude:
I was only a psychical entity,
And nothing can't well get drunk on nought,
Nor lose sight of its own identity.

• There was but One, and yet there were Three,
A thing that's not quite comprehensible;
That is, to the reasoning sceptical mind,
Whose proud boast is being so sensible.

When first I looked it was God the Lord,
And then it became Christ Jesu;
I gazed again, 'twas the Holy Ghost!
I groaned to myself, "This trees you."

I was in a woful quandary, be sure,
At the mystical trio's vagaries,
And turned in despair to another form
That I rightfully guessed to be Mary's.

I no sooner looked than she melted away,
And quite dazed I turned back to the Trio;
Determined to speak, I closed my eyes,
And began in Italian, "O Dio!"—

You want to know why I chose that tongue,
And not holy and orthodox Latin?
Well, I'm fond of that vowelled mode of speech,
And the other I'm not so pat in.

"Oh, God," I cried, "Almighty Lord!
Direct my religious yearnings;
I long to be saved, indeed I do,
And beside, I dread hell's burnings."

I opened one eye in expectancy,
And God's hand his head was scratching!
I closed it and opened the other one—
The Ghost a short snooze was snatching!

I peeped again—there was Jesus Christ
His beard with his fingers combing!
From mingled feelings of awe and despair
Came a wish to be promptly roaming.

But thinking o'er the facts again,
I'd got no information;
I resolved to make one more appeal,
And coughed in preparation.

I opened my mouth and shut my eyes
To see what God would send me;
A literal fulfilment of childish play
For which I thought Christ would commend me.

I remember once I submitted myself—
It was for the first and the last time—
As a child unsuspecting, most eagerly
To the practice of that pleasant pastime.

My mouth was agape, my eyes shut tight—
The remembrance my soul still abashes—
And the mystic revealing my young soul desired
Came quick: 'twas a mouthful of ashes!

Whether a like experience
From my visit to Heaven audacious
Was mine, or another and better by far,
Will be found in this story veracious.

I've an awful habit of wandering
From the subject that's on the *tapis*;
My serious Muse remonstrates herself,
For the practice, she says, is unhappy.

You mustn't think that I lose the thread
Of my theme, when I write in this fashion;
Or that I don't know what I'm writing about,
And am worthy of cheap compassion.

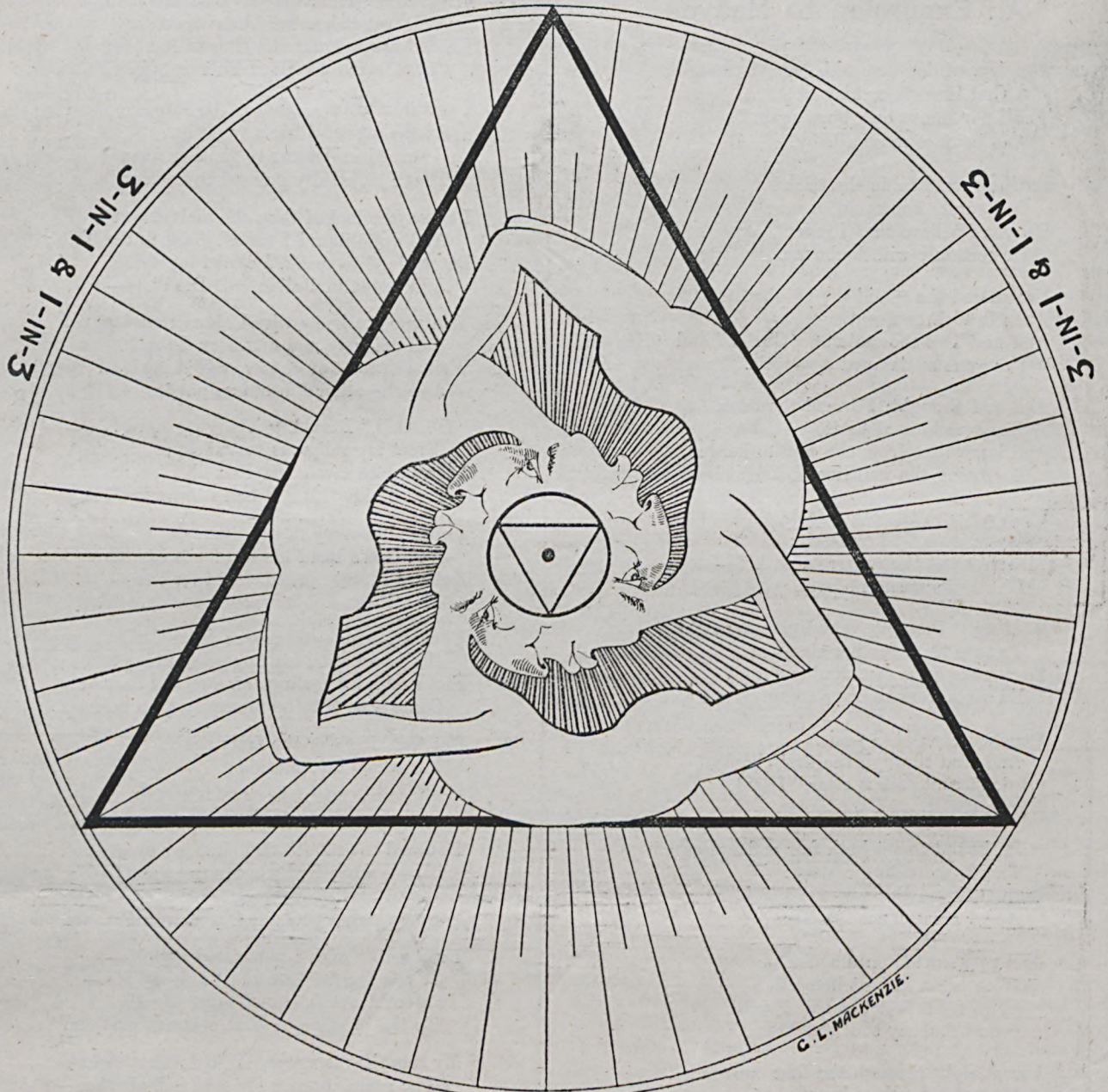
My friends, I remember the theme too well,
The subject, and why I pursue it;
The recital won't take much longer now
And we'll all be glad when I'm through it.

Well, I looked at Jesus, then closed my eyes,
And said: "O Lord, my Redeemer!"
Did God make man or the animals first?
He replied: "Oh, shut up, you dreamer!"

I looked—he had changed to the Holy Ghost,
So I said, or I stammered rather:
"Did man come first on earth, or the brutes?"
Answered he: "I don't know; ask the Father!!"

I looked in amazement—and there was God,
Which augmented my wonder, ne'er doubt it;
In despair I yelled: "Was man the first?"
And he said: "I know nothing about it!!!"

E. VANS



3-IN-1 & 1-IN-3

THE TRINITY SOLVED.—[ATHANASIUS NOWHERE.]

[This illustration will explain how we read of the God-head, but never of the God-feet.]



NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S GOLDEN IMAGE; OR THE IDOL THE JEWS WOULD NOT WORSHIP.
(From a Nineveh bass-relief.)



MOSES IN THE BULL RUSHES.



TRANSFIGURATION No. 2.

After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.—LUKE xxi., 28.

EPIGRAM.

It blew a hard storm, and in utmost confusion
The sailors all hurried to get absolution ;
Which done, and the weight of the sin they confessed
Transferred, as they thought, from themselves to the priest,
To lighten the ship and conclude the devotion,
They tossed the old parson souse into the ocean.

MISS MARTINEAU relates an anecdote in her *Western Travels* of a clergyman who was so strict a temperance member that he refused to drink water out of the Brandywine River, but enjoyed the wine-sauce eaten with plum-pudding.

A BISHOP'S BLESSING.

WITH covered head a country boor
Stood, while the bishop blessed the poor ;
The mitred prelate lifted high
His voice : " Take off your hat ! " " Not I—
Your blessing's little worth," he said,
" If through the hat 't won't reach the head."

" MA, how is it, think you, that so many marriages take place at the church of the Rev. Mr. Carpenter ?"—" La, girl, what a question !"—" Well, I think it's because, being a carpenter, th people naturally suppose him to be a good joiner."

Eve's Diary.*

OR THE TRUE ORIGIN OF THE SERPENT MYTH.

Friday, Sept. 4, 4004 B.C.—How tiresome. No one to talk to only Adam. Can't even make him jealous. Must keep a diary and talk to posterity. There's no visitors except a very handsome serpent, all gold and jewels, that gambols about to amuse us in a very friendly fashion, and the old fright who boasts that the garden is his and treats us as his servants. Wonder if he's an impostor or a bit demented. Adam's very silly the way he cringes to him. It's no use talking to him about it. I've found out already that man is so obstinate a creature that reason is wasted on him. The more you tell him anything the more he won't. So I shall say nothing about it, and we're very happy together, and stroll about the glades very lovingly, and pluck wild cherries and blackberries and sloes. Sometimes we try mushrooms for a change. Can't say I like raw turnips and crab-apples, but Adam is a perfect schoolboy at them, and I mustn't contradict him. Necklaces of red berries look charming, however, and the pond reflects one's likeness capitally. But treading on flint stone with bare feet is not pleasant. And other things besides are not satisfactory, I'm sure. Swans and peacocks and gazelles and zebras have nice handsome feathers or beautiful fur to cover them if it rains or blows cold, but my golden hair, however nice and long and wavy it may be, is not at all sufficient. I don't like it, but I mustn't say anything. A poor orphan like me has no mother or father to fly to, even if I wanted.

Saturday, Sept. 5.—Old gentleman insists we must do nothing all day only pay our respects to him because *he* is going to rest all day. Wish he'd keep out of the way and leave us to ourselves. Says he made the garden and Adam, and then made me for Adam. Didn't he make Adam for me too then? Don't believe him. *Shan't* believe him. Says I'm a rib. Sure it's a fib. I'll pay him out yet. He treats us like slaves—marches into the place just as if it were his own—never knocks at the gate or says By your leave—no more manners than a pig.

Sunday, Sept. 6.—Flowers very pretty. Very nice to have Adam picking them for me, especially the honeysuckles out of reach and the thorny ones, and wading into the ponds after the water-lilies that fade so quickly. Old gentleman interfered, and said Adam ought to be ashamed of himself fooling away his time on a woman like that. Made us both go on with our gardening work. Treats us like children. If I were a man I wouldn't stand it. Wish I *was* a man. Adam is infatuated—he lets himself be fooled like a perfect ninny. I *hate* gardening, and I have to pretend I like it. It's shameful. No tools to work with. We have to scrape away the earth with our fingers to set anything. Why it's absolute ruin to a pretty hand. How can one look lady-like with a hand that one digs with? If I pout and show Adam my dirty hands, the silly creature only sniggers something about *infra dig*. And then the scratches from the bushes and the thorns. Why Adam is tattooed worse than a New Zealander. And if I speak about it, the old wretch who calls himself our master only snubs me, and Adam only laughs at me and says it's all right, the Lord of the garden knows best and we ought to be very grateful—where to echo replies "great fool." Even when Adam brushes up against some stinging-nettles or sits down on an ant-hill or a hornet's nest, or a hedgehog, or some thistles, he doesn't swear for long. As soon as he has done jumping about, he says Mr. Jarvey made them all for some wise purpose, and he's quite contented to take it all on trust. Old Jarvey says they are all very good, but I can't see it. As for me my troubles are more than I can speak of, but when I have a downright good cry over them, as I often do, Adam only kisses me and says I'm silly to take them so much to heart. As if it was proper and decent to be like this—nothing on and no home—mere vagabonds shut up in a garden and sleeping beneath bushes all among the toads and snails and beetles and worms of this "paradise" as the conceited old governor calls it, though I'm sure it's more like a pig-stye. Why it's unendurable, and I'll find some way of ending it or die

for it, that I will. And I'll serve out Master Jarvey, the ugly old wretch, at the same time, see if I don't. I know how to thwart him. He's *our enemy*, only Adam can't see it. He won't let us know anything that's right and proper and be free to do as we like and go where we like and learn to be decent and wear clothes and have proper homes. He says we shan't eat the apples off that favorite tree of his, does he, because we shall then know too much for him and shall understand all about "good and evil" as he calls it, whatever it may be. I'll find out what it is and upset the old gentleman's apple cart, or my name isn't Eve. Adam shan't be a mere ignorant catspaw any longer if I can help it. If man's courage is lacking, woman's wit shall step in and change this abominable state of things for something better. The old gentleman is evidently frightened that we shall try those apples. That's why he tries to frighten us. He says they are so poisonous that a single bite would kill us on the spot. But the more fibs he tells the more I won't believe them.

Monday, Sept. 7.—Dreadful work this gardening. Fancy picking the slimy slugs and the crawling caterpillars off the bushes without gloves on. It makes me shudder. Adam takes it all like a lamb. Grand old gardener! Grand old *fool*! Says Jarvey planted this garden and put us here to dress it and till it. He'd better let us dress ourselves instead of the garden, I'm sure. We want it most. I absolutely shiver at night, and in the day the blazing sun blisters my poor unprotected skin and is tanning me as brown as a bear. I had a pretty complexion once, but I shall soon be a black woman if I don't alter this, and Adam will get rid of me like he did his first wife Lilit. Our master—at present—holds her up as an example to me. Wonder whether she was as pretty as me. Says he made the pair complete like he did all the animals, only Lilit ate one of his tempting apples and was turned out and had to marry a compassionate gorilla. And that's why he had to make me out of a rib afterwards, so that poor Adam shouldn't be alone. Why the old fibber said the apples were deadly poison, and the day we touched them we should surely die.

Tuesday.—I meant to have some of these apples, and when a woman has a will she'll find a way, you know. Dear old Adam wouldn't let me touch one or even look at one on any account—he would be horrified at the idea, the simpleton. So I had to make up a little tiff to get away from him for once. I pretended that I was dreadfully annoyed at his want of confidence in me—and there was very little deception in that, heaven knows—and I kept it up till at last he let me go by myself just to prove that he really loved me and wasn't an unfeeling tyrant and so on. Of course I didn't go straight to the tree, else he might have suspected. I went a roundabout path to it for fear he might follow me and stop me. Why shouldn't a woman acquire knowledge and satisfy her curiosity if she wants to? A man or a god that makes knowledge a forbidden fruit is a domineering despot and deserves to be deceived, whether for his benefit or not. Of course that which is an ardent love of knowledge in man is in a woman only a frivolous curiosity. She must be kept ignorant. But she won't, take my word for it. The apples were very good—nice rosy ones, pretty to the eye and delicious to the taste. As I am the "Rib," perhaps people will be silly enough to call that particular variety after me the *Ribstone* pippin. Having dared to break a stupid command, I felt that fetters had fallen from me and an incubus taken from my mind. My eyes were thoroughly opened to our shameful and degraded condition, no better than that of beasts. But how am I to rescue Adam? He is the only man in the world and I can't afford to lose him. I don't want to, and don't intend to. But if I tell him he won't believe me. I must think what to do.

Wednesday.—Made it up with Adam and he is quite surprised at the sense he thinks I am beginning to display. He is sure that I love him again more than ever. So we took a walk together and I told him something wonderful happened yesterday, so wonderful that I was afraid to tell him because he wouldn't credit it. After a long while, when I saw his protests of belief were in earnest, I satisfied his curiosity. I told him that the intelligent serpent whose strange gambols we had often watched had come to me, and how the curiously beautiful creature, after assuring me of its goodwill by its dumb motions, actually spoke to me and told me something wonderful. (We must deceive the men for their own benefit when they are ridiculously stupid

* Those who think it impossible Eve could write, should ask themselves how she could talk either, when she had no memories to associate words with and give them meaning. The special miracle which gifted her with prophetic sense of the bearing of words would as easily enable her fingers to write.

and opinionated—there's no other way of dealing with them—the obstinate creatures.) As Adam didn't believe me very much I could see, I wouldn't tell him any more till he was in a better state of mind, just to punish him for his want of faith.

Thursday.—Adam quite penitent and burning with curiosity. Told him that the serpent—all fibs. but never mind—began eating some splendid apples and said that they not only were good to eat but made him wise above all other living things. They had given him growing reason and his power of speech. At my request he took me to the tree on which they grew, and when I started back shocked, and exclaimed that the fruit of that tree was deadly poison, he assured me it was not so, and that whoever said so told a falsehood. He plucked some fine large apples from one of the lower branches and munched them up before my eyes and was as well and as sensible and as lively and glittering as ever in his beautiful harlequin coat of colors. When I told this amiable serpent of the old gentleman's prohibition, he explained that it arose from a selfish fear that we might become too wise to remain his slaves and might even take of the fruit of the tree of life and become his equals. And then—so I told Adam—I was persuaded to try one myself and I wasn't dead in the least, and asked him whether he didn't think I was wiser than ever? Adam was dreadfully interested, and when we arrived at the tree—for I had been leading him towards it all the while—and showed him that eating an apple didn't make me drop dead as the old gentleman said it would, and told him how nice they were, and coaxed him a bit and so on, he took one too, and then we had a nice little *al fresco* feast off those Ribstone pippins. We can't be ignorant barbarians any longer, that's one comfort. And Adam will have to come with me too if I'm turned out, that's another.

Friday.—Old gentleman dreadfully angry. Just evicted us for stealing his apples and won't give us a character. All the better. Adam begins to see what a vindictive old curmudgeon he is. We're free at last. All the world before us where to choose. The old fellow was obliged to give us a suit of clothes apiece for decency's sake when he turned us out on the world for fear the neighbors should talk about him. The stingy old wretch made them himself out of old rabbit skins. They're a wretched bungle, but they're infinitely better than none: they'll do till I can make better. Now for a home of our own and civilised ways and freedom to please ourselves without a domineering old taskmaster always prying into everything and catechising us like children. If I hadn't fooled Adam for his good, we should both be naked savages still, and no better than ignorant slaves and brutes all our lives. Adam says the apple stuck in his throat, and left a lump there that I shall always call Adam's apple. Says he only swallowed the pippin so as to share my fate whatever it might be. Wonder if he did love me as much as he pretends, or whether it's all nonsense. Old Jarvey is telling all manner of fibs about us. Don't you believe him. I shall hide this so that people may discover it by-and-bye and learn the whole truth about the matter, and see that they owe everything to the cleverness of their first mother Eve.

W. P. BALL.

How MANY APPLES DID ADAM AND EVE EAT?—Some say Eve 8 and Adam 2. Total 10. Now we figure the thing out far differently, Eve 8 and Adam 8. Total 16. Others think the above figures entirely wrong. If Eve 8 and Adam 82, certainly the total would be 90. Scientific men, however, on the strength of the theory that the Antediluvians were a race of giants, reason something like this: Eve 81 and Adam 82. Total 163. But I say wrong again, for what could be clearer than if Eve 81 and Adam 812, the total was 893. The Yankees ask if Eve 811st and Adam 812, would not the total be 1,623? Our journal says I believe the following to be the true solution: Eve 814 Adam, Adam 8,124 Eve. Total 8,938. Still another calculation is as follows: If Eve 814 Adam, Adam 81,242 oblige Eve, the total must be 82,056. Now, I have since thought that as mankind has had to suffer for nearly six thousand years for their apple chewing, they must have got a rare lot into them. So this may be near the mark: Eve 814 Adam, Adam if he 8,081,242 keep Eve company. Total 8,082,056. But still the figures are too low, and I now find that Eve, when she 81,812 many, and probably felt sorry for it, but her companion in order to relieve her grief 812. Therefore Adam if he 81,814,240 of Eve's depressed spirits. Hence both ate 81,896,864.

The Death of the Atheist's Child.

“I had a bird; and the sweet bird died.
Pretty little red feet, why did you die?
Why did you leave me, sweet bird, why?”

An old thatched house, of cross timbers and rubble, in a pleasant garden, with an outlook towards the west over golden rippling wheat. The large French windows of the house opening on to a closely-cropped lawn, a large cedar tree in the centre, throwing its dark shadows in patches over the grass, seeming to make the stillness more solemn. The room where my sweet girl lay looked on this lawn, and the gentle summer air coming in at the open windows—laden with wild-flower scents, ravished from waving foxgloves and gentle meadow-sweet, played timidly with the muslin drapery enshrouding my dear love—seeming to tell her of the impatience shewn by the flower world to claim her.

My sun glint lay embosomed in flowers—her friends she talked with until you could fancy the fairy flower-bells tinkled with a laughing chime of glee. On each side of the open windows, climbing blush roses clung, and with a shy inquiring gaze looked into the room ever and anon as if they too would like to be fondled with the thin delicate hands of my loved darling. A stray kingcup seemed strenuously trying to make good its hold on the stone step to peep into the room and show its polished gold to this flower fay of mine, who soon, aye! too soon, would become a beautiful member of that flower world she so loved. These loves of my darling love seemed wishing for the time to come, to lead her as one of them amongst her friends the flowers, and the rose, filling the room with sweet scent, rustled in a bustling manner and seemed to nod to her and beckon, as the shadows lengthened on the lawn, and the cedar got more impressive and solemn in its seemingly extending size, as it stood out in such dark relief against the western orange sky, flecked here and there with long strips of golden-lined clouds, getting deep and ruddy in the waning light. As evening began to gather, the large bees began their journey homeward, stopping at the entrance to my darling's chamber, and by way of farewell, humming softly, as if they had a message to impart from the flowers they had rifled. My sweet love lay with her feathery fern-like hair falling over my hand, her thoughts with the birds and flowers, as she listened to the subdued strains of music in the inner house—her mother scarcely playing, but singing clearly enough to be understood, Shelley's “Skylark,” set to a simple but sweet melody.

My loved one with her deep and true eyes looking in my face, said, “Father, I shall pass from you to-night. The evening primrose is opening its bright golden petals and I know it is the last summons from flowerland—they want me father. Don't think I am dead, my father, don't think I am gone; I shall only be with the flowers; speak to them my darling father and you will speak to me; let my grave be covered with them. I have been pointed at as being an Atheist's child, but the loving, darling flowers do not gibe at me—see! they caress me. The rose has been whispering to me all day, and now the sad yellow evening primrose (that only puts forth its beauty when other flowers sleep) calls me! and in sorrow at the parting between you and I, my loved one drops dew from its yellow cup—tears it has none. Call darling mother, that I may say good-night. Farewell, dear birds, busy in the elms, chattering o'er the day's gambols in the sunshine. Flower, sweet flower, I come. Don't weep, my mother, when you think of me; your thoughts must be of my friends the sweet, sweet flowers. Oh! flowers ye all are beautiful, so bright and gay in the sun glint with little red-footed birds nestling amongst your lovely petals. Flowers, flowers, I cannot stay longer from you. Father love, mother darling, I leave you both, but I am only with the flowers; be kind to my loved friends the flowers. Farewell! good-night. Ah! now comes sweet rest.”

And so my loved one is now with her friends. The wild convolvulus and red glaring poppy are o'er her grave with the sweet apple-scented briar, and its wealth of delicately pink blossoms. Sleep my love, rest amongst the flowers, sweet symbol of your purity.

FROM YORKSHIRE.

JOHNNY REI WIG, wen ast what sowin tares ment, sed, “Haw mi muther sewed this tear wen I'd been slurrin dahn a plenk.”

“YOU are going to hell my man,” sed a parson to a chap at Leeds station at wor drunk. “Thart-a-a-liar,—ahm bahn to Armla.”

A LAD at heard a man at wor at their bahse sayin t' well known line “An honest man's the noblest work of God,” sez at it izzn't reit, for “his muther wor better ner onny man at ivver wor made.”

LITTLE Tommy Doodles asst his fathur wun day if an infide hed onny reight to hev a christian name? At another time he wanted to know where a fire went tul when it goes aht? He puzzles t' owd chap duz Tommy; and his fathur thinks he's bun to get to be a bishop at least.

THE SACRED HISTORY OF CAPTAIN NOAH'S MENAGERIE. (Genesis vi. to viii.)



1. Orders from headquarters



2. Building the Ark



3. Mr. and Mrs. Japhet collect Lions.



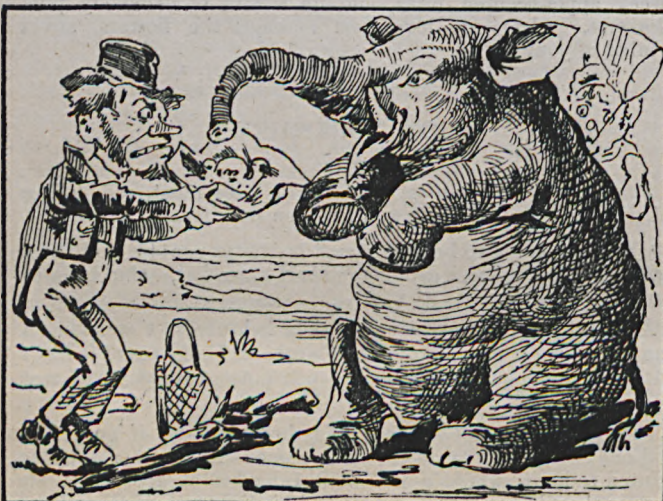
4. Ham catches Giraffes



5. Noah goes for Polar Bears.



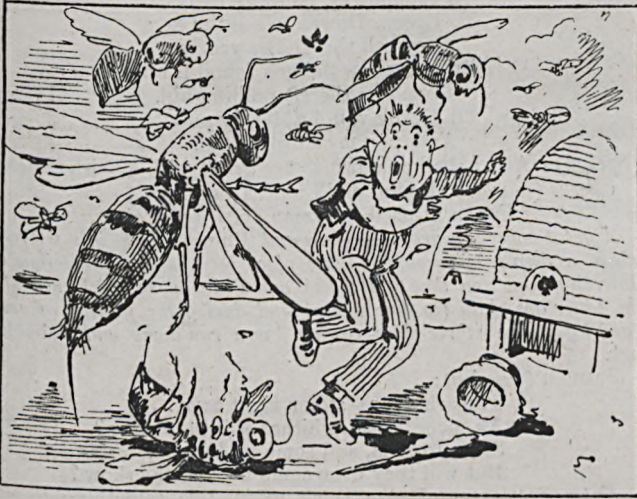
6. Mr. and Mrs. Shem secure Ostriches.



7. Japhet "buns" the Elephant



8. Ham fishes for Crocodiles.



9. Noah tackles the Bees.



10. Japhet brings a pair of Gorillas.



11 THE MARCH PAST.



12. THE TRUE TALE OF THE FLOOD.

Samuel Called

OR, THE OLD AND THE NEW SHOWMAN.

A Burlesque in Two Acts.

ACT 1.—Jahveh's great show of birds, beasts and angels. Ark in the distance. Samuel discovered asleep; old Eli beside him, soliloquising.

ELI: Now is this season of my discontent
Made glorious and bright by the son of—hem—(aside)
Hannah,
And all the clouds that lowered o'er this show
In the deep bosom of religious humbug buried.

(The flap of the ark opens to slow music. Jahveh's head appears, and a loud voice is heard calling, "Samuel! Samuel!")

SAMUEL (to Eli, rubbing his eyes): Did you call, father dear?

ELI: No, my son; merely the hawkers in the street. Lie down again; you must be tired. Sleep. (Continues his soliloquy.)
To sleep? perchance to dream—

Ah! there's the rub—for in a tranquil sleep

What dreams we have of future glory—

Stay, let me pause.

(The ark opens again, and Jahveh, popping his head slyly round the corner, shouts in his most tragic tones: "Samuel! Sam-u-el!")

SAM. (to Eli, indignantly): What's the good of your saying "Sleep," and then shouting in a poor sleepy fellow's ear in that way?

ELI: Now, my son, don't put yourself in a pet. S'welp me Moses, I didn't shout at all; I was merely talking quietly to myself.

SAM. (scornfully): I say its A-lie (Eli).

ELI: Say you so? Touch me not so near.

I would sooner have this tongue cut from my mouth

Than I would do offence to Michael—I mean my son Sammy.

But I must be candid. (Whispering in Samuel's ear.)

The voice thou heard'st was that of the king!

Jahveh, the boss of the show—ha, ha!

(Flourish of trumpets without.)

Sleep then again, my child, and if thou art again awakened,

Reply: "Speak, boss, thy servant is not deaf."

(Samuel gradually dozes.)

JAHVEH (coming slowly out of his box, shouts again): Samuel! Sam-u-el Sam-u-el!

SAM: What cheer, governor! I heard you. I'm not deaf, not I. I'm all alive oh! alive oh! alive oh!

JAH: Eli, you villain, you told him to say that. You had better run. Quit my sight. I say away.

From here you had better skeddaddle—run,

For this my weapon (pea-shooter) beats the needle gun.

(Eli vanishes.)

JAH. (to Samuel): Now, my son, come join me in a song;

I'm afraid old Eli's "going wrong."

(Jahveh and Samuel sing "There's another good man gone wrong.")

JAH. (to Samuel):

I've a word to say before you go—

That Eli, poor fool, must leave our show.

His sons disgrace us—ruin our name;

We've only that to look to—fame! fame!

The silly old man I shall now bring low,

Better an open than a covert foe.

His berth to you I give, young spark,

Manager, showman of my ark.

(Jahveh and Samuel dance a breakdown and retire into the ark.)

CURTAIN.

ACT 2.—Exterior of another show. Eli's sons discovered outside, beating drum and playing barrel organ.

HOPHNI: Walk up, walk up, and see the real live serpent. The only specimen in the world that can walk and talk. The serpent at the show over the way ain't alive at all; it's stuffed, and works by machinery.

PHINEAS: Yes, gents. Walk in and see the jawbone—the one Balaam used when he crossed the Red Sea and slew a thousand people.

LITTLE SCHOOLBOY: You mean Samson's jawbone.

PHINEAS: I don't care whose jawbone it is—we've got it. The one they've got over the way is a swindle.

HOPHNI and PHINEAS sing chorus:

We've got it, we've got it;

Just pay and take your pass.

We've got the only jawbone

Of poor old Balaam's ass.

Enter ELI: Oh my sons, my sons, why don't you cease this business? If you go on with your opposition to my governor I shall get discharged. Already he has told me to "quit his sight." Do cease, my good boys, or you'll bring down your poor father with gravity on his head.

Ah! I find I'm rather fuddled;

Jahveh has my brain bemuddled.

Never mind, I must fling away melancholy. (Dances a hornpipe, after which he sings):

The other day, in search of peace,
I thought I'd go quite early
To Epsom Downs to see the race
They call the Derby yearly;
But somehow Jahveh found it out
From him there's nothing hid.
I'll Derby you, he sternly said,
And 'pon my word he did.

(Spoken): And I shall go down to the grave with a hairless head.

Chorus (in which Hophni and Phineas join):

For an ill-used showman am I, boys, etc.

A great noise is heard. Hophni and Phineas rush into the road where a desperate encounter takes place between the patronisers of Jahveh's show and that of Hophni and Phineas, in which encounter the latter are slain (to slow music) and during the passage of arms (and legs) some "three-shies-a-penny" men run away with Jahveh's ark.

JAHVEH (weeping):

The ark gone—stolen right away.

Ah, poor beasts, whither will they stray?

Some to Asia, and some to Jericho,

But will they ever come back to the show?

Enter SAM. (to Jahveh): Don't weep, I've something to tell you.

Sings:

Poor old Eli sat on a wall

Poor old Eli had a great fall.

He fell with his weight all on his head,

And now, they tell me the poor fellow's dead.

Singing, rule, old Jahveh, old Jahveh rules the waves,

Jewish showmen never, never shall be slaves.

Enter a MESSENGER: News, Jahveh, news! Special 'dition o' the Echo. Orful slorter—Eli's sons killed.

JAHVEH: What? my great antagonists slain? Messenger, give me two copies of the paper, trade price. Stay, give me a dozen and book to my account. (Messenger—after some hesitation—gives)

To Samuel:

Samuel, my son, come give me joy,

My foes are dead—your path is clear.

Ha, now you shall be my showman-boy.

What, do you weep? Come dry that tear.

Eli's dead—and a good job too,

The show I now will leave to you.

Jahveh embraces Samuel—the animals, birds, and angels gather round—band strikes up "For they are jolly good fellows."—Red and blue fire.

CURTAIN.

A. B. MOSS.

A Seaside Sermon.

"Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?"—JER. v., 22.

THE present writer, so far as he knows, has no great fear of the Lord in question, and will attempt to give a reason why no one should be particularly afraid of a hypothetical being who is ever getting small by degrees and beautifully less. There are no manifestations of God's personal presence, and if the power and wisdom of the "invisible one" cannot be better exemplified than by the resistance of a sand barrier opposed to the encroachment of the sea, modern intelligence may well question the ability of the "creator" to adapt means to the end of preserving the earth in the form which he pronounced at first to be very good.

But Jeremiah's view is supported by the redoubtable Job, who spoke these words and said: "He hath compassed the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end." Concerning Job, however, I have to impress upon my devout readers the importance of studying the context, and not contenting themselves with a detached sneeze of inspiration from a daily text-book. The obedient Freethinker, who is wont to search the Scriptures, will find in chapter xxviii., verse 2, a confession by Job that God had taken away his judgment (Job's power of judging). That being so, nothing is more clear than the fact that Job, like many of his compeers, merely immortalised the general scientific ignorance of his times by dogmatizing from appearances, uttering vain words without knowledge. As to the source of Job's knowledge, all scripture being given by inspiration of God, every tyro in theology knows that the heart is the seat of the mental faculties, as the Bible proclaims it in many instances. That prophecy is a result of the "Spirit of God" is another well-known fact. Yet Job, who is enrolled among the prophets, leaves his poor heart out of consideration and makes his nasal organ the temple of the spirit of God, saying, "All the while the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness." Bravo, Job! Is it to be inferred that each time you blew your saintly nose the inspiring agent was expelled, leaving you abandoned to scientific absurdities? I should scorn, oh Job, to be one of those hypercritical shallow-pates who consider the word poet as synonymous with liar, for poets do not lie unless

they are paid to do so, whatever they may have done in your time, but in what manner, oh hero of a thousand boils, did you learn that God had said to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" According to Elihu, God speaketh "when deep sleep falleth upon men, then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction." That is, *probably*, he *probes* the ear, say with the "sword of the spirit," pours in the "instruction" and carefully stops with cotton wool—for, remember, all *spirits*, even the palpable ones known at this day, are more or less volatile! Opposed to Elihu's theory of receiving a revelation at the tympanum is Job's apparent notion of concentrating it at the nose. The symptoms of a coming manifestation of God to him was a tickling sensation in the olfactory nerves—he arose to a new life born of the spirit and of rheum.

The story of Canute the Great is no doubt familiar to everyone. To rebuke the fawning sycophants of his time he seated himself on a chair by the sea whilst the tide was rising, and with a shout commanded the waves to retire (as did several *beings* successfully (!) before him), but as the sea began to surround his royal clay, he observed, like a good Unitarian, "There is only one omnipotent *being* who can say to the ocean 'Thus far shalt thou go and no further.'" It would seem from Job's manifesto in God's name against the "proud waves" that he held the conception of Neptune as a spirit of mischief continually urging the waters to engulf God's fair earth, or at least to alter the physical geography in opposition to God's perpetual decree; but how interesting it would be to have a comprehensive record of the great encroachments, the goings further, which the sea has impudently accomplished since the time of Canute and the remoter ages of Jeremiah and Job. Despite Jehovah and his sand-banks, given the present relations of force and resistance, it were a far greater miracle to preserve by a perpetual decree the ancient coast lines than to divide the Jordan or the Red Sea; the more so when we read of Behemoth, that marvellous teetotaller that *drinketh up a river*, etc. When we remember what a falling-off was there when the all but omnipotent hard drinker the Behemoth, degenerated into a mere crocodile, thirsty for blood as a pious little inquisitor, we are prepared for a corresponding shortening of God's arm, and the weak piping treble of his old age, which can no longer with authority say to the sea "Thus far shalt thou go and no further."

To give now some illustrations of the value of the blessed and comforting text heading this discourse, the fact is incontrovertible that through the action of the sea on the coast "many villages on the eastern side of our island have been submerged, and places which were two or three centuries ago several miles inland are now close to the sea." Again, take Holland as a better example, where, despite dykes and embankments, the sea often obtains the mastery, as in 1530, when 400,000 persons perished. Some will exclaim "Ah! that was the work of puny man which failed before the majestic forces of nature." Very well. But the records of historic times bear me out when I say that even with shores unprofaned with a warning signal to mariners, the God who is love permits the sea to go *some distance further*—owing to his failing memory we will charitably assume. Thus "in 1634 the sea swept away nine-tenths of the island of Nordstrand off the south-west coast of the duchy of Schleswig, when thousands of persons perished." Again, to return to England, "In 1100 a large tract of fertile land on the coast of Kent was inundated, forming the well-known Goodwin sands. Many more examples might be presented, but, if the subject is not a dry one, still salt water makes one thirsty, and the congregation will now dissipate."

W. C. SAVILLE.

The Apostles' Whit-Sunday Conference.

[Reported by SCOFFER.]

ON Whit-Sunday, A.D. 33, the Apostles of Christ met, as previously arranged, at a certain garret in Jerusalem, to hold their Annual Conference. There was a good attendance.

Brother JAMES, in an able speech, lamenting the absence of their late president, Jesus Christ, proposed that Peter occupy the chair.

PHILIP seconded this, and it was carried without opposition.

PETER then took the chair amid applause, and addressed the brethren assembled as follows: Fellow workers, it gives me great pleasure to occupy so proud a position as you have been good enough to bestow on me this day. It has come quite unexpectedly, and you must excuse these tears. Yet somehow I think I possess the ability to carry on the good work of our Master. It does not want a chicken-hearted individual to fulfil so dangerous a post. (A Voice: "Don't crow, Peter.") It wants a man of courage—a man who when the hour of peril comes will not shrink and crawl away like a miserable cur. (Hear, hear.) It wants a man of pluck, a man of nerve, a man of iron; and although I do not like to boast, I think you have in me one who will never waver, but who will lead you on to victory and plant the flag of Christianity firmly in the Devil's stronghold. (Loud and continued applause.)

The next business was the election of a new vice-president in the place of Mr. Iscariot, who had met with an accident. The

Chairman said he was pleased to bring to their notice a very earnest worker in the cause, Mr. Matthias, and he should propose that this gentleman be added to the list of vice-presidents. He knew him to be a very godly young man. His three brothers were in a lunatic asylum, and it was only by a mistake that this young fellow had not the honor to be there also. (Cheers.)

Brother BARTHOLOMEW said that no other recommendation was necessary to become a member of the Christian brotherhood than that of being nearly fitted for a lunatic asylum. He was happy to say that most of his own relations were in similar institutions, and he expected very soon to be with them. He had very much pleasure in seconding that Mr. Matthias be elected a vice-president.

The resolution was put and carried *nem. con.*

The Secretary, THOMAS, then read his report, which showed that they were making slight progress. Two new members had joined them during the year, but unfortunately one of these had since been imprisoned for burglary. He was sorry to say that financially they were not in a very flourishing condition. Last year, after their president had kicked over the money-changers' tables in the Temple, owing to the activity and shrewdness of Bartholomew their exchequer was considerably augmented; but he was sorry to have to state that their treasurer, Brother Andrew, through having a hole in his pocket, had lost all their funds excepting twopence halfpenny. No one would doubt the honesty—(cries of "Oh, oh,")—of their indefatigable treasurer and he sincerely hoped that this misfortune would in no way prevent his friend's re-election—notwithstanding that he was inebriated for two weeks after the sad affair.

Brother JAMES said he had been told that on the very next day after their treasurer's *sad loss* he was seen purchasing a new "rig out" for himself and family; but knowing him to be a Christian it would be entirely wrong to suspect him of dishonesty. No one has ever known a Christian to be dishonest, and I venture to prophesy that no one ever will. (Cheers.)

The Secretary's report was then passed as read, and auditors were appointed for the ensuing year. The Secretary and Treasurer were then re-elected, and the Conference was about to pass on to the next business, when suddenly there came a sound from above "like a rushing mighty wind," and it filled all the apostles with astonishment. Some one had come down the chimney. It was Jesus Christ, smothered in soot. They thought it was the Devil until he spoke as follows:—

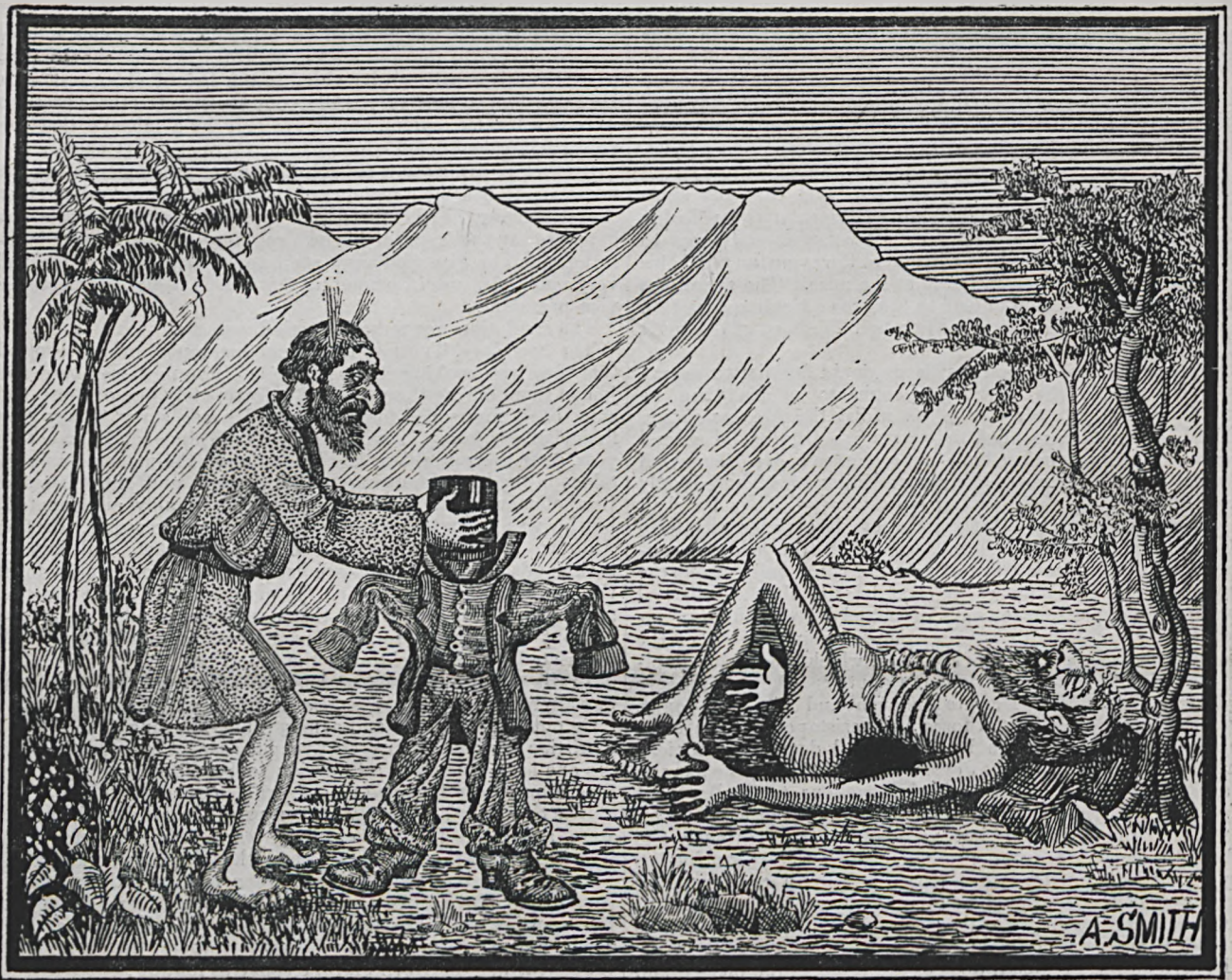
Fear not, my beloved apostles, I am your old friend Jesus Christ, and I have come here to propose that Peter occupies the presidential chair till I want it, and that won't be for a few thousand years. You doubtless have all been looking to heaven thinking I flew up—instead of that I've been up the flue. Yes, brethren, I've been hiding there from the authorities. I've had enough of this Salvation business; the game is almost up. I've been turning water into wine, raising people from the dead, curing the blind, healing the sick, drowning people's pigs, and feeding thousands of half-starved wretches with five loaves and two fishes, and yet when I got into the hands of the authorities I couldn't get a dozen people to speak up for me. No one hardly believes in me. They say I am a trickster. When I was being crucified I caused all the saints to walk out of their graves in this city, and yet no one has seen them. What's the good of my trying this game on any longer? These Jews say it's all moonshine. Although I did the tricks before their very noses they won't believe in me. Therefore I resign the post, and I heartily propose, second, and carry that friend Peter be president. If there's anything to be made out of the office, he's the man to do it. No doubt you wonder how I am still on earth. Well, it happened in this wise. As I was ascending to heaven one of my boots fell off, and I didn't wish to sit on the right hand of God the Father with only one boot on, so I descended again. I had gone up about ten miles, and when I arrived on earth I found my boot, after several day's search, some miles distant from where I ascended, which now makes me think that the earth moves. I was about to ascend again, but a lot of boys and girls espied me, so I put off my excursion till by and bye. I don't mean to start from the same place next time. The authorities "smell a rat," and are on the look out. My ascension from two different places will confound the unbelievers. I remembered Conference day, so I thought I'd give you a surprise and appear among you; but now I must be off once more up the flue, as I want to ascend on the quiet. So farewell, dear brethren, for a few thousand years.

The Conference then broke up amidst excitement and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

"WHAT is the reason," said a young lady, "that there is nothing said in the Bible about a 'certain woman' as well as a 'certain man'?" A gentleman answered the lady's question in the following impromptu:—

"A certain man" is a phrase in scripture common,
But nothing's said about a 'certain woman';
The reason all may see that are not blind—
A woman's never *certain* of her mind."

"WHOM did Barney buckle to? He deserved a good wife."
"Yes, and he did deserve it, but didn't get it. He's married to the devil's own daughter, sure!" "Ay, ay; well, it's so, is it? Then he's married into an old *ancient* family."



HEBREW OLD CLOTHES.

And the Lord spake unto Moses . . . strip Aaron of his garments . . . And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there on the top of the mount.—NUMBERS xx., 23-28.



A GOD OF LETTERS.



THE CONFIDENCE TRICK (A 1).

Look up . . . for your redemption draweth nigh.—LUKE xxi. 28.



A SALVATION TRIO

Shout, ye lower parts of the earth.—ISAIAH xlv. 23.



FAITH-HEALING BY TELEPHONE

Discovery of a Letter of Mary Magdalene.

AN old yellow letter has lately been discovered in the pockets of an old dress, which had been offered for sale at one of the Jewish second-hand shops in Jerusalem. This dress must be at least eighteen hundred years old, according to its style and cut. A member of the Christian Evidence Manufacturing Society had been travelling through the Old City—otherwise known as Jerusalem—to try and find some articles or information which would tend to make the Bible shine in a brighter light than it does at present. He was getting despondent, and thought he had been on a fool's errand, when he alighted on this old feminine garment. His heart went out towards it. He got the dress for a few pence. When he arrived at his humble abode on the outskirts of Jerusalem, he looked at his treasure, when lo, and behold, a crumpled-up letter was found in the pocket of the dress. It was written in Hebrew. He hurried home and got it translated. He then called a meeting of the above-mentioned Society; when they all declared that he had bought a dress which would give all Freethinkers—and people of such stamp—a good dressing. The meeting then came to the following resolutions:—

"That this letter was written by Mary Magdalene to a lady friend."

"That it tells us where the books of Jasher, Gad, etc., have gone to."

"That Jesus Christ *was* crucified."

"That Jesus Christ *did* rise from the dead."

"And that he was the friend of Miss Magdalene."

The following is a true translation of the letter found in the dress:—

"3 Abib, 4039.

"MY DEAR SARAH ISAACSON,—No doubt you have been waiting a long time for an answer to your last letter. I know that you will forgive my irregular correspondence when I acquaint you with the reason. I have just got time, so I will tell you all about my sweetheart Jesus Christ.

Some time ago, my friend Rebecca was married to that nice young man Jacob Moses, in Cana of Galilee. That is where I met my darling Jesus. I tell you it was a case of love at first sight. I was head over heels in love with him. I was introduced to him. He was very attentive to me all the time that the marriage-feast was kept up; and a little later on he asked me if he could have the great pleasure of seeing me home. Could I refuse? Certainly not. It is not every girl that has such an opportunity offered her as I had that blessed night. You should have seen the other bridesmaids look daggers at me when Jesus offered me his arm at the close of the festival. He is such a handsome young man; such eyes that seem to look through you; such a fine nose; and as to his hair, it defies description—long, flowing, glossy, and such a lovely auburn. Some of my spiteful friends call it 'carrots!' Talk about that walk home, it was heavenly! Just at the door of my house he had the impudence to squeeze my waist and to steal a kiss. Such a sounder! I pretended to be very vexed; but I liked him all the better for it. He began to call very regularly, and is a great friend of my mother. I must also tell you that he is a bit of a ventriloquist and magician. At this wedding in Cana he turned the water—which was in six water-pots—into wine. An easy trick, which I will teach you when I next visit you at your shanty. He did many such tricks; and that made the ignorant and superstitious people believe that he was some relation to the *Most High*!

Our courtship would have gone on pretty smoothly if I only could have persuaded him to read less of the Old Testament. He persuaded himself at last that he was the one alluded to in the Bible who should ultimately save the world. This caused him to preach on his own hook. He kicked up rows in the synagogues; professed to restore sight to blind people; pretended to raise dead people; and all such antics. It is said he cursed a barren fig-tree because there were no figs on it. I can give you a different explanation of the affair. This fig-tree was our letter-box. He did not look for figs on the tree, but for a letter from me in the tree. He did not find one; and that made him get his hair off, and hence his cursing. By the way, Jesus made me a capital work-box out of this fig-tree. He is a carpenter: same trade as his father.

At last my poor sweetheart got into trouble. He was taken up as a religious impostor, and had to be crucified. I thought my heart would burst with pain when I saw the executioners nailing him to a cross. But I had done something to lessen his own pain. I had bribed the soldier—who gave Jesus some vinegar to drink, just before he was supposed to die—to mix a drug with the vinegar which would send him to sleep. The arrangement turned out splendidly. My friend Joseph of Arimathea took the body of my lover and laid him in a new sepulchre. But Jesus played me a capital trick. Instead of waiting for us to fetch him, he had the cheek to wind off the linen from his body and come out of the sepulchre on his own account, dressed up as a masquerader of a very primitive age. He had taken all the leaves of the books of Jasher, Iddo the Seer, Gad, etc., and had made a kind of paper suit—the edges of the leaves fastened together with his world-famed magic spittle. Paper

cap, paper stick, paper unmentionables; in fact, his whole dress consisted of paper—shirt included. No wonder he frightened me when he said, 'Woman, why weepest thou?' But I soon knew him again. People believe that he has risen and gone to heaven. Let them. I know better. I am very happy because I am going to be married to him in a few days. Will you be first bridesmaid? Write soon.—Yours truly,

MARY MAGDALENE."

[The Christian Evidence Manufacturing Society beg to announce to the public at large that this famous letter can be seen in the Christian Museum; and beg for funds to make further additions to their already large exhibition.]

G. E. C. NAEWIGER.

Rib-Ticklers.

"WHAT are the chief ends of man?" asked a Sunday-school teacher of one of his pupils. "Head and feet," was the prompt reply.

THE height of prudishness was attained by the London clergyman who, when he had occasion to refer to the prophet Jonah, delicately spoke of him as having passed three days and three nights in the whale's—ahem—society."

A LADY undertook to explain to Douglas Jerrold the five points of Calvinism. Jerrold listened patiently until the doctrine of election had been elucidated, when he exclaimed: "Well, if I had known that I was born to be damned, I'll be damned if I would have been born."

ONE of the brethren, who had a habit of moaning out "O-h, y-e-s!" at regular intervals during the service, was rather broken up on Sunday night. He had just wakened up when the preacher asked the solemn question: "Brother, do you intend to spend eternity in hell?" "O-h y-e-s!" sang out the devoted brother.

MINISTER: "That was a very vivid picture I drew in this morning's sermon of the burning tortures of the lost, deacon, and yet the congregation did not seem to be particularly impressed." Deacon: "Yes, I noticed that myself, and I partly account for it by the fact that the temperature of the church was only a degree or two above freezing."

"IN six days," said the sky-pilot, addressing the Sunday-school; "God made the earth. Now, dear children, what did he do the seventh day?" No answer. "I will ask you, Johnny Sharpe," continued the sky-pilot, pleasantly; "after working six days, what do people do on Sunday?" "Pleathe, thir," replied Johnny Sharpe, "they have a good dinner and go to the pub., thir."

"BROTHER IKE," said a gentleman of color to another darkey lately, "yer orter been to de pra'r meeting las' night. We prayed fur yer." "Am dat a fac?" "It ham." "Den I'se got faith in pra'r. Dat pra'r was answered." "Sure 'nuff?" "Fo' God it was." "Tell me 'bout it, Brudder Ike." "Wall, 'Zekiel, I'se got de fatter turkey at my house yer eber seed. An' he wus roostin' low, las' night—bery low."

MRS. SCROGGINS: "Well, Betsy, and how be you this day?" Mrs. Jones: "Bad, Martha—very, very bad; I'm a-goin', Martha—a-goin' to the other land." Mrs. S.: "Well, Betsy, if it's true, and yer must go, you'll see my 'Enery up theer; tell 'im I keep a mangle, and t' childer is well, and ——" Mrs. J. (peevishly): "Nay, nay, Martha, yer can't expect as I can go a-wanderin' about the clouds a-lookin' for your 'Enery wi' my bad leg!"

A HUMOROUS old man fell in with an ignorant and impertinent young minister, who proceeded to inform the old gentleman in very positive terms that he would never reach heaven unless he was born again, and added: "I have experienced that change, and now feel no anxiety." "And have you been born again?" said his companion, musingly. "Yes, I trust I have." "Well," said the gentleman, eyeing him attentively, "I don't think it would hurt you, young man, to be born once more."

A VERY ANCIENT CHESTNUT.—A certain bishop had a Biscayan man-servant whom he ordered one festival to go to a butcher, who was called David, for a piece of meat, and then come to church where the bishop was to preach. The bishop in his sermon, bringing authorities from the scriptures in this manner—"Isaiah says thus," "Jeremiah says thus," at last, happening to turn towards the door as his servant came in, went on: "And what says David?" Upon which the Biscayanman roared out: "He swears to God that if you do not pay your old bill you need never send to his shop again."

A MINISTER in the Highlands of Scotland found one of his parishioners intoxicated. Next day he called to reprove him for it. "It is very wrong to get drunk," said the parson. "I ken that," said the guilty person, "but I dinna drink as meikle as you do." "Why, sir, how is that?" "Why, gin it please ye, dinna ye ay tak a glass o' whisky-and-water after dinner?" "Why yes, Jimmy; I take a glass of whisky-and-water after dinner merely to aid digestion." "And dinna ye tak a glass o' whisky-toddy every night when ye are going to bed?" "Yes, to be sure; I take a little toddy every night to help me to sleep." "Well," continued the parishioner, "that's just fourteen glasses a week, and about sixty every month. I only get paid once a month, and then if I'd take sixty glasses it wad mak me deed drunk for a week. Now, ye see, the only difference is that ye time it better than I do."

Comic Answers to Correspondents.

TEETOTAL EUCHARIST.—"Well drunken" at Cana evidently meant only drunken from the "well"—intoxicated, that is, on pure pump-water.

"RATIONALISTIC CHRISTIAN."—Your explanation of Moses' forty days fast should be sent to the Christian Evidence Society, not to us. You point out that though Moses, as the Scriptures say, ate no bread and drank no water, he might have lived on other things instead. Did he take six pork pies and a dozen bottles of champagne with him then? Or did he live on locusts and wild honey, like John the Baptist, or on "angel's food" or manna, as the Children of Israel did for forty years?

CARDINAL MANNING.—Protestants and Roman Catholics regard each other as blasphemous heretics. We believe them both to be right. It was "quaint old Fuller" who reverently said that the "odd man is the Holy Ghost." The Father and Son had probably tossed up for a glass and the Ghost stood out.

JOHN SMITH.—Your numerous clan is not descended from the lost ten tribes as you imagine, for Scripture tells us distinctly that "there was no Smith found throughout all the land of Israel" (1 Sam xiii., 19.) Possibly the Joneses, who all originally lived in Wales, are descendants of the Jonah who once lived in a whale.

J. C.—Why didn't you invent the electric telegraph, or the steam-engine, or the printing press, or the telephone, or something else equally original and useful, instead of only imitating old myths, and repeating other people's moral and immoral precepts? You can't palm off your doctrines and miracles as genuine novelties on us, you know.

PARACLETE.—Your paper on "The Comic Aspects of the Trinity, by One of them" is too blasphemous for our columns. Besides, you shouldn't expose your partners' weaknesses. There should be honor among gods even if they are Christians.

MARY.—Why complain? You are very fortunate. We can assure you that it is not every young woman who is deified for having an illegitimate baby. We, however, think better of you than your Christian worshippers do. We always looked upon you as an honorable wife, and regarded the whole tale as a Christian slander. We shall be glad to have your authority for denouncing your orthodox traducers.

MOSES.—You plead that God commanded you to slaughter the Midianites and others, young and old. When we believe that a lie excuses a murder, we shall hold you innocent, and not before.

D. D.—"Cant" in Scriptural references is short for Canticles, as the Song of Solomon is sometimes called. In ecclesiastical matters it may refer to "Cantuar," or the Archbishop of Canterbury. The word, or abbreviation, is eminently applicable to religious matters in general. Does your own signature "D.D." stand for Doctor of Divinity, or for the "Dirty Dick" whose wine vaults attract the curious public in Bishopsgate?

ZECHARIAH.—We exonerate you from all blame. If the young Jewish carpenter, or his biographer, misunderstood you the fault is not yours. They misunderstood many things. We quite believe you never contemplated the idea of a King of the Jews riding on two donkeys. If the Noddies had vocal powers like Balaam's, they and their rider might have anticipated Shakespeare's "When shall we three meet again?"

AARON.—Declined with thanks. Couldn't you send us something spicier?—say a full account of Mo's adventures with Jahveh at the public-house.

C. H. SPURGEON.—Send us something on current affairs. We can't stand your sermons. Several of our readers slept for forty-eight hours on the one we inserted for a trial, and some of them had to be brought round with a galvanic battery.

INQUIRER.—You ask us whether J. C. was ever up a tree. Certainly. See Acts v. 30.

ANXIOUS.—You will find the Lord at Manchester. Over a shop in the Oldham Road is painted "Godbehore." The grammar is bad, but no doubt the announcement is correct.

PIRACAH.—You and your people were treated villainously, but you were well rid of the scurvy lot on any terms.

ELIUD.—Sorry we cannot make an appointment. We fear you have not forgotten that old left-hand trick with the dagger. A message from God is all very well, but we object to it in the shape of ten inches of cold steel.

VIRGIN.—Not at all surprised to hear your baby has no father. We expected it all along. Unfortunately many other babies in this city are in the same plight, and it would be rather hard on the poor Ghost to father the lot on him.

PATMOS JOHNNIE.—Will we give you a penny for your thoughts? Not we. You never had a thought worth half the money.

HAPPY ELIZA.—We never questioned your virtue, and judging from your looks we should say it runs very little risk. We merely said you showed too much stocking in the Hallelujah can-can.

WILLIAM BOOTH.—Hang your Salvation watches. The first day we used the one you sent us we lost a train by over half an hour, and committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. If an immortal soul is worth anything your watch is darned dear. They offered us ninepence on it at the pawnbroker's, so we took off the hands and gave it to the baby.

SIMON PETER.—No room for your long screed on Paul. Besides, your personalities are not even amusing. If you plague us again, we shall insert Paul's account of the cock-crowing business. We have spared you hitherto, because your poor old head is bald enough already.

ADAM alleges that he composed and copyrighted "Over the Garden Wall" after he was kicked out of Eden, and solicits our opinion as to how he should assert his claim. We never give legal advice.

J. C.—Glad to afford you an opportunity of correcting the mistake. Many Christians will be happy to know that you did not say "Give to everyone that asketh," but "Ask of everyone that giveth." The sky-pilots always read it that way, which is another proof of their inspiration.

J. ISCARIOT.—Your claim to be considered the efficient cause of our salvation has no interest for us until we learn what you saved us from. Besides, you had thirty shillings on account, and you'll have to go to the County Court for the balance.

HOSEA.—The fact that the Lord commanded you to take the woman and that you expected him to return you the fifteen pieces of silver, is no excuse for your conduct.

PAUL.—We understand the case. The sunstroke on the road to Damascus gave you the maggots. We have no room for the dissertation on your thorn in the flesh. Try the *Lancet* or the *British Medical Journal*.

SIEM, HAM, AND JAPHET.—You had better get the old man into an asylum for inebriates.

The Robber Robbed.

A CERTAIN priest had hoarded up
A mass of secret gold;
And where he might bestow it safe,
He knew not to behold.

At last it came into his thoughts,
To lock it in a chest
Within the chancel; and he wrote
Thereon, *Hic Deus est*.

A merry grig, whose greedy mind
Did long for such a prey,
Respecting not the sacred words
That on the casket lay,

Took out the gold, and blotting out
The priest's inscript thereon,
Wrote, *Resurrexit, non est hic*;
Your god is risen and gone.

Milk and Honey.

A NOTED desperado out West, earned for himself the name of "God Almighty" owing to his capability for evading the law. After a while, however, he was caught and lynched. A stranger passing that way at the time made inquiries as to the unwonted stir that was prevailing and was informed that God Almighty was being strung up. On hearing this explanation he exclaimed:—"What an unfortunate family, the son crucified and the father hung!"

THOROUGHLY PREPARED.—A Suabian village clergyman was exhorting a young couple who had come to ask him to put up the banns: "So then, my dear young friends, you wish to enter the holy estate of matrimony. But have you thoroughly prepared yourselves for the important step you are about to take?" "We have that," replied the damsel; "we've stuck a pig and killed a dozen chickens, and we've baked tarts and cakes enough to make the tables bend with the weight. That ought to be sufficient."

BOTH MISTAKEN.—A sky-pilot was in the habit of eating his noonday meal at a certain restaurant, where he generally sat opposite to a gentleman whom he thought by his appearance was a Jew. One day he saw the gentleman eating a dish of pork and beans, and ventured to remark—"My dear sir, don't you know that I always considered you a Jew, but now I see that I'm mistaken." "My dear sir," responded the other, "don't you know that I have always considered you a gentleman, but I now see that I have been mistaken."

"DON'T you owe your God anything, Mr. Grinnell?" asked a deacon of the Baptist Church, who was sitting in the corner on an empty nail-keg, and who until that time had remained silent listening to the stories of the others, and to the old settler enumerating his many debts. The old man looked at the deacon a moment, stroking his grizzly beard, evidently in profound meditation, and said: "Yes, deacon, I do, by gosh! Yes, I do owe the Lord a heap, but he ain't a crowdin' me like the rest of my creditors."

COULDN'T STOP THAT BOY.—Romeyn, a Montclair boy, aged five, converses with his friend of equally mature years, as follows: Romeyn: "My pa is going to get me a goat." Fairchild: "I've got twenty goats." R.: "Where are they?" F.: "Oh, they're down in New York in pa's office." R.: "Why don't they bring them here?" F.: "They're sick." A pause. Finally Romeyn speaks: "I saw Anthony's nose last summer." Fairchild: "I saw Anthony himself." R.: "Anthony's Nose is a rock, and it broke off and fell into the water." F.: "I saw it fall." Romeyn's mother, an interested listener, at this point deemed it expedient to interpose with a moral lesson. "Why, Fairchild," said she, "did you never hear of Ananias and Sapphira?" F.: "I knew them both." R's mother: "You know, Fairchild, they were struck dead for telling lies." F.: "Yes, I saw them struck." R's mother: "Fairchild, do you know where they went? (Very impressively): They went to hell." F.: "I know it. I saw them go."



CHRISTIANITY IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS; OR, CONVERTING THE NATIVES.



All for the Glory of God.

"As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so the rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."—*Westminster Confession of Faith*, chap. iii.

SAID Jahveh to Jesus, I've hit on a plan,
All for the glory of God,
For a jolly good lark, by the making of man,
All for the glory of God.
We'll plant a big garden and place him within
With a subtle old serpent to tempt him to sin,
Then damn him for ever, and all of his kin,
All for the glory of God!

Then, after some thousands of years have passed by,
All for the glory of God,
You can go down to earth to suffer and die,
All for the glory of God.
And those who believe the strange story you tell
Shall have a gold harp and a halo as well;
But as for the rest—we'll send them to hell.
All for the glory of God!

Some parsons we'll have to pray and to preach,
All for the glory of God,
And damn those who doubt all the dogmas they teach,
All for the glory of God.
Then strife and contentions are sure to prevail,
Unbelievers we'll murder or shut up in jail,
Or roasting in hell, they shall weep and shall wail,
All for the glory of God!

LUCIANUS.

AN old Scotchwoman named Niss McNab was staying one Sunday with a friend, a dressmaker, and they began to talk of religious matters. Forgetting that it was Sunday, they dropped the subject and commenced to talk of a new dress which Miss McNab was getting made. Miss McNab, however, suddenly remembered the day, when she exclaimed, "Ah, it's our bodies we're concerned about!" Her friend, not understanding her, observed, "Tuits! Never heed the body if the skirt's right!"

Sam Slicove goes to Church.

"I haint bin at church moren once," sed Sam to me the other day, when I met him on the street. "Thet was Sunday afore last, an' Ime blest ef I go agin. They haint perlite them church people, they haint got no sense of politeness whatsomever." An' by way ov reliev'in' his feelins he expectorated an over-sized quid over part ov my highly polished shoe-leather. "Yer see," he added, "Ide no idea the consarns were so cheap till I hurd tell you'd only got to put sumthing in a kolleekshun-box an' walk in. When I went I dropped in a button Ide got no particular use fur, an' slid into a nice kushioned seat where there wor an old chap sittin' readin'. He glared az ef he'd eat me, but I didn't mind him a bit. Bye-'n-bye two smart young gals kem up an' they stared hard at me az ef Ide no rite to be thar, but Ide paid fur my seat an' I jest sot still. They moved a leetle further on an' sot down. The performance soon commenced, an' I tell yer the singin' waz jest splendid, but I couldn't make nothin' outen the feller as did the speakin' part nohow. Seemed to me he'd a deal too much to say about nothin'. When the consarn kem out, Deacon Brown, thet's him as keeps the grocery-store round the corner, kem up to me, an' sez he, Samuel, sez he, how d'ye like our pastor, wor'nt he jest amazin' to-day? Sez I, ef it's the feller with the bald head az wears the white choker ye mean, I tell yer he waz amazin'; I was in sich a maze I couldn't make out whether he wor talkin' to himself or the crowd; 'peared kinder mad. The deacon didn't seemed pleased at this, so sez I, kinder to soothe his feelins, sez I, who wor the feller he talked so much about? 'peared rather fond ov him. Sez the deacon, he wor'nt talkin' about no feller, he wor only preachin' about Christ who died fur us. Wall thet's the feller, sez I; who's he? What! sez the deacon awfully astonished like, ye don't know who Christ is? Wall Ime blest, why he's the son of God. I've hearen tell of God an' Christ too, sez I, but I didn't know az they wor anybody; thought they was sorter cussin' or swearin'. Why don't yer know that Christ died fur us, an' it's free to all? I reckon thet's kind, sez I, is it free fur everybody? Free to all, says the deacon, awful solemn like, though your sins be az scarlet they shall be az wool. Wall now, sez I, in that case if he keeps up that ere dyeing establishment still an' would have no objections, why I've got an old coat an' a pair o' pants I should like — the deacon filed out quickern no time, an' Ime darned ef I know yet what made that blamed ass skirt so smart, do you?" Chewed ef I do, sez I, an' the meetin' broke up.

JEM FITZ.

A BRIGHT-EYED little girl, on being taught by her orthodox mother that Jesus was God, and that he was in heaven at the right hand of God the Father, said: "Why, mamma, how can God be on the right hand of himself?"

THERE is one passage in the scriptures to which all the potentates of Europe seem to have given unanimous assent and approbation, and to have studied so thoroughly as to have it quite at their fingers' ends—"There went out a decree from Claudius Cæsar that all the world should be taxed."

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