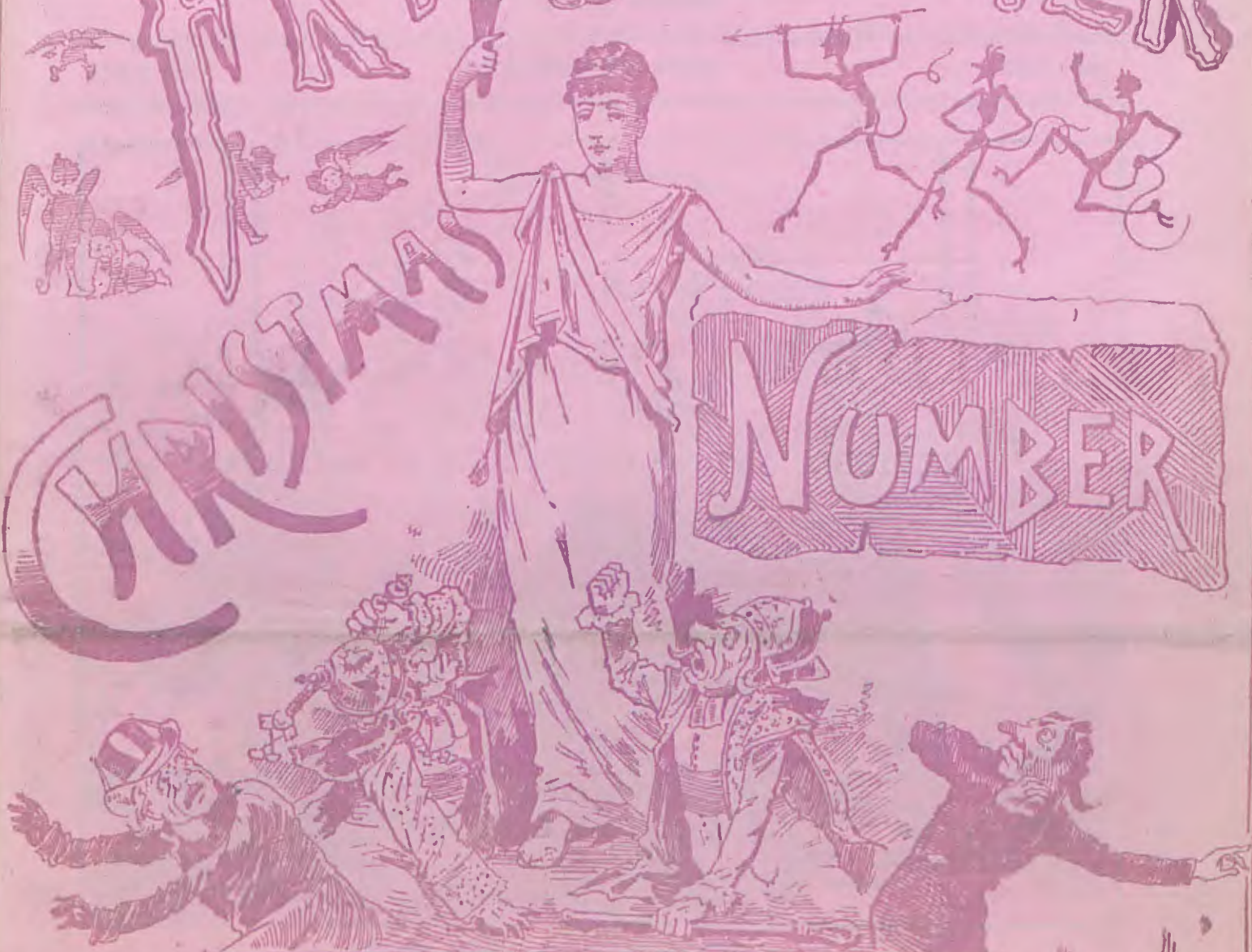


# THE FOREFEET THINKER



# CHRISTMAS

# NUMBER

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CHRISTMAS AT NAZARETH, A.D. 1.

## CHRISTMAS AT NAZARETH, A.D. 1.

LITTLE JOSHUA JOSEPHSON was nearing the first anniversary of his birth. He was a flourishing baby, as was to be expected, considering the circumstances in which he was ushered into the world. His legs were beautifully mottled, his cheeks were chubby, his infantile fists were prettily dimpled over the knuckles, his hair began to droop in ringlets, and his nose exhibited a delicious Semitic curve which thrilled the heart of his adoring mother.

Mary watched him one afternoon as he chipped pieces off the legs of the kitchen table with one of Joseph's chisels. Her husband had often warned her against letting him play with edge tools; but the gashes on his holy fingers healed in five minutes, and he had a wonderful way of putting the chips back again, so that the table legs were none the worse for his juvenile experiments.

That very morning little Joshua had, for the first time, articulated "Mamma" with perfect clearness, although he could never be got to say the first syllable of "Papa." His mother was delighted, and when Joseph came in to dinner she suggested that, as it only wanted a fortnight to

the twenty-fifth of December, they should begin making arrangements for a birthday party. Joseph acquiesced. He felt the matter did not concern himself, but he promised her a sovereign for the necessary expenses.

The invitations being left to Mary, she chattered away on the subject to little Joshua, as though he understood it all; indeed, she was quite convinced that he did, for he nodded and shook his head with striking appropriateness to her various questions. By tea-time it was settled that the birthday party should be very exclusive. There were to be only five guests: the nurse, the three Persian gentlemen, and Mr. Gabriel.

"But how shall we invite them?" said Mary. Little Joshua smiled, as who should say "Leave it to me, Ma." And although Mary wondered how it would be done, she felt confident the programme would be carried out.

The eventful day arrived. Mary dressed in her wedding clothes, and Joseph made himself as elegant as possible; after which they sat down to await their company. The first to arrive was the nurse. She was younger than most of her profession, and buxom to boot. Soon afterwards the three Persian gentlemen knocked at the front door. Little Joshua toddled to see if they had any more presents, and he



was not disappointed. Finally a high-class rat-tat announced the arrival of Mr. Gabriel. This handsome "masher" was got-up most elegantly. His whole person exhaled a delicious perfume, and his dainty moustache was trimmed so beautifully that the nurse's lips watered as he gave Mary a hearty salute. Joseph, however, frowned at the spectacle. But little Joshua danced with glee, and for the first time he uttered the word "Papa."

When the company were settled down, the three Persian gentlemen did some splendid conjuring tricks, winding up with a dark *séance*, which frightened Mary, and made the nurse so ill that half a bottle of brandy was consumed in restoring her spirits. Mr. Gabriel then obliged with a song. He warbled "S'io t'amo" in a melodious tenor, all the while casting the roundest sheep's-eyes on Mary, who sat blushing in an arm-chair.

Dinner being served up, little Joshua was placed in his baby-chair at the head of the table. Mary sat on his left, and Mr. Gabriel on his right. Joseph and the nurse faced each other, and the three Persian gentlemen occupied the fourth side. Joseph was at first a little glum, and his appetite was far from robust, but he cheered up under the influence of a pint of porter, and attacked the victuals with excellent vigor. The three Persian gentlemen had astonishing appetites. They excused themselves by saying they had walked all night, and so rapidly that they had covered four hundred miles in eight hours. Joseph and the nurse stared at this, but Mr. Gabriel smiled facetiously, and asked "Did you see the star?" Whereupon little Joshua laughed, and pulled Mr. Gabriel's left wing.

When the wine and dessert were on the table, one of the Persian gentlemen took advantage of his proximity to the nurse to tread on her toes; and she, having no boots on, felt hurt, and told him to "draw it mild." Joseph's tongue was unlocked by several glasses of port, and he told stories about his courtship, until Mary looked uncomfortable, and little Joshua was obliged to cause a diversion. To the astonishment of all he began to talk. The Persian gentlemen threw up their hands in amazement, the nurse sniggered, Joseph laughed a tipsy "hear him," and even Mary and Mr. Gabriel, who knew he was a wonderful child, could hardly conceal their surprise. Little Joshua chaffed the nurse, pledged Joseph till he rolled under the table, asked the Persian gentlemen conundrums, and bet a dozen walnuts on the number of feathers in Mr. Gabriel's wings.

Wine and mirth produced their natural effect. Joseph was under the table already, the Persian gentlemen joined him one by one, and the nurse dropped her head upon her arms and snored the snore of the just. Mr. Gabriel and Mary drew closer to little Joshua. Their hands met behind his chair, and presently their heads came into dangerous proximity. Mr. Gabriel was just snatching a kiss from those tempting lips, when he was arrested by the voice of little Joshua, who exclaimed in the most freezing tones "Stop it, Gabriel; ma's married now."

Mr. Gabriel got up and went out, and did not return. Mary crept off quietly to bed. Mr. Joseph, the nurse, and the three Persian gentlemen slept where they were; while little Joshua sat on the hearthrug and smoked a churchwarden. Thus ended the first Christmas at Nazareth.

G. W. F.

### CHRISTIANITY, IN WORD AND DEED.

'Tis written, though we'll never know by whom,  
But wisdom's wide e'en to the crack of doom:  
"Foxes have holes," Christ knew the holey foxes,  
For pleasant nooks have all the orthodoxes;  
"The birds have nests" and very well they're feathered,  
With warmth and comfort close around them gathered,  
And safety too, preserved from change and dread:  
"But the Lord knows not where to lay his head."  
No consternation 'mongst the host were vaster  
Were priests compelled to emulate their master:  
"Blessed the poor" proclaim the sleek professing  
But care not overmuch to share the blessing,  
Or else their opportunity is ample,  
And force lies less in precept than example;  
Smite but a priest and he will show no hastening  
To humbly court the further wanton chastening;  
And as to eagerness for heavenly blisses,  
They rather cling to such an earth as this is.  
'Twere honestest should text with act agree,  
But that's no part of Christian sanctity,  
But "be not righteous overmuch" they read,  
The only word they translate into deed,

### JOHN THE BAPTIST, ESQ.

THE father of this young gentleman was the Rev. Mr. Zacharias, who was chief incense burner and candle lighter in the Temple of the Lord. As a young man he was known as Zach the lady-killer, and he was extremely fortunate to marry the Virgin Mary's sister, whose name was Elizabeth, but this young lady was more frequently called Betsy by her female companions. Zacharias and Betsy lived happily together for some years, but finding that they were not blessed with children there were occasional shindies and much jangling between them. But they were a righteous couple and they prayed earnestly to the Lord to help them over their difficulty. For nearly fifty years they knelt each night by the bedside and prayed for two hours; in the cold weather they prayed till their teeth chattered, and they had to finish their prayers in bed. But at last their prayers were answered. Perhaps the Lord had only just heard them, as it is a long way to heaven, or he had been too busy thinking of his own darling boy, who was to make his first appearance on this earth very shortly. If so, Gabriel, the young man who is specially retained for this kind of work by the Lord, had quite enough to do to visit the Virgin Mary, but nevertheless he managed to pay her sister Betsy a visit, and then he hurried off to her husband in the Temple and told him his prayer was answered, and that his wife would in the course of time have a boy and his name was to be John. Poor old Zacharias was struck dumb with astonishment, and he did not recover his speech again till little Jack was born.

Six months after Gabriel's visit, Betsy was very busy at needlework, and who should pop in one day to have a cup of tea but her sister Mary, who happened to be in precisely the same condition as herself. Betsy was greatly astonished at her sister, and began reproving her for being such a forward young hussy, and spoke disrespectfully of her young man Joseph, and said he ought to marry her at once.

"It's nothing to do with Joe, at all," replied Mary, sobbing violently.

"What do you mean, Mary; surely you have not been courting another young man?"

"No, Betsy, that I have not. I am true as gold to my Joe," answered Mary as she wiped her eyes with her clean white apron.

"Then just explain yourself. You say it's not Joe's fault and that you have not been courting anyone else. How did it happen?"

"It's rather a strange story," whimpered Mary, "and perhaps you won't believe it; no one where we live will believe me, and I have come to you for sympathy and shelter."

"Tell me all about it, Mary dear, I will not doubt your word."

"Well, one night I had just got into bed when all of sudden a nice-looking young man with wings came in at the window and so frightened me that I swooned right off. When I came to he told me not to be afraid of him, and that he was sent by the Lord to tell me that I should have a baby. I told him I wasn't married, but he said that didn't matter at all, for he said with God nothing was impossible. Then he told me that he had already been to see you, and that you were also going to have a baby. I hardly believed he was speaking the truth, but I see he has not deceived me."

"No indeed he has not," replied Betsy, "what a dear nice young man he was, don't you think so, Mary, and wasn't he handsome?"

"Yes, dear sister, and wasn't it kind of the Lord to send him to both of us? But I wouldn't have cared so much if I were married like you are."

"Never mind, Mary, the Lord will help you over your trouble; no doubt he will persuade Joe to have you even now."

"I wish he would," sobbed Mary.

"Don't cry, dear sister. You shall stop and live with us until we can see what can be done for you. Drink up your tea and make yourself at home. Zach will be here soon; he seems quite cut up over this affair of mine, and strange to say he does not speak a word to me. I believe he has been struck dumb with astonishment."

Time passed on merrily for three months, during which interval Betsy had written some heartrending letters to Joseph on behalf of her sister Mary. Joseph eventually believed his sweetheart's story and sent some money for her to ride home to Nazareth as quickly as possible.

Two or three days after Mary's departure, Betsy gave birth to a bouncing boy, and all her cousins and neighbors had a regular jollification to celebrate the wonderful event. Old Zach went about seemingly quite pleased, but never a word did he utter; he couldn't even offer up a prayer of thanksgiving. It was not until eight days after his wife's confinement that he opened his mouth. While the child was being circumcised some wanted to name him after his dad Zacharias, but Betsy said "No, his name shall be Jack." Then old Zacharias was appealed to, and he took a sheet of cream-laid notepaper and a pen, and he wrote "His name is John." His friends marvelled at this, for they thought the old fellow hadn't been to



school and could not write. Immediately after he had wiped his pen his mouth opened and he was able to speak. He at once dropped down on his knees and praised the Lord for his kindness for giving him a son.

Young Jack grew up to be a fine lad, and waxed strong in spirit. It was noticed at the time of his birth that he had a large head, and some thought that he had water on the brain. This proved to be a fact, for he was particularly fond of water. When his mother washed him, he always cried if she wanted to take him out of the tub. He fell in the water—but several times through looking in while his mother was absent. On other occasions he would walk barefooted in the gutters on rainy days, and when old enough he used to bathe in all the ponds he could find, and throw in all the dogs and cats he could get hold of and pretend he was baptising them. He often got into terrible scrapes with the neighbors, but when he began baptising all the little boys and girls the rage of the people got to such a climax that he had to escape into the wilderness of Judæa. Here he learnt the art of preaching. All he had for a congregation at first was a few wild rabbits, squirrels and monkeys, but after a few years he appears to have made a name for himself, and flocks of people came to listen to him and confessed their sins. He took them all down to the river Jordan and gave them a good ducking. John did such a roaring trade that he had to fit up some bathing machines for the upper classes, as they didn't care to be thrown in with some of the dirty Jews and Jewesses. Even if John the Baptist, Esq., had only charged a penny a dip he would have made his fortune, for he did not spend his money in riotous living, but subsisted on locusts and wild honey. He never even so much as indulged in a pork sausage by way of a change, neither would he partake of a savory bloater. He was quite content with honey all day long. What a sweet tooth John the Baptist must have had. Certainly, he had a little change, for he always ate locust for supper as it was not likely to lie heavy on his chest. He would wash it down with a pint of warm water and never on any account would he take anything stronger, for it was prophesied that he would drink neither wine or strong drink.

Jack the Baptist, Esq., was not such a masher as his father as regards dress, for according to the Bible his costume merely consisted of a leathern girdle round about his loins and a cloak made of camel's hair. He did not wear a tall hat, and to carry an umbrella was quite against his grain, for he wouldn't miss a drop of water to save his life.

He was now at the height of his popularity, and he had a special announcement to make to the multitude, so he marched about sandwiched between two boards, on which was inscribed: "Look out for Cousin Jesus; I am not worthy to unlatch his shoes. I baptise thee with water, but he shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost." The people all marvelled at John the Baptist's generosity in advertising his Cousin Jesus; but he had sold the business to Jesus, as he was getting tired of too much water. They had arranged between them to give a special performance, and he was to baptise his Cousin Jesus and pretend he was the son of God. John and Jesus had been rehearsing their parts in the wilderness by the help of a dove. They trained the bird to fly high in the air and suddenly descend on the head of Cousin Jesus, who could do a little ventriloquism.

The day arrived for the grand performance and thousands of people gathered on the banks of the Jordan as though there was going to be a great boat race. Jesus tucked up his trousers and marched boldly in the water, and John gracefully followed him. The bird had been previously sent up in the air, and when John the Baptist, Esq., saw the bird descending he ducked his cousin under the water, and as soon as Jesus came up again the bird dropped down and stood on his head, and appeared to say, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." The trick passed off all right, and everybody went away perfectly satisfied.

Although the baptising business was virtually handed over to Jesus after the above event, many people still patronised John the Baptist, Esq., but he sent most of his disciples to his cousin. John might have retired on his laurels, but unfortunately he uttered some disrespectful words about King Herod's sister-in-law, Mrs. Herodias, and he was put in prison. He would have been killed outright, only the king was afraid of the multitude, as they looked upon John as a kind of prophet. But when Herod's birthday arrived he gave a grand party at which Herodias's daughter danced so nicely and pleased him so much that he promised on oath that he would give her whatever she asked for. Mrs. Herodias instructed her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptist, Esq., and King Herod, not wishing to break his oath, ordered poor old John's head to be brought in on a dish and given to the young lady, and she took it to her mother, who was no doubt curious to see whether John had really got water on the brain. Some of his followers came and asked for his body and they gave him a very respectable funeral, not forgetting to throw several buckets of water over their old friend's corpse. Thus ended the career of one of the greatest benefactors of mankind, for if he did not cleanse the people of sin, he certainly induced them to have one wash during a lifetime.

SCOFFER.

## ARREST OF JAHVEH THE RIPPER.

AN elderly party, evidently of the Jewish persuasion, has been arrested near Petticoat Lane, Whitechapel. He gives the name of Jahveh, but is also known by various aliases, such as Adonai, Sabaoth, Elohim, and other Hebrew cognomens. He was discovered outside an à la mode beef establishment, and was so intent upon sniffing up the perfumes therefrom, that he failed to notice the detective who arrested him. On his person was discovered a number of Hebrew documents, which prove him to have been a most sanguinary wretch and the head of a horde of banditti, whom he incited to the most atrocious cruelties. The documents in question appear to be in the nature of instructions to the ripper's gang. Among these occur the words, "kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him," and "cursed be he that doeth the work of Jahveh deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his knife from blood." These documents appear to have been inspired by the direst forms of religious mania, and much of the matter contained in them is totally unfit for publication. They certainly show the prisoner to be a most callous and abandoned wretch, if not a raving lunatic. He seems to have authorised human sacrifices, and much bloodshed by his followers, and it is even said he offered up his only begotten son. Without prejudging the question whether he is the author or instigator of the Whitechapel murders, there is certainly a clear case for further inquiry.

## CONSULTING THE VIRGIN MARY.

BRIDGET Haggerty was in love with Michael McGeoghan, but her parents and the priest were set against the marriage. Biddy with tears entreated the priest to let the marriage ceremony be performed, but he was inexorable. At last, wearied out with her importunities, he told her to go to the chapel on Sunday night, and pray three times to the Virgin Mary, and if she said "Yes," the marriage should take place. Sunday night came, and devout Biddy went to the chapel and plumped down on her knees before the statue of the Holy Virgin. There were in the chapel two statues, one of the Virgin Mary, and another of Jesus Christ. The priest intended to be at the back of the Virgin, but coming late he had only time to ensconce himself behind the statue of Jesus. Biddy prayed fervently, and then asked: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, is it thy holy will and wish that I should be married to Michael McGeoghan?" A voice from behind the statue of Jesus cried out "No!" She prayed for the second time, but still the answer was unfavorable. For the third and last time she prayed, but still the voice said "No." Rising from her knees, Biddy turned from the statue of the Virgin to that of her Son and exclaimed, "Howly Jasus, shut up, and let your mother spake for herself."

## CURIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE ASHANTEES.

THE Ashantees have this tradition, and on it their religious opinions are built: In the beginning of the world God created three white men and three white women, three black men and three black women. That these twelve human souls might not complain of divine partiality and of their separate conditions, God elected that they should determine their own fates by their own choice of good and evil. A large calabash, or gourd, was placed by God on the ground, and close by the side of the calabash also a small folded piece of paper. God ruled that the black man should have the first choice. He chose the calabash, because he expected the calabash, being so large, could not but contain everything needful for himself. He opened the calabash, and found a scrap of gold, a scrap of iron, and several other metals of which he did not understand the use. The white man had no option. He took, of course, the small folded piece of paper; and discovered that, on being unfolded, it revealed a boundless stock of knowledge. God then left the black men and women in the bush, and led the white men and women to the seashore. He did not forsake the white men and women, but communicated with them every night; and taught them how to construct a ship; and how to sail from Africa to another country—for the circumstances of the dispensation happened in the heart of Africa. After a while they returned to Africa with various kinds of merchandise, which they bartered to the black men and women, who had the opportunity of being greater and wiser than the white men and women, but who, out of sheer avidity, had thrown away their chance.

"Ah," said the superintendent, "and here is Tommy Goodboy's missionary offering, 27 dols. 50 cents. That will make some little heathen hearts glad. Now tell us how you got this money, Tommy." "Yes, sir," said Tommy, speaking up loud and distinctly like a good boy that he was, "part of it pa won on 'change, some of it ma won on a crazy quilt raffle, some of it sister Laura won at progressive euchre, two dollars brother Bill won on the horse race, twenty cents I got for marbles I won playin' keeps, and the rest I won in a grab bag and a prize cake at a church fair." After a brief consultation the brethren decided that they would send the money to the heathen, but wouldn't tell them how it was raked in. There are some things in modern Christianity it isn't best even for the heathen to know.



## THE UNFORTUNATE PRINCE.

A TALE.

[During the year of grace 1888, Dr. Voelkel, the able Free-thought lecturer and editor of the *Neues Freireligiöses Sonntags-Blatt*, Magdeburg, was tried on a charge of "indirect blasphemy, gross insult of Christian doctrine, and abuse of the Bible," contained in a tale entitled "Der Unglückliche Erbprinz." The case was heard with closed doors, but Dr. Voelkel obtained a verdict of "Not Guilty." We publish a translation of the indicted story.]

ONCE upon a time there was born an hereditary prince, and his name was Man. He was promised all the power and glory on earth and was to be invested in them the day on which he would marry Princess Liberty, who was of the same age. The bringing up of Prince Man was entrusted by the Lord God to Uncle State and Aunt Church, a husband and wife who had been living in heaven from all eternity.



They were, however, a malicious uncle and a wicked aunt. They hated poor Princess Liberty, and, longing to possess all the power and glory themselves, they would take care to prevent the Prince ever getting out of leading strings and becoming acquainted with Princess Liberty.

And a very strange affair it was. The Prince having grown up a tall, strong lad, desired to eat roast meat and drink wine, but he was still nourished with ewe's milk. He desired to climb trees and swim through the river, but he was still swaddled like a baby; and when he kicked and complained he was threatened with the black man,

or else the sugar-stick of Patience was put in his mouth.



Now Aunt Church had engaged a maid called Science, who behaved quite submissively, but she was really also a princess and was faithfully attached to her sister Liberty. One day the Prince asked of her his age, and the maid told him he was many thousand years old. The malevolent aunt having heard this, the poor servant was much scolded and beaten, and shut in the dark chamber, whilst the lad, although an hereditary prince, was every day called a stupid little boy.

The good and faithful maid got weary of her sufferings. She ran from the house, and thenceforth living in the fresh

air, grew very tall and pretty. At night she went secretly to the Prince, taught him to read, and told him about the wonders of the sky and many other beautiful things.

Prince Man now became aware of his strength. He tore his swaddling clothes to pieces, and although they punished him severely with the rod of the law, they could no longer restrain him. They were compelled to give him his first breeches and allow him to walk in the garden.



"He feels his strength, we must give him some occupation," said the malicious uncle to the wicked aunt. So they put a stripe to his breeches, and gave him a colored coat and a sabre. He could now run to his heart's content against trees and rocks. And when he lit himself with his own sword and fell to the ground badly hurt Uncle State praised him, for he thought he could in this way repress the lad. But when the Prince tried to

climb the wall which separated the garden from the realm of Princess Liberty he was again forcibly put into swaddling clothes, which they wrapped so tightly that his flesh was cut, and he cried he would never do it again.

In order that he should not become too wild, and having learnt to read, Aunt Church put in his hands a charm book which makes everyone blind and lame who reads it three times. But there was a leaf in the book that contained a counter charm, and this leaf, which the bad aunt had forgotten to tear out, was read by the Prince in preference to all the other leaves in the charm book, for it treated of love.

"I desire a sweetheart; I will marry," said Prince Man one day to the evil-minded old couple. This terrified them immensely, for they knew very well that their dominion was in danger. They sent to the chamber of the Prince, who had long been a tall strong young man, at the same time three maids



named Faith, Hope, and Charity. But though they could look devoutly towards heaven, they had neither flesh nor bones, and our Prince turned sadly away from them.



At that time it happened that the two old people often had shocking quarrels about the allowance and the jewels which by right belonged to the Prince. When they were engaged in one of these bickerings, the Prince quickly climbed up a high tree and looked over the garden wall. Ah, what did he see! The sun shining and glittering, the birds singing joyous songs on all the trees, huge blossoms exhaling wonderfully sweet perfume. And in all this glory the fair Princess Liberty was walking, her golden hair flowing about her. From her large proud eyes a dazzling flame darted to the heart of the Prince. Sister Science touched with a magic wand the wall, making it fall with a crash. The youth leaped boldly over the ruins, embraced the Princess and kissed her, holding her closely pressed to his heart, fondly fancying they had been united for ever.

But Uncle State and Aunt Church had hastened to the spot in the greatest rage, surrounded by the colossal army of priests, monks, knights, officers, jailors, and soldiers, in short by all the detestable demons that were kept in the pay of the malicious couple for the protection of their dishonest rule.

Alas, alas, what a dreadful fight! Of what avail Prince Man's strong fists, what use was Liberty's flaming sword? From behind these legions seized the lovers, twined ropes around their bodies, stupefied their senses with vapors of incense, and with sceptres broke their noble limbs.

The Prince was cast into the darkest prison chamber, and when Uncle State did not beat him with a stick, Aunt Church preached



to him a sermon with much worse effect. Science having been reduced to an abject state, entered into service again, and Liberty, bleeding and soiled with the dirt of scorn, fled far, far away, exiled, broken-hearted, dying.

Dead? No. Sometimes, in the quiet hours of the night, when Prince Man was in terrible pain and thought of his distress and misery, the nightingale would sing to him a song of Princess Liberty betrayed and sold, and the loud, sweet tones would cause his heart to melt in tears of love. And oftentimes a joyful ray of light would struggle through the prison bars and proclaim to him that Liberty was living still and would get well again—he should yet call her his own.



Then his heart rejoiced, and he, in fetters, sang a proud and hopeful song of the time to come.

"That was a sad tale," said the child to whom I told it, "there is not even a wedding in it."

"Yes, my child, and much more so because the tale is true, and has happened more than once, and will happen again and again."

"Is there no end to it?" asked the child.

"Oh yes, for you and me. When we are in the grave, the tale is at an end,"

R. R.



# THE STORY OF MAN.

## I.—ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE.

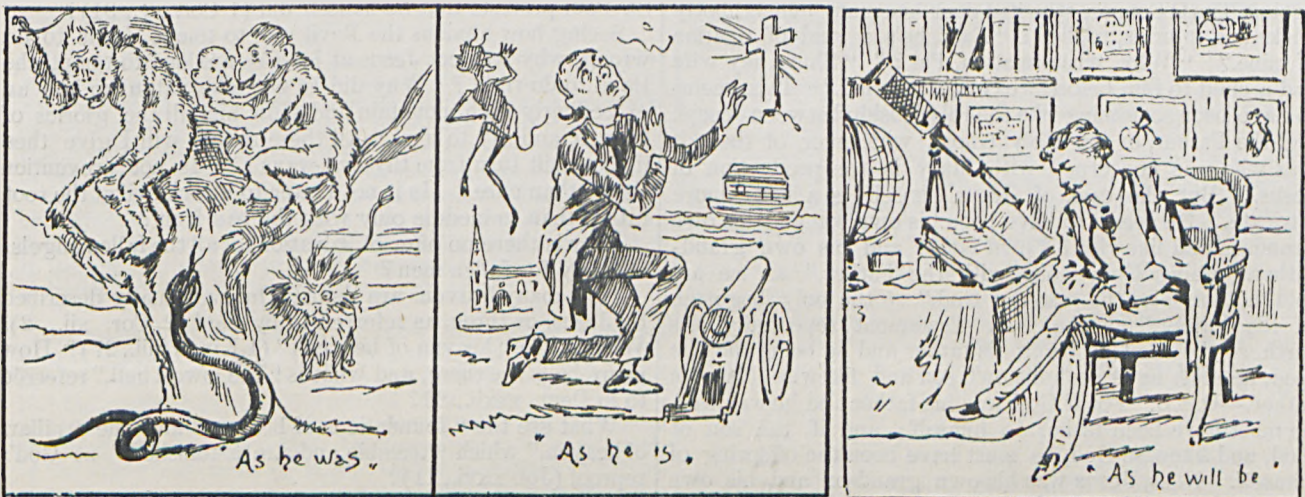


Once innocent and happy.

Now hopelessly degenerate and degraded.

The eternal future.

## II.—ACCORDING TO SCIENCE.



The lowly past.

Ascending in spite of superstition,

Intellectual, humane and happy.



### MOSES THE STONE-MASON.

And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him.—EXODUS XXXIV., 4.



## GOD'S RELATIONS.

THE Trinity, says Bishop Beveridge, is "a soul-absorbing mystery," and one revealed only to the angels. There is always a fascination about a mystery, however, and ever since the Pope permitted the Duke of Aosta to marry his own niece I have been meditating about the relationship of Jesus, Jehovah, the Holy Ghost, and the Virgin Mary, to the peril of my immortal soul, and at the imminent danger of committing the mysterious sin against the third and most nebulous portion of the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity.

Why the Church should be so vehement against marriage with a deceased wife's sister, I never could make out, for not only is a brother distinctly commanded in Scripture to take his deceased brother's wife, under pain of her spitting in his face (Deut. xxv., 5-9), but Jehovah himself is said, like his favorite Jacob, to have been the husband of two sisters at the same time (Ezekiel xxiii). Paul goes a good deal further, and seems to permit a man to marry his own daughter: at least if this is not the meaning of the Revised Version of 1 Cor. vii., 36, I should much like to know what it does mean.

But the man whose father married the daughter of his son's wife, and thus became his own grandson, scarcely complicated relationships more than Jehovah in that unfortunate business with the carpenter's wife. The relation of Joseph to Jehovah is comparatively a simple matter. Pat Murphy being asked why he did not take proceedings against Tim O'Connor, who had done him many unneighborly tricks and injuries, replied: "Faix, he's a kind of relation of mine." "Why, what relation, Pat?" "Shure, my wife had a child to him before we were married." This seems to have been something like the relationship between Joseph and the Father, or the Holy Ghost, whichever of them it was who was concerned with Mary in the production of Jesus. But the case of Jesus himself is a little more intricate. He seems to have been his own son and his own grandson and likewise his own father and his own grandfather. Being God, "one with the Father," as we are told, he was also the "son of God." "the only begotten of the Father," as the New Testament repeatedly sets forth, so the one God being his father and he being the one God, he must have been his own son and likewise his own father.—Q.E.D. For if God was his father and he was God, he must have been father to himself; and if the son of God, and likewise God, he must have been the offspring of himself. Next, Jesus was his own grandson and his own grandfather. He taught his disciples to pray to "Our Father," and if God be, as asserted the Father of all, Mary must have been his daughter, and if so, her son was in consequence God's grandson. But Jesus being God himself, was, as the son of Mary, God's grandson, and as God, the father of all, he was necessarily his own grandfather.—Q.E.D.

The question then arises—What relation did the Virgin Mary sustain to Jesus? Evidently she was at once his mother, his daughter, and his sister. His mother by parental descent; his daughter, as being the daughter of God, as previously demonstrated, she was necessarily the daughter of Jesus; and, thirdly, his sister as being the son of God and she his daughter, the two must consequently be brother and sister. But this is not the whole truth, to ascertain which we must inquire into the relationship existing between Mary and Jehovah, who, it must never be forgotten, is one with Jesus. We are here confronted with the fact that Mary was at once the daughter, wife or spouse, mother and sister of God. She was his daughter, as previously indicated; his wife, inasmuch as being the mother of Jesus, she must have been God's wife or his mistress; and although the particulars related in Matthew and Luke, casting doubts upon the legitimacy of Jesus, might induce one to give her a worse name, that of wife to the father of her son seems the most charitable. She was, in addition, God's sister, being, as before demonstrated, the sister of Jesus, who was very God of very God.

How far I am from having exhausted this momentous inquiry is evident from the consideration that whereas pious Catholics term the Virgin Mary the "Mother of God," yet more devout Christians have not scrupled to call Saint Ann, the Virgin's mother, "Grandmother of the eternal God." Every consideration which goes to show that Jesus was his own mother's father, proves that he was in the same relation to his grandmother and his grandmother's grandmother, *ad infinitum*. There is also the position

of the Holy Ghost to be considered. The Christian world is already divided upon the question whether he proceeds from the Father alone or from the Father and the Son, and there is the further question as to whether the Son proceeded from him or from the Father.

J. M. WHEELER.

## SOME BIBLE QUESTIONS.

SEEING that casting out devils and prophesying may be works of iniquity, or may be freely done by "workers of iniquity" (see Matt. vii., 22, 23), why does Jesus appeal to such works as his evidence?

Was Isaiah advocating vegetarianism when he said, "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man" (Isaiah lxvi., 3)?

Where are "the precious things put forth by the moon," spoken of in Deut. xxxiii., 14?

How did Aaron manage to die twice (Deut. x., 6; Num. xx., 25, 28)? Was it to make up for Enoch's not dying once?

How did the giant Goliath manage to die twice by the hands of different people (1 Sam. xvii., 4, 50; 2 Sam. xxi., 19, Revised Version)? Aaron was a sacred sort of individual who was used to working miracles, but Goliath was a profane outsider. If Aaron and Goliath had had a little more practice, could they have managed to "die daily," as St. Paul protests that he himself did (1 Cor. xv., 31)?

Seeing how anxious the Devil was to tempt Jesus to do wrong, why was not Jesus at least as anxious to tempt the Devil to do right? Why did he not take Satan up into an exceedingly high mountain and show him all the glories of heaven, and say to him, "All these things will I give thee if thou wilt turn from thy evil ways?" Is not prevention better than cure? Is it not better to attack evil at the root rather than to meddle only with the bad fruit?

Why is there no offer of salvation for all the fallen angels, but only for fallen men?

How many heavens are there? One, as usually described by Jesus, or three, as referred to by Paul (2 Cor. xii., 2)? What is the "heaven of heavens" (1 Kings viii., 27)? How many hells are there, and what is "the lowest hell," referred to in Deut. xxxii., 22?

What are the "foundations of heaven," and the "pillars of heaven," which "tremble and are astonished" at God's reproof (Job xxvi., 11)?

Are "the bottles of heaven" pint bottles or quarts (Job xxxviii., 37)?

Who takes the contract for glazing the "windows of heaven" which God opened to let the deluge pour through?

Being a man of peace who turned the other cheek also, why did Jesus scourge the money-changers and others from the temple? Why did he also "hide himself" (John xii., 36)?

According to the Protestant Bible the great message of Jesus was "*Repent*, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Roman Catholic Bible says the message was "*Do penance*, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Which interpretation is right, and will people be damned because they happened to get hold of the wrong interpretation?

Was Christ praising teetotalism or alcoholism when he said "Blessed are the poor *in spirit*"? The blessedness of being in liquor is certainly a widely-received notion.

If Christ came to save the world how is it that the world is not saved, and that the greater part of mankind have never even heard his name? If God wills not that any should perish, how is it that the majority are to perish everlastingly? Why does he make the road to salvation narrow and difficult, so that few traverse it, while he makes the road to destruction broad and easy and attractive, so that the many are led away thereby?

How did David manage to save up gold and silver to the amount of over a thousand million pounds sterling? (1 Chron. xxii., 14.) Did any other king ever accumulate half as much? If the Bible statements are true, why don't historians recognise that David and Solomon were by far the richest kings that ever lived? How did David save a thousand millions in forty years out of a national revenue which at the highest only amounted to four or five millions? How did Solomon manage to spend the thousand million pounds in building a house to the Lord no bigger than a small-sized chapel, 90 feet long and 30 wide and 45 high (1 Kings vi., 2)?

W. P. BALL.



**MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE.**

(With apologies to the "Star.")

Mr. Adam and Mrs. Eve were the first lady and gentleman to hold a garden party. Not many guests were invited, but two of the greatest characters on record were present. It is rumored that a dreadful fracas ensued over some fruit, and the host and hostess never gave a second garden party, especially as they had to give up possession of their palatial residence on account of this unforeseen and unfortunate occurrence.

This worthy couple had two stalwart sons, Cain and Abel; and we have it on good authority that on account of jealousy these two young gentlemen fought a duel, in which Abel was killed; some say that he was murdered, but that is a mere canard.

Nevertheless, Cain fled to the Land of Nod, where he found a charming wife. She was a dark, handsome creature, with hazel eyes, and had an abundance of hair that was the envy of all her companions. Her accomplishments were many; she had splendid teeth, and she could crack nuts to perfection. But what she most excelled in was climbing and jumping—in fact, she was just like a monkey.

Mrs. Eve was not particularly fond of her beautiful daughter-in-law, and we are sorry to say she never introduced her to society. Yet she ought to have been proud of her, seeing that she had no daughters of her own until she reached the ripe old age of 900. Her husband died at the age of 930. We don't know whether the old lady ever married again. Unfortunately for her, there were not many marriageable young lords in those days.

It is perhaps worth noting that the largest vessel ever constructed was made by a certain Mr. Noah. It was capable of holding two of every living creature on the face of the earth, and enough food to last the whole lot for 200 days. The vessel was made under the superintendence of the greatest architect of the day, who particularly studied the sanitary arrangements—for the vessel or ark not only had one door, but it also boasted of a window two feet square which was opened once in six months. We omitted to state that Noah and his family lived in the ark, and strange to relate they came out alive and strong in health. The animals also were pretty hearty.

It may interest our readers to know that Father Abraham was, in his prime, a tall, well-built man, and he moved in good society. He had iron grey hair and a long flowing beard, and had the typical face of a Whitechapel Jew. He was born at a place called Ur, but we cannot discover at what college he was educated. He married a dark, handsome young lady, rejoicing in the aristocratic name of Sarah. When travelling in Egypt, just after his marriage, he gallantly passed his wife off as his sister, so as to save his own life, not caring much for his wife's honor; he even allowed her to be taken into King Pharaoh's house while he waited outside.

Abraham was a very godly man, and it is believed that he acted for some time as scripture reader. He was a religious fanatic, for we hear on good authority that he attempted to offer up his son Isaac as a living sacrifice. Luckily he was interrupted in his murderous intention, or he might figure in the Chamber of Horrors.

The young man Isaac was of medium height, with very dark curly hair. He, according to a Society journal, fell in love with a handsome little Jewess named Rebecca, who had been educated at a first-class boarding-school, and although she could not touch the piano, she was an accomplished Jew-harp player. On her marriage she was presented with a splendid trousseau and jewels in abundance, including a nose-ring.

We might add that Rebecca was the first lady who had twins—two bouncing boys, Esau and Jacob. Esau grew up to be a fine manly fellow; he was very shaggy, something like a Shetland pony; but he was a clever hunter and a crack shot. Jacob was a plain, smooth, oily individual, and would have made an excellent Uriah Heap.

Perhaps it is not generally known that Jacob had to work seven years for his uncle to obtain his cousin for wife, and then he got the wrong one, and had to serve another seven years to obtain the one he really wanted. But he managed to swindle his uncle out of some money before he took his departure.

Joseph was the pet son of the gentleman mentioned above. He was a very noted character in his day—at least his coat was. We have good reason for knowing that it was not made at Poole's, but are strongly of opinion that it came from a sweater's den; anyhow it was made by 60 Jews, and each had to find his own material—hence the variety of colors. Joseph was what is vulgarly termed a masher, and he was envied by all his brethren. He was a handsome young fellow,

except that his nose was rather hooked and his lips much too thick. Joseph aspired to the stage, but his brethren thought he was more adapted for the pit.

Moses the magician was a very majestic person in his way. At the height of his popularity, we understand, he wore a fantastic robe and a skull cap. He had long wavy hair and mutton-chop whiskers. He was probably a great success at private entertainments or children's parties. He was the cleverest trickster of his day. He could get water out of a rock, and we believe he could, like some Jews, get blood out of a stone.

The man after God's own heart was David. He was only thirty years old when he was made king of Israel. He was a handsome man, a psalm writer, champion harpist and a good dancer. We understand that he waltzed almost naked round the ark of the Lord, and a young lady witnessed this indecent performance. King David fell in love with a young married woman, and he had her husband put in the forefront of a battle to be killed. He was quite the ladies' man; even at his death he had a young damsel put in bed with him to make him warm.

One of the strongest men on record was the great Samson. He was a splendidly made fellow, with muscles like iron. He ran off with the gates of the city on his back. But it was as a marksman he made his reputation, for he slew a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. Samson had a splendid head of hair, but someone cut it all off while he was asleep, and when he lost that his strength left him. He also lost his eyes, for he had them cut out. But Samson had his revenge, for his hair began to sprout out again, and he managed to pull a large building down on himself and his enemies and thus finished his wonderful career.

King Solomon was the wisest man on earth. He built the costliest temple ever known; he was also a literary man, for we understand that he wrote many songs which are said to be very indecent. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines. What a pity he did not live to send an article to the *Daily Telegraph* on "Is Marriage a Failure?" He would be a good authority on the subject.

One of the most unfortunate individuals was poor Mr. Job. He had to undergo all kinds of torments just for the sake of settling a dispute between God Almighty and the Devil. He was smothered with boils from head to foot. He tried all the patent medicines he could get, but without avail, and all he could do was to grin and bear it. Against he got woff it was nearly time for him to die. Such is luck.

The 25th of December is supposed to be the birthday of Mr. J. Christ. He was a very affable young man, and somewhat feminine in his style. Some evil disposed persons pretend that he was not quite right in his mind. He worked no end of miracles, and his company was much sought after for wedding parties, because he was clever at turning water into wine. Thousands of people get drunk on this gentleman's birthday to show their love and respect for him.

**THE ISRAELITES IN THE DESERT.**

THE FIRST PERSONALLY CONDUCTED TOUR ON RECORD.  
*Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.—DEUT. viii., 4.*

I BING of Moses and his mob who scored one on Pharaoh's fob,  
And wandered in the desert forty years.  
But it really is provoking, I think Moeey must be joking,  
When he tells us of that tramping and those tears.  
For by ordinary walking, a man that had no baulking  
Would have cleared that little desert in a week;  
But then the tale could not be told, of the clothes that ne'er grew  
old,  
And the boots that ne'er wore out upon the feet.  
For those that went in babies, came out great brawny ladies,  
Their tidy-iddy frocks still edged with fancy lace.  
And the burly warrior of forty, who'd in childhood oft been  
naughty,  
Looked pitiful in drawers with marks of shame upon his face.  
Others still wore suits so puffy, and those woollen shoes so stuffy,  
With sundry other things too delicate to state.  
Oh, Mo! there must be something wrong to write like this so  
strong,  
A tale too thin and slender for any ordinary pate,  
We know you in full song—perhaps you'd taken drinks called  
"long."  
If you'd even shown a sigh of woe, and returned to your "old  
clo,"  
All might then have been more square, and you'd have ascended  
thro' the air,  
Instead of perhaps being sent unto the regions down below;  
And your body buried fair, instead of the "devil now knows  
where."  
And your character for truth would be a little on the rise,  
Whereas now you've earned the fame of being grandfather of all  
lies.



# THE STAR IN THE EAST.

AN OLD CHRISTMAS STORY.



1. The Wise Men follow the Star.



2. The Star rests on an Inn.



3. The Wise Men enter.



4. They find a King in a Manger.



5. They give him Presents.



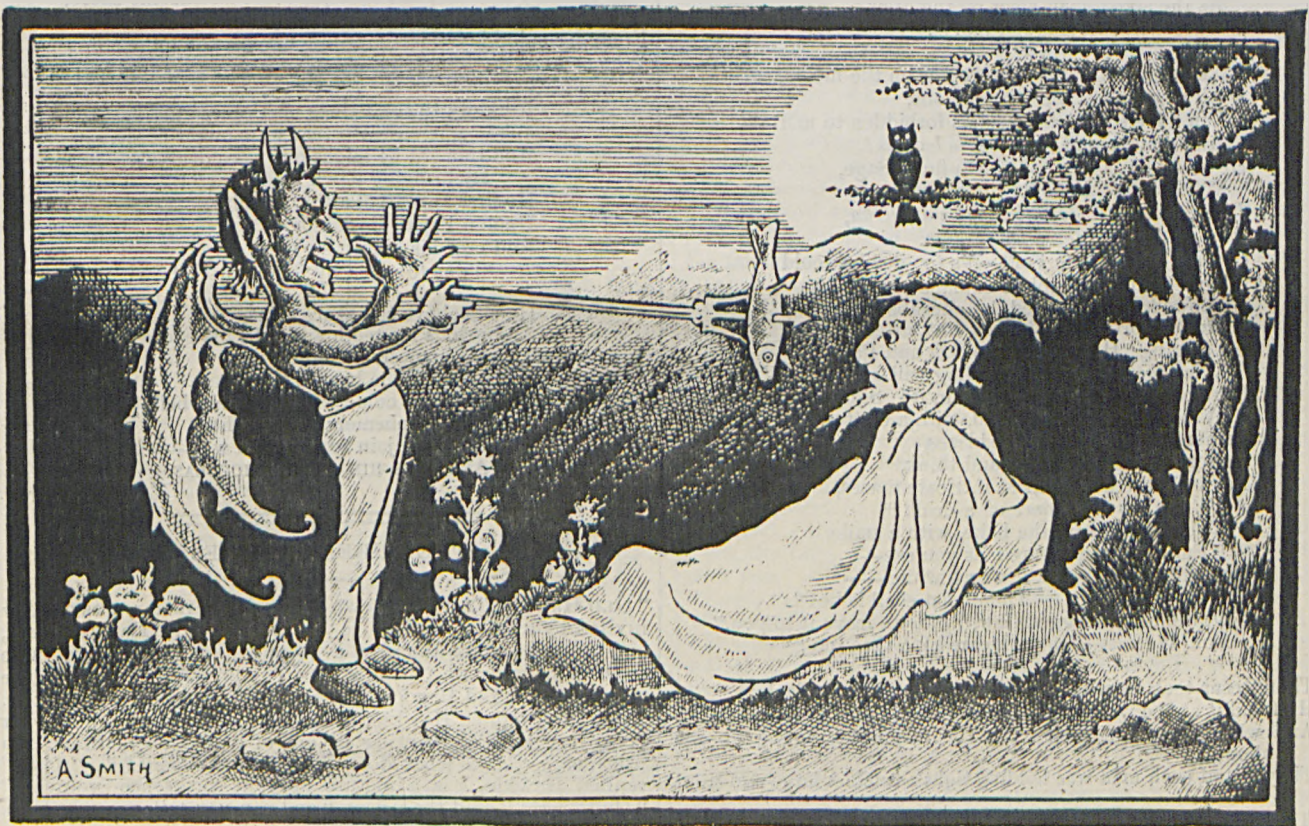
6. Homeward Bound.





CATCH ME WHO CAN.

*Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.—Exodus xxii., 18.*



J. C.'S TEMPTATION.

*Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungry. . . . Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. —MATT. IV., 1, 2, 7.*



## THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM.

Being the only TRUE account of Noël Number One.

ALL OTHERS ARE FORGERIES.

ONCE in Rorty David's city  
Stood a dirty cattle-shed,  
Where arrived a mystic baby  
With a halo round its head.  
Mary was its artful ma,  
She alone could name its pa.

Though the babe long expected had finally come,  
'This didn't bring comfort to Mary;  
For he wouldn't drink milk undiluted with rum,  
Possessed all his teeth, and was hairy.  
He puzzled the doctor with questions abstruse,  
Could jabber in Spanish and French,  
Told badly-used Joseph to "go to the deuce,"  
And called Mrs. Jahveh "Old Wench!"

The former was reading his "paper"  
While Mary re-footed his socks;  
The baby lay watching the taper,  
And sulkily chowing his locks—  
For a long flannel wrap still invested the chap,  
Though he said he was "ready for frocks."  
The flickering candle burned faintly;  
Joe's peepers began to feel sore,  
And he growled in a manner unsaintly,  
"I can't read a paragraph more!"  
He had put down his pipe, his glasses to wipe,  
When there came a loud knock at the door.

The knocking continued, and raised such a din  
That the strangers from Nazareth hollered "Come in!"

Then in rushed a loud and uproarious crowd  
Of bucolic, inelegant Jews;  
Who shouted in chorus, "Behold him before us!  
Thrice welcome to Bethlehem Mews!  
Come, tip us your slipper, Omnipotent Nipper—  
Our rudeness we hope you'll excuse."

Said the babe, as he skipped from his manger  
And made a most affable bow,  
"Your mode of addressing a stranger  
Affects me I cannot say how.  
But how did you know me? or light on me? Blow me!  
I'm bothered completely, I vow!"

Here, a swivel-eyed, bandy-legg'd Jew,  
With a nose of ineffable glory,  
As the spokesman-elect of the crew  
Related this singular story:

"We respectable Boors were out on the moors,  
All superintending our muttuns,  
When wide swung the portals forbidden to mortals,  
And down came an angel in buttons!  
He said 'I'm a page of the Infinite Sage,  
Who sends this polite invitation—  
Please visit my son at the Maggie and Gun,  
If you're good for a jollification.  
(I must back to the Fold—it's too devilish cold  
To attempt a complete explanation).'  
He bowed and ascended, by cherubs attended,  
Much shorter than he was, but fatter;  
All singing 'Hurrah for the Son and Papa,  
Who beef and plum-pudding will scatter—'  
Here came a loud roar—'Damn it! Shut the front door!'  
Which they hurriedly did, with a clatter.  
So here we all bolted, like blazes,  
Not staying to ponder and think,  
For we'd thread the most intricate mazes,  
To get but the chance of a drink!"  
"Well! well!" said the babe, with a smile,  
"I'm quite unprepared, as you see—  
But still, if you think it worth while—  
You do? Good! Then what shall it be?"  
Said the bandy-legged Jew, "Sir, we leave it to you."  
And the rest said (in Hebrew), "Oui, oui!"

Then Jesus took from off a shelf a bottle old and black;  
He filled it at the water-tap—the shepherds said "Good luck!"  
And while they wondered what the deuce the young 'un was  
about,  
They found each man was holding tight a tumbler large and stout.

The bottle held about a pint, and yet, in scarce a minute,  
Each thumping tumbler held a pint-an'-half of something in it;  
And eyes and nose, the story goes, proclaimed to everybody  
That what they held, and saw and smelled, was screeching  
whiskey-toddy.

"Now here's a toast," exclaimed the host: "My Brother Shep-herd Men!

You see I've come to find my flock, and take 'em home again."  
They drank the toast with three times three, and swore the brew  
was "fizzing."

It "made one's fire-box feel red-hot" and "set their clock-work  
whizzing."

"We toast yourself," the spokesman said, "your step-dad and  
his missis;  
And eke the tap from which you drew such stunning stuff as  
this is."

One shepherd sought the self-same tap, burglariously inclined,  
But found it ran with water of a pestilential kind.

The Savior proved a genial boy; he tipped a comic stave,  
Performed surprising conjuring tricks and "dark séances" gave.  
He drew cigars from pickle-jars, and helped his guests to  
smoke 'em,  
And if the smoke got down their throats, would mercilessly  
joke 'em.

The Blessed Maid had long succumbed, and snored within her  
bunk;  
Old Joseph lay, with scarlet face, beneath the table, drunk;  
And even gods must have their nap, so Jesus said, "Gay cocks,  
My dad's dead nuts on mutton chops. Be off! and guard your  
flocks!"

The bibulous suite were soon on their feet,  
For the fact they'd entirely forgotten;  
And thoughts of "the sack" were aroused in a crack  
By the words of the Only-Begotten.  
"Still, ere we decamp," said the swivel-eyed scamp,  
"To our chilly and desolate shake-down,  
We'll have a drop more, and perform on the floor  
King David's unparalleled breakdown."  
With a throat-splitting yell, like the demons in hell,  
They danced round the gratified scion,  
Who said, as he listened, "May Satan be christened,  
If this isn't equal to Zion!"

They wished him a tearful good-bye,  
And finished by trying to bellow,  
In a key that was varied and high—  
"For he is a jolly good fellow!"

Then off like a shot went the bibulous lot,  
'The impetus helped to support 'em;  
Had they slackened or stopped, they had certainly dropped,  
And the watch would have probably caught 'em.  
They told as they ran the Glad Tidings to man,  
Who didn't seem happy to hear it:  
But shouted "Police! Here's a breach of the peace!  
These people are full of the spirit!"

And meanwhile from the stable proceeds a fearsome snore,  
From Mary on her mattress and Joseph on the floor;  
From Jesus in his fodder-box, and, maybe, from the cows,  
Who shared the slimy tenement with barn-yard fowls and sows.

All glory to the Prince of Peace,  
Who came on earth that wars might cease,  
And thought he might our woes decrease,  
By bringing down "a sword!"  
He first appeared, attired in clay,  
Upon a Pagan Festal Day,  
And now his brazen servants say  
'Twas founded by their Lord!!!

He sits above the azure skies,  
And grinds his teeth and rolls his eyes  
To hear explosive laughter rise,  
When Bible hoaxes tickle us.  
One day he'll come with book and bell  
To send blasphemers down to hell.  
I hope they'll join to kick him well—  
AND PASS HIM ON TO NICHOLAS.

EX-RITUALIST.

## THE THREE PICTURES.

"OLD HAWKIE," a well-known Glasgow character, was one day  
invited by a priest to come to his house. Old Hawkie went,  
and the priest took him into a room where there were three  
pictures hanging up on the wall. The priest, pointing to the  
middle one, asked Hawkie if he knew whom it represented.  
"Oh, yes," replied Hawkie, "that is a picture of our Savior  
being crucified." Pointing to one of the other pictures, the  
priest said, "And what does this one represent?" "That,"  
replied Hawkie, "is a picture of your reverence yourself."  
"Quite right," said the priest, "and can you tell me who this  
is?" pointing to the other picture. "Oh, yes," replied Hawkie,  
"that is his Holiness the Pope." "Quite right. Now tell me,  
what do you think of them?" "Well," replied Hawkie, "I  
always heard that Christ was crucified between two thieves,  
but I never knew their names before."



**A GROWL FROM GOD THE FATHER.**

[We received the following extraordinary effusion, just before going to press, through the ceiling of our sanctum, in a terrific clap of thunder, which rusted the scissors, turned the paste sour and the ink green, and frightened the printer's devil into fits.]

SIR,—As you are the editor of the only paper in the world that does me common justice, and refuses to join in the sickening and fulsome adulation of my prig of a son, I have determined to write and ask you to allow me to ventilate my grievances through the columns of your invaluable paper.

I've no doubt that many people think that to be a God is an awfully jolly thing, and to have nothing to do but listen to singing all day is purely delightful; but they would alter their tone if they had been at it all the years I have. True, it has given me a wonderful ear for music; but even that is a nuisance. Only yesterday they were singing an anthem consisting of the remark, "I could do with a penn'orth of ice-cream," contorted into many and various sentences after the manner of your English anthem-writers, when one of the choir—I think his name was Wagner—sang a note flat. Why, 'twas awful. After hearing ceaseless streams of perfect music for millions and billions of years, to hear a flat note—G-r-r-r-ch—I can't bear to think of it. Never mind, though; I chucked my crown at his head and gave him "Two lovely black eyes."

Then there's that son of mine, Jesus. He's a perfect nuisance. You should see the airs he puts on. A fortnight ago he came down to Earth to have a look round, and found his way to London. He went round Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square, spent the evening at the Oxford, and arrived here the next morning looking jaded and seedy, without a blessed denarius in his pocket. Now he goes strolling down Mount Olivet Street, togged out in the newest fashions, with a lot of celestial mashers and mashresses of more than doubtful reputation. Only last night he met Mrs. Hannah More taking her harp to be mended, and actually had the impudence to say to her, "Bai Jove! Tottie, will you come and have a drink?" It's simply scandalous, you know. Then he isn't at all respectful to me. He calls me an "old fossil," pulls my beard without the slightest provocation, and sends caricatures of me with three hats on, and a villainous Semitic cast of countenance, to the celestial comic paper, *The Holy Ghost's Half-holiday*. I can't stand it much longer. Either he or I will have to resign.

But even Jesus is, I think, preferable to that palpable idiot of a Ghost—the "foggy member," as you humorously design him. Jesus you can see, so you know what you're about, and know when you can safely snub him, and when it's advisable to get behind the throne, but you never knew where this Ghost is or what he is doing. I must tell you, as you appear to know very little about him, that he is able to become invisible just when he pleases. Last Sunday, for instance, I was having a spiritual conversation with Catherine of Russia, and was imprinting a fatherly kiss on her chaste lips when with a diabolic Ha! ha! who should appear through a crack in the wall than that fiend of a Holy Ghost—really I must have that plaster seen to. Then he goes out on the loose just when he likes, and pops into our houses through chinks and keyholes without a "with your leave," or "by your leave." I can tell you it's no joke having a Ghost on the premises.

Then there's Mary. She's always disgracing the family by dressing as if she was nineteen instead of nineteen hundred, and trotting out with all the young mashers, who are green enough to be taken in by her paint and powder. Poor old Joe! I pity him. He's hardly got a hair left on his head. She's torn 'em out to make her a dress-improver.

But I might keep on for ever. I might tell you about Noah, how he's always getting drunk, how David and Solomon are running a kind of Brigham Young show—only more so—how the latter goes on at a low music-hall and sings suggestive songs; how John the Baptist is employed by an illusionist as the "bodiless man," and so on *ad libitum et infinitum*. But I know that editors are stern and unrelenting men, that shears are sharp, and space is limited. Taking this into consideration, therefore, I must conclude, hoping you will aid me to air my grievance.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

JEHOVAH JIREH,  
+ His Mark.

Written at the Old'un's dictation, by yours truly,  
MAHERSHALALHASHBAZ SMITH,  
(The Old'un's Private Secretary.)

**A MONUMENT TO ADAM.**

SOME Congressman has announced his intention to introduce a bill providing for the erection of a monument to Adam. It will be a sad day for Adam when this scheme is accomplished. Respect for the father of the human race has heretofore prevented any very close scrutiny of the life and character of Adam, but an effort to build a monument to his memory will be likely to set investigations on foot that may result in placing that gentleman's reputation in a very unfavorable light.

One might think that after a lapse of so many years the veil of charity might well be thrown over one who, however much he may have erred, might truthfully claim that he had no

human precedents to guide him, and that all would cheerfully concur in a movement to perpetuate the memory, through lasting marble or enduring bronze, of the first man of his time, or any other time that we have any record of. But such is likely not to be the fact. Adam must take his chances with all other men to whom monuments are erected.

How much this is due to cankering envy and how much to an honest desire that men rendered monumentally conspicuous should stand upon their own merits as well as upon a pedestal, it is difficult to determine, but we are satisfied that the former sentiment is largely responsible for it.

There are plenty of men so blown up with self-pride, so permeated with a sense of their own importance and superiority that they think the race ought by good right to date from their nativity, that they sneer at a monument to Adam or anyone else but themselves. They demand to know what Adam did to merit a monument, aside from casting a unanimous vote for himself for all the offices in Eden, and laying the foundations for a race of beings who can never cease to regret that such a man named Adam was ever born.

Men who have always charged their own mistakes to their wives, openly taunt Adam with his cowardice in laying that little transaction in fall apples to Eve and trying to sneak out of all responsibility himself. We are far from attempting an entire exculpation of Adam in this notorious affair, but perhaps there were extenuating circumstances of which we know nothing.

Perhaps Adam was passionately fond of mince pies, yet felt that one ingredient was wanting, and the apple supplied it. Not to mince matters, Adam was taken on his weak side—the one that was a rib short, probably—and was justified in claiming that Eve tempted him, for what man who loved pies wouldn't welcome any improvement in them, particularly when made by a young wife?

But detractors of Adam do not stop with the apple. They charge him with being a poor provider in his family, treating his wife shamefully, particularly in the matter of clothes. He scrimped her in fig leaves, only allowing her to buy the smallest and most inexpensive patterns. He never bought her a new bonnet in his life, and during the whole course of their connubial career, which lasted some nine hundred years, he never took her to a lecture, a theatre, a circus, or even a Sunday night sacred concert.

There is this that may be said of Adam, however: He never chased after other women, and as for Eve, it was never so much as hinted that Adam's children didn't look like him.

—Texas Siftings.

**THE BISHOP AND THE CHESS-PLAYER.**

A STORY has been forwarded to us of a bishop who, in times long gone by, stopped at a roadside inn to bait his horse. In an arbor in the garden he saw a man seated at a little round table playing chess; but though the board was laid out with a double set of men, he was all alone. He seemed so intent that the bishop went up to him and asked him about the game. "I am playing with the Lord," said the man; "and I have just lost fifty pounds to him." "But you can't pay the Lord," said the bishop, who, thinking the fellow was a lunatic, humored him. "Oh, yes I can," said the other. "When I lose, he always sends me some Christian gentleman to take charge of the money and distribute it among the poor; you are the person this time, and there are the guineas." And he handed the prelate a little bag full of gold. The sum was correct, the coins were good. "By the time you come back this way I shall have played several more games, and may have more alms for you," said the man. The bishop bade him adieu, remounted his horse, and went on his way wondering. A few days after he returned with a large sum of money he had gathered from his estates, and stopped at the same inn. In the arbor was the chess-player as before, but as he entered the garden the man, seemingly not perceiving him, rose as though a game were just concluded, and walked into a shrubbery at the back. The bishop followed. "Well," he said, "how stands the game now?" "Oh," said the other, "I have just won 500 guineas." "Indeed, and how will you get paid?" "Oh, the Lord always sends a rich man to pay me; he has sent you." "Me?" cried the bishop. "Yes; you were willing enough to take my losings, and now you must hand over my winnings." And as the bishop was beating a hasty retreat he felt a hand grasp the back of his neck and the barrel of a pistol put to his ear. The argument was conclusive, and, having secured his booty, the robber disappeared. After that the bishop never interfered with solo chess players.

A SUNDAY school teacher said to her class, "Now, children, who loves all men?" The question was hardly put, before a little girl, not four years old, answered quickly "All women!"

A CERTAIN Sunday school superintendent goes to see little Clara's big sister quite often. "Children," said he to the school last Sunday, "we are told in your leaflets to-day to love the Lord. Do you know what 'love' is?" "It's when you hug my sister in the parlor, sir," spoke up Clara from the front row.



# ST. JOHN'S MENAGERIE.



1. Many-eyed beasts and their keeper (Rev. iv., 6).



2. Horse-like locusts, with stings in their tails (Rev. ix., 7).



3. Lion-headed horse (Rev. ix., 17).



4. The Lamb and his Bride (Rev. xix., 7).



6. Mother Earth and the Dragon.  
"The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." (Rev. xii., 16).



7. Lamb among Beasts (Rev. v ]6).



5. The Lamb fighting the Beast (Rev. xvii., 14).



8. Dragon with the Boss Tail (Rev. xii., 4).



9. Seven-headed Leopard (Rev. xiii., 1-2).



10. Woman clothed with the Sun (Rev. xii., 1).



11. Elders Worshipping the Holy Triplet (Rev. iv., 10).





**HIS TENDER MERCIES.**

*And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.—NUMBERS XXI, 6.*

**SWINBURNE ON GOD AND THE ARMADA.**

THE most striking poem in Mr. Swinburne's new volume is his ode on "The Armada." Some of his lines are full of blasphemy. Thus of the Spanish he says:

"But faith is theirs, and with faith are they girded and helmed and invincible are they, almighty, elect for a sword or a rod; [shod: Invincible even as their God is omnipotent, infinite, God.

In him is their strength, who have sworn that his glory shall wax not dim:

In his name are their war-ships hallowed as mightiest of all that swim: The men that shall cope with these, and conquer, shall cast out him.

In him is the trust of their hearts; the desire of their eyes is he; The light of their ways, made lightning for men that would be free: Earth's hosts are with them, and with them is heaven: but with us is the sea."

He also pictures Pope Sixtus and King Philip II. praying to their God, and tells them:

"Lords of night, who would breathe your blight on April's morning and August's noon, God your Lord, the condemned, the abhorred, sinks hellward smitten with deathlike swoon: Death's own dart in his hateful heart now thrills, and night shall receive him soon.

God the Devil, thy reign of revel is here for ever eclipsed and fled: God the Liar, everlasting fire lays hold at last on thee, hand and head:

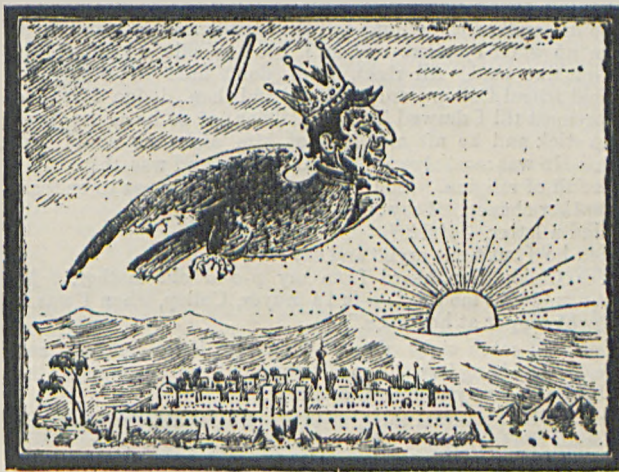
God the Accurst, the consuming thirst that burns thee never shall here be fed."

This is pretty warm, but it is not at all likely that the Attorney-General will authorise a prosecution for blasphemy.



**JEHOVAH'S ARMOURY.**

*The Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapon of his indignation.—JEREMIAH I., 25  
The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name.—EXOD. XV., 3.*



**A FLYING GOD.**

*Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah.—JEREMIAH XLIX., 22.*



## CAPTAIN COLLOP ON EARLY PIETY.

By JOSEPH EVISON (*New Zealand*).

HE was a large, sad, serious, sunburnt mariner, and he entered our office in a manner suggestive of the leader of a boarding party. As he opened the door he preceded himself with an *avant courier* of tobacco juice, which stretched itself along the floor like "the trail of the serpent."

"Are you the skipper of this hooker—leastways the Editor," he asked, mopping his battered visage with a big red handkerchief. We felt for the longest and heaviest office ruler before replying—

"We are the Editor."

He unfolded a copy of the *Rationalist*, and read therefrom as if he were hailing a main-top in a gale of wind:—

"The whole tendency of Early Piety is to make its votaries unnatural, therefore hypocritical, therefore dishonest; it fosters vanity, kills robustness, mental and moral, and turns loose upon the world a number of egregiously ignorant young asses."

"Did you write them words, shipmet?"

We bowed.

"My name's Collop—Captain Collop of the 'Martha and Emily' schooner, a tradin' down to the Islands for oranges. You say early piety ain't no good; I'm not what you might call pious myself, but I know one of that there sort when I sees him, and you're altogether out o' your recknin', mate. Piety is good, and early pious training is good, as I'll show you. Did you ever come across Captain Joful—John Joful?"

We intimated that this delight had not been vouchsafed us.

Then Captain Collop bit off a portion of our tobacco, wiped his heated forehead, and slowly ground out, in weird monotone, the following:—

"Twenty-five years ago me and Joful was in China, and owned our own schooners. We ran from Shanghai to Ningpo. Joful was a real pious sort, and no mistake; but he'd take his grog reg'lar, and his religion didn't show much, except about once every four months, when he said he'd got a letter from his poor old mother in England. I never seed the letters, but I always know'd when he had one, for he'd go off on a reg'lar religious rampage. We would be a lyin' in Ningpo mostly such times—he moored on one side of the river and me on t'other. One of his China sailors would come aboard my craft (we carried mixed crews of Chinamen, Malays, and Manillamen), looking a bright pea green, and his teeth chatterin', and his pigtail sticking straight out behind. And the heathen pagan would say, in his derved piggin' English, "Claptain, you klum makee see Joful, he cathee one pleece choppee ffrom his muddee, he makee too muchee bobellee."

Then I know'd as how poor Joful was took bad again with religion; and I'd take the boat and half-a-dozen strong Manillamen, and a few fathoms of nine-thread, and pull across to Joful's schooner. And afore we reached her we'd hear the sound of shots; and when we'd got within range, we pull straight down ahead of him, so as he couldn't see the boat a-coming, for we knowed he'd be a posted on the companion ladder, half up and half down, with a loaded gun a restin' on the hatch, and with not much dunnage on him, and his hair a flyin' in the breeze, and he about six foot four in his bare feet, and a patiently waitin' until anything alive showed itself, so's he could shoot at it. But, bless you, nothing much never showed, for all the boat's crew knew that when Joful had a letter from his poor old mother he'd shoot a Chinaman, or a white man, or a Lascar, or anything that moved. That's how his love for his mother, and his early pious trainin' affected him. It was peculiar—that's a fact, but it showed the natural goodness that was into him—didn't it now?

Yes, he would shoot at most anything at them times, when he felt his piety surging about inside his head—at anything except me. He wouldn't shoot at me, not if I give him plenty of warning—not a purpose, anyway. I used to make my boat fast to his anchor-chain, and tell the Manillamen to stand by to swarm up when I hailed. Then I used to shin up alone, and sing out like mad, 'All right, Joful, don't fire! It's only me, your old friend Collop—only Collop,' and then dodge forrard of the foremast till I drewed his fire. Then, if so be as he fired, I'd up stick and be aft alongside of him afore he could load again. He was most always glad to see me, and was, these times, choek full of religion. And he'd go on loading, so as to be ready for another chance. I say:

"Had a letter, Joful?"

Then he'd bus't out cryin' and say:

"Yes, Collop, I've heard from my p-o-or old mother. My mother as taught me the I-o-ord's prayer, Collop, when I was an innercent nipper at her knee."

Then he'd catch sight of some Chinaman hidin' behind a cask or a case, and bang! would go his gun, and, as he sponged her out, he'd cry gently to hisself and say:

"Missed that infernal thief, Collop. Yes, Collop, my poor old m-mother she taught me all as I knows of piousness."

Then he'd slip a couple of bullets in.

"When I was a little kid she'd put my little hands together and teach me my g-g-gentle Jesus meck and mild—"

Then—bang! would go his old gun again, and he'd say, as mournful and sad as ever:

"Oh! thunder, I nearly hit that long-tailed pagan hidin' there behind that house."

And bye'n-by, bang! he'd let rip again, and say:

"Oh! Collop, you can never know the comfort as religion is to me." And he'd fill her a quarter up with powder. "Religion's all I have left. I shall never see my old mother again. I— See whether that 300 yard sight is up, Collop; there something up in that loreha's rigging, 'pears to me it's a white man. Yes, she taught me to forgive my enemies, and I'd kneel beside her and say "Lead us not into tempta—"

And then he'd boohoo right out, and fire again. Then I'd give a whoop, and my Manillamen 'd come over the bows, and some of his crew'd come aft too, and we'd run round him with the nine thread till we'd tangled his legs and threw him, and an awful time we'd have, that's a fact. Then we'd put him below, and lash him to his bunk, and take away all the rifles and pistols and razors and knives, and I'd sit down by him and feed him with big spoonfuls of brandy and water, and talk about his old mother, and read all the best passages of Scriptor to him about Jonah and the whale, and the voyages of that there lubber Paul, and about the ark, and Lot and the promises. And in two or three days all this religion, and a little opium as I gave him, made him better, and he'd come round like a innercent infant, "at peace," as he used to say—"at peace, Collop, with God and man."

But it showed—didn't it?—the all-fired influence which real religious early training has, because, you see, he always fired on them occasions with ball, and if he'd not been pious, he'd loaded up with shot, and that'd have scattered, and pretty certain have hit something. It was just his religion.

And one time, in Ningpo, he was real bad, and they come for me, and I thought he'd a killed the lot of us, the religion was tearing him about that bad. Well, on the third day he says to me, all of a suddint, and very low and sad-like, "Collop, old ship, I'd like to see a clergyman afore I die."

"You ain't as bad as that, John Joful," says I.

"Collop," says he, "fetch me a sky-pilot afore I die."

Well, he did look drefful weak, and he'd been sayin' his prayers and other early piety over and over again, and I felt scared, as if the angel of the thingammybob was nigh on board of us, you know. So I sends one of the boys down to the mission station—Methodees, they were—to say as how a man was dying, and to send a proper certificated sky-pilot, and, maybe, some medicine. And, towards sun-down, Joful got worse and worserer, and says I to myself, "You're a going out with the tide, John Joful, a ebbin' with the tide; that's what's the matter with you."

By'n-bye a sampan sculls alongside, and in it a missionary cove—a little chap with a big white 'elmet and a rumbrella, and I know'd him for a huppish, impudent feller, as all the boys was down on. And says he to me, very cocky and fierce:

"Is this the schooner 'Wanderer'?"

Says I: "You bet."

"And why isn't there a proper ladder rigged for my accommodation?" says he, as large as a Admiral of the Red.

Finally we histed him on deck, and he wanted to know where the dyin' man was, and I points to the cabin; but when I wants to explain matters—to prepare Joful for him, and him for Joful—he just pushes me a one side, sayin', very loud, we was all the same—"a lot of drunken beasts." And down the companion he went, very stiff and grand.

I looked down arter him, and you might a-knocked me down with a feather, for there was Joful, as I thought a dyin', up, out of his bunk, and in the little cabin.

The little chap in black was very rough and 'aughty with Joful, and no mistake, ordering him to show his tongue, and feelin' his pulse, as if Joful was a sick Christian Chinaman, and seemingly forgetful that he was only four foot nothing, and Joful six foot four in his stocking feet. And when Joful commences talkin' very pathetic about his poor old mother, and his early piety, and that, the little man says, "I don't want to hear that rubbish, you must pay me ten dollars, and then I'll give you some medicine."

When he talked about rubbish, I see Joful's face turn kinder queer, but he said nothin', but goes in his cabin and comes out with the dollars and planks them on the table.

"Then the missionary lugs out three powders done up in white papers, and says he very lofty and a curlin' his little nose: "You'll take one of these now, one at eight o'clock, and the other if you can't sleep," and he put 'em on the table.

"Says Joful, as soft as a turtle-dove, and lookin' at the powders: 'I'll take 'em for my poor m-mother's sake. Which one will I take now?"

"You stupid fellow, never mind your mother. You'll take one if you can't sleep, one at eight, and one now."

Jo, he smiled a innercent faded smile, and asks very low and poetical like, "Which one will I take at eight?"

"Is this man an idiot?" says that little God-forsaken Bantam, and then, in a most aggravating manner he repeats his orders.

"Which one will I take if I can't sleep?" asks Joful, as soft and sweet as East India sugar. "Mister," he goes on, "I'm a pious man myself. I'd like to own a sky-pilot of my own, all to myself. What would you take now to be my reg'lar chaplain?"

The little chap drew himself up, and said, "Sir, you're a drunken beast and a fool also."

And I see his hand (Joful's hand) go softly, slowly behind him, and before the parson had well finished speakin', or I could move, Joful's arm comes round with a flourish dragging a great blanket from off his bunk, and afore you could say knife, he had dumped the little chap in the centre of the blanket, white hat,



rumbrella, white choker and all, and then he catches hold of the four corners and ties up the blanket and the parson inside, just like a bundle of dirty clothes, and gives a swing and hists the man-o'-God on the cabin table, and as he see me a comin' he draws a five-shooter as he'd had stowed away somewhere and pints it at my head, and says solemn and tender:

"Collop, come unto me all ye that are weary and I will give you rest."

So I went and watched, for I knew he would shoot, and was off again.

Then he turns to the bundle of missionary, and opens the mouth of the blanket an inch and calls:

"Cluck! Cluck! Cluck!"

Just as if he had a chicken in there. Then he says:

"Now you're my chaplain. Pray for me, chaplain." And the little chap commences to pray like mad, but whether for Joful or hisself I couldn't make out. After a time Joful looks into the blanket again and says:

"Pray for my poor old mother, chaplain"—and he prayod.

"Now sing a hymn, chaplain"—and he sung.

"Now preach a sermon, chaplain"—he preache d.

Then he made him take the three powders one after the other. Oh, you believe me, Joful had a real refreshing time. Bye'n'by Joful would call him to prayers seldomer and seldomer, and then his head fell back, and he went dead asleep. Down I dives, chucks the revolver overboard, out knife and cuts the little man adrift, and such a mix up you never did see. It took me five minutes to sort him out, and then I gives him a stiff second mate's nip of rum, and passes the little critter down in his boat.

And next morning Joful woke up, and axes for summut to eat, and said as 'ow he'd made his peace with God, and soon he was all taut again. But it all showed the goodness of his heart, and what good early religious trainin' had done for him—didn't it now? Because you know, if he hadn't been religious he'd have killed that missionary—wouldn't he now? But not Joful—not him. It was his early trainin' that did it. He just makes that missionary pray and preach for him, just like that there Levide in the good Sammarian, in the book. But there is one thing that puzzles me, and that is, Joful didn't really have those letters from his mother, because he didn't have no mother, because he was born in Stepey Workus, and his mother died when he was a babby; and when he was a babby too, old Captain Slumley's wife—Slumley as was in the collier trade—took him, and "Cussing Slumley," as they called him, didn't have no religion, nor yet she, except rum; but Joful, he was very pious, anyway—real pious—and piousness is good, young man, take it from me.

And the office dust being now as effectually laid as if the city water-cart had been over it, Captain Collop took a fresh quid, and rolled out of the office singing—

"Come to Jesus; all in the Bay of Biscay oh!"

## RIB TICKLERS.

The clergyman who is violently opposed to men working on Sunday looks through the papers on Monday, and feels sore and grievously offended if his sermon is not reviewed.

"Who is that lady dressed in black, mamma?" asked Bobby, as he sat with his mother on a ferry-boat. "That is a Sister of Charity, my boy," replied his mother. Bobby pondered deeply for a moment, and then he said, "Which is she, mamma, Faith or Hope?"

A child who had just mastered her catechism confessed herself disappointed because, she said, "though I obey the fifth commandment and honor my papa and mamma, yet my days are not a bit longer in the land, because I am still put to bed at seven o'clock."

VISITING MINISTER: "That's a fine rocking-horse you have, my little man. Papa buy it?" Charley: "No; I won it at a lottery." MINISTER: "Ah, don't you know it's naughty to gamble or take chances?" Charley: "Why, it was at your own church fair, Mr. Broadbrim."

A new story is told of W. R. Travers, the wit of Wall Street. His wife was one day bringing a motto in their home which read, "God Bless Our Home." "Let me put one in the other corner," said Mr. Travers. "What is the motto?" "I would like to have it read, 'And d—n our Cook.'"

A story is told by the late Mrs. Mary Somerville of her own mother. That good lady, being out in a boat, and alarmed by the motion of the waves, inquired of the boatman whether there was any danger. The man, whose religious orthodoxy was more conspicuous than his nautical skill, advised her to put her trust in heaven. "Oh dear, oh dear!" exclaimed his anxious passenger, "is it come to that already?"

COLORED VIEWS OF BAPTISM.—Jim Webster: "What preacher's gwinter baptise dat baby?" Sam Johnsing: "Parson Whangdoodle Baxter." "How much does he git?" "Two dollars." "You oughter git Parson Bledsoe. He'll do hit for a dollar." "Hub, what sorter baptism kin yer git for a dollar?" "Ef yer has got yer doubts about it's efficacy you can hab de chile baptised twice for de money what yer pays Parson Whangdoodle Baxter."

PRESIDENT LINCOLN said that the best story he had ever read in the papers of himself was this:—"Two Quakeresses were travelling on a railroad, and were heard discussing the probable termination of the war. 'I think,' said the first, 'that Jefferson will succeed.' 'Why does thee think so?' asked the other. 'Because Jefferson is a praying man.' 'And so is Abraham a praying man,' objected the second. 'Yes, but the Lord will think Abraham is joking,' the first replied."

An Irishman once got a job from an undertaker to make a coffin, the job to include painting the inscription on the lid. This he was too ignorant to do, but did not like to confess it. By dint of following the written copy given him, he managed to get as far as "Michael O'Rafferty, aged—," but try as he would, he could not imitate the "28." At last he remembered that he could write "7," and that four 7's made 28. So he finished the inscription, "aged, 7777." When they came to bury Michael, the coffin stood at the grave side and the priest spoke somewhat as follows: "Ah, he was a fine lad, and he's lying there so still, taken away in the very prime of loife. Young too, he was only—" and here the priest looked down at the coffin plate to see how old Michael was. "He was only," said his reverence again, and put his glasses on and went nearer to see how old he really was. "He was only—" he continued, "he was seven thousand seven hundred and seventy seven. Goodness gracious! how did he escape the flood?"

THERE is a story extant, of which I had to guarantee the truth, that once when the New York correspondent of a London paper wanted to get exclusive use of the cable for a Presidential Message to Congress he dashed down to the telegraph office and handed in a copy of the Bible. "Here," he said to the operators, pointing to the first chapter of Genesis, "start off here and don't stop for any of those other fellows. I've engaged this cable remember, and I meant to hold on to it at any cost till I get a copy of the Message through." That was smart, if rather expensive! but the foreman printer in London was a trifle surprised when the sub-editor sent up the first three chapters as telegraph "tissue" to be got into type as "New York Gossip." He went on setting the copy till it got to Deuteronomy, and then he weakened. He climbed downstairs to the sanctum and asked if the editor had read the "Gossip" through. "Certainly, I have," said the sub. "But do you know it is the Bible our man is sending us? I suppose to keep the wire," said the amazed printer. "The Bible, is it? Dear me. I thought it was another of those d—d American scandals with a lot of family particulars."

## TOO PERSONAL.

A CELEBRATED Dissenting minister went one winter evening to preach in a small town. When the time arrived for commencing service his audience consisted of only one person—a commercial traveller. However, he decided to go on with the service, thinking that others would come in shortly. He began by announcing a hymn, which ran as follows:—

"Come, O thou traveller unknown!  
Whom still I hold but cannot see.  
My company before is gone,  
And I am left alone with thee.  
With thee all night I mean to stay,  
And wrestle till the break of day."

It is needless to remark that the commercial traveller at once left the building.

## SACRED CORRESPONDENCE.

CARD-SHARPER.—So you think Adam understood the game called Napoleon, because he went "Nap" in order that God might take from him a Bony-part. We warn you of your probable fate. We suspect that punning is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

ANGLO-ISRAELITES.—The Jews were not the authors of trial by jury, as you allege. The harps that the 144,000 virgin Jews are to play in heaven, must of course be jews'-harps.

PETER.—So your surname was not Piper, and you didn't pick a peck of pepper. The legend is apparently apocryphal. Is that about the cock-crowing equally so? Or are you a mere petrified myth, a personified nobody? Was the Saul-Peter controversy a gunpowder affair? When they robbed you to pay Paul, how much did they take, and which of your brother apostles did the trick?

J. C.—You say you are the true vine and your Father is the husbandman. We hope he clips you well. How would you do in a hot-house? You might put yourself under the charge of your favorite stoker, Old Nick.

NAZARITE.—Your teetotalism was of God, you say, and it included abstinence from vinegar, and from currants and raisins and from grapes in every form (Numbers vi., 3). Yes, but you won't persuade modern Bible teetotalers to adopt the Bible pledge. Modern Christians are so conceited that they think God was a bit of a fool in the old days, and they will lead him right by help of their own opinions, which they regard as the light that he has given to them.

TUGG.—Your complaint of the outrageous treatment of your religious feelings is wrongly addressed. You should write to Mr. Gladstone, not to us. Show him that strangling travellers is a holy action, and that Bowance's commands must only be spoken of in a spirit of the deepest reverence, just as he speaks of Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter and the divinely-commanded sacrifice of Isaac.

BARABBAS.—We are not surprised to see that you are ordained. We always thought you would do well in the Church, and prove very useful to it.

DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER.—You are milking the heavenly moo-cows in the Elysian fields, are you? Very well, go on milking. We hope the heavenly grass is as green as the believers in it, and that the churning will be quite the cheese. Does Gabriel help you, or does he continue courting the Virgin Mary, or dirting with her grown-up daughters?

PROS CONSCIENCE.—Quite right. Of course two years' imprisonment is not enough for the wretch who said you were in the wrong, and, worse still, proved it. Alter the law and make it a hanging matter. That is the only way to teach obstinate heretics to respect pious feelings.



## BIBLE JOKES.



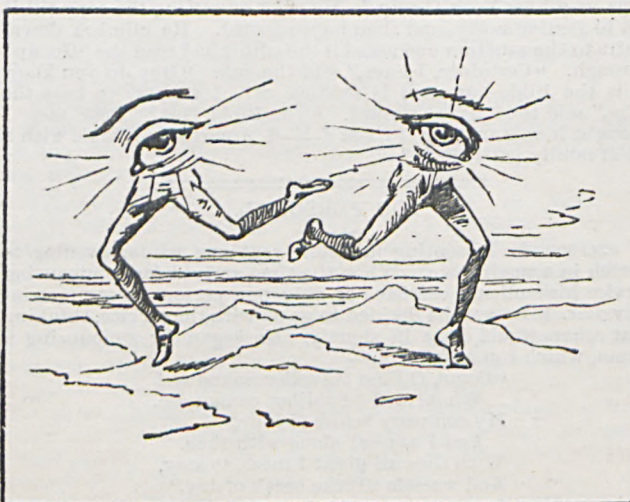
1. The Bible Gulliver.

The hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod.—1 SAM. v., 6.



2. A Varied Diet.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you.—GEN. ix., 3.



3. Running Eyes.

The eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.—ZECH. iv., 10.



4. A Clever Tongue.

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.—PSALM xiv., 1.

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