

greater injustice than the clergymen; and they are utterly unconscious of this, or of the savagery of their opinions and conduct. Deliver me, said a Massachusetts judge, from the methods of an ecclesiastical tribunal. Surely they are infamous. They either whitewash or they crucify. There is no sifting of testimony, no effort to discover the true relation of things, facts are perverted, reason ignored, only prejudice and the petty feelings of the hour triumph.

"It's like going into a den of tigers," said Jimmy. "Look over the crowd. Can you expect justice from a set like that, the cowed slaves of popular opinion?"

"You might as well take your staff and start," said Charlie.

"I will compel them to say something. They shan't evade it. Half these people call themselves liberal. Let me see if they are or not. They hate Skinflint, and yet they will do exactly as Skinflint orders."

Skinflint was indeed the ruler of the assembly; for he was really the only bigot in it, and therefore the only man of real conviction, and supreme by the power of his conviction. He believed in Hell-fire. You could see that he did in every lineament of his face. There wasn't a chance for a smile in it. It was the face of a mummy, cold and terrible. He could answer any question you might propound concerning any part of the Scriptures, and had a thousand texts at command. He was completely armed and equipped for theological battle. He believed emphatically in verbal inspiration. The salvation of the world depended upon this belief. The word of God must be accepted just as it is. There must be no dispute and no doubt.

In forcing Demorest to say yes or no to this dogma, Skinflint was simply acting out his nature. Others would like to have dodged the issue; but he was relentless, because he was illogical. He said very pertinently, if there isn't any hell-fire, what is the use of the Church? They all saw the point and meekly obeyed his summons to the combat.

Brother Balderdash, a famous philanthropist and president of the Young Men's Christian Association, was the right-hand man of Skinflint in this all-important struggle. He himself, however, was not much of a theologian or student. He called himself a "Christian worker." He took his creed entirely on trust and swallowed it whole; and, as hell-fire was a part of it, of course he swallowed that. He could have swallowed anything. He was very receptive, and entirely obedient to the dignitaries of the Church. He was once a merchant, but found that he could make a great deal more money as a servant of Christ. He had a wonderful

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### LITTLE TORCHES.

By W. E. Johnson

The young man who desires to be pure must think pure thoughts.—Southwestern Christian Advocate, August 19.

And in order to think pure thoughts he must steer clear of such villianous obscenity as befouls the old testament from lid to lid. Much of this sacred book is not fit to be read in a sewer.

When affliction is in our home, when disease is in the body, or when death invades the home circle and the crape is on the door and the coffin in the home, the Holy Spirit comforts and helps us, soothes our sorrows, helps our hopes, and points us to the world of light, life and joy where we shall meet the God we have loved and the friends we have lost.—Christian Conservator.

That is just like the God of Moses and Talmage: he kills some member of a family and then sends the Ghost around to ask the mourners how they enjoy the funeral.

"Certain papers representing the Catholic Total Abstinence movement are doing great injury to the good cause they are championing by their violent and scandalous denunciations of 'beer-swilling Catholics.' Hundreds of canonized saints and myriads of uncanonized ones have drank beer every day of their lives."—Church Progress.

That is the trouble you get into from worshipping beer-soaked saints and a "Divine" Nazarine who rushed the can for the guests at that celebrated marriage pow-wow in Cana.

Rationalistic Christianity does not reach the people, and is little, often nothing, more than an intellectual diversion and social nucleus to the cultivated.—The Christian Advocate, August 12.

"Rationalistic" and "Christianity" are opposite terms. The moment Christianity becomes "rationalistic," it ceases to be Christianity.

Every believer in Jesus Christ is under obligation to receive the old testament in precisely the spirit in which Jesus Christ received it—one of unquestioning obedience.—The Christian Herald (Detroit) August 19.

By the same logic, this believer is "under obligation" to go bare-headed and wear sandals and skirts as Jesus did. He would also be "under obligation" to ride a jackass, when travelling, instead of a street car.

#### Grand Undertaking.

EDITOR TORCH OF REASON:

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E. M., 297.

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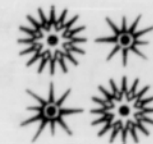
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