

To Sky-Pilots and Devil-Dodgers.

MIRACLES.

Let us examine a few of the most prominent features of your bible narratives, doctrines, and alleged "Divine Commands". First take Miracles. The bible statements upon which your parsons place so much reliance, as evidences of supernatural interference, to support the truth and authority of various so-called revelations and commands of God, are contrary to all known facts and to the unvarying order of nature, which is the only positive expression we possess of the will or existence of a supposed God, who is said to hide himself behind the phenomena of material existence. Everything else is human, and is produced by and comes to us through human agency, such as scriptures, dreams, visions, and other unreliable and, in their nature, uncertain and illusory operations of the imagination. We therefore decline to believe in the stories of miracles, said to have occurred in the dark, ignorant, credulous, child-like age of the human race, as we now decline to believe in the miracles foisted upon the world by the Roman Catholic Church, such as the apparition of the Virgin Mary, at Lourdes in France. Though there may be scores of fools and rogues prepared to swear to that miracle, or anything else, to support a cherished belief or to make money, no reasonable man, educated on scientific principles, at this era of the world's history, believes that such a phenomenon as a miracle ever existed or ever will exist. Moreover, millions of miracles cannot sustain an evident falsity—such as two plus two equals five, or justify to man's conscience any outrage on humanity committed by charlatans and oppressors. No miracle can ever excuse or justify palpable moral wrong. The first miracle recorded in your bible comes under the latter category. The appearance of Satan in the form of a serpent was a rascally and dishonest miracle, performed for the base purpose of seducing Eve, by the unfair employment of a superior intelligence against a weak woman. We therefore say that the legend is a myth and a lie, because a good god could never have permitted any such action against an innocent and foolish creature. As for Balaam and his ass, Jonah and the whale, Samson and his tricks, Noah's Ark, the fiery furnace of Ashach, Meschach, etc., they have been the laughing-stock of the really educated for centuries.

WITCHCRAFT.

The ignorant, blind credulity given to the bible assertions, not only about miracles, but many other matters, has produced infinite mischief and misery. Take, for instance, the belief in witchcraft.

The bible says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus xxii, 18), thereby implying, as a matter of course, the existence of witches as a well known fact. As killing supposed witches is now fully recognized by all civilized nations as murder, the bible ascribes the crime of commanding murder to God. The fact is, the bible only and solely represents the ignorance and brutal cruelty of the persons who wrote it, and this ignorance and brutal cruelty they blasphemously describe as attributes of God. But John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, said in his journal under date May 25, 1768: "The giving up of the belief in witchcraft is in effect giving up belief in the bible"; therefore, if John Wesley was correct, we must give up the bible, for we have given up belief in witchcraft—John Wesley was correct. From the Egyptian magicians, who performed like unto Moses and Aaron with their enchantments, and the witch of Endor, who raised the dead Samuel, to the demoniacs of the gospels, and the sorcerers mentioned in the fifteenth verse of the last chapter of Revelation, the Jewish and Christian scriptures abound in references to and stories about, witchcraft under all its forms, and injunctions to destroy it. What was the consequence of this absurd belief and the wicked command contained in the bible? The learned Dr. Zachary Grey states that between three and four thousand persons suffered death for witchcraft in Europe from the year A. D. 1640 to 1660. In Leith, Scotland, nine women were burned together as witches in 1664. In Italy, in the province of Como, 1,000 persons were executed for witchcraft in a single year. In one province of Sweden 2,500 witches were burnt in 1670. True accounts of the horrid tortures which accompanied "witch-finding" would fill the eyes of any humane person with tears, and excite the most intense indignation against this ferocious, bloodthirsty, monstrous bible superstition. They can be found in the writings of Dalryell, Lecky, Michelet and other historians. So much for witchcraft, witches, and the bible command to kill witches. Is it not disgusting and horrid?—[Freethinker.]

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