

## The Licensed Preacher.

A NEW RELIGION.—THE OBNOXIOUS DEACON EMBARKS FOR THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS.

By Rev. Old Mortality.

My Dear Little Ones:—I have told you much regarding some of the world's strange religions, and now I will tell you something about a "splinter" new religious sect that call themselves "True Followers". This late addition to America's 144 different styles of religion is a product of Missouri. Its advocates believe in the doctrine of baptism and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

And this we will do if God permit.—Hebrews, chapter 6, verses 2 and 3.

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick.—James, chapter 5, verse 15.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.

They shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. Mark, chapter 16, verses 17 and 18.

This is the third time I am coming to you.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.—Corinthians, chapter 13, verses 1 and 12.

Upon these quotations from the Scriptures are founded the church and creed of "The true Followers of Jesus Christ." This sect numbers perhaps 1,000 believers who are scattered through southern Kansas, western Arkansas, northern Texas and Oklahoma. A large majority of them, however, are found in Oklahoma far west of the railroads and in among the sandhills along the Cimarron river.

While the church as a whole recognizes no ostensible head, the acknowledged leader of them all is Joab Morris. Second only to him in the fervor of his religion and the power of his teachings is his son-in-law Joseph H. Bohall. These two profess to be inspired and speak only as they are bidden to speak by Jesus Christ. Another son-in-law, James Clay Darling, has the gift of "the unknown tongue", and through him speaks the Holy Ghost to the brethren. These three live, travel and work together and in reality constitute the fountain head of inspiration for the church of the True Followers, a belief born in superstition and nurtured in the grossest ignorance, and whose rites suggest the antics of the Indian ghost dance.

Joab Morris, the head and tail of this new religion, is a gross and ignorant man. He has a following of over 1000 people who are about

as ignorant and superstitious as their uncouth leader. Is it not something of a wonder to see a new religious sect spring up and thrive in this wonderful land of newspapers, magazines, books, free schools and our thousands of colleges and great temples where science, truth and wisdom are taught at such trifling expense? But perhaps we ought not to wonder or be greatly surprised so long as the American people accept the unholy, unchaste Jewish book of fables as being written by the finger of the vacillating and bloodthirsty monstrosity that figures in this book as its hero.

No, little pets, let us not lose sleep in wondering "what fools we mortals be." You and I know that religion has been and is still a curse to all the inhabitants of this world. I do not tell you this at a venture. History proves it far better than I can. The good, intelligent, educated and well-balanced men and women of America can thrive like a green bay horse—yes, thrive on horse sense. Horse sense coupled with enterprise and honest "mother wit" is quite sufficient for all practical purposes—that is, it is enough for the truly intelligent and the truly honest. The dishonest, the illiterate, the stupid, the ignorant, and the hypocritical knaves who have an ax or two to grind will take to religion as a newly-hatched duck takes to a dirty pond.

When we look over the history of different nations we learn that millions of lives have been sacrificed and that towns and great cities have been razed to the earth and rivers of blood have reddened the seas in supporting some of the vile religions that even now throw a pall over portions of the earth.

You may wonder how long these lamentable things will continue. I answer, not long—no, no, not much longer; perhaps fifty years. France has had her religious wars. Her eyes have opened up. Oh, bloody St. Bartholomew's eve! Germany has had her share of trouble. At one time she sent 30,000 of her children to a religious war. Oh, tomb of Jesus! These innocent little ones never returned to their ignorant, cruel and superstitious parents. Fifty millions and more lives have been sacrificed in trying to fasten religion upon the inhabitants of Europe and other countries.

Little dears, listen hard to what I am now about to say. In this country we have over two millions of educated men and women who are outspoken skeptics, and tens of thousands of Freethinkers. In Europe there are at this time seven millions of people who have cast aside the black mantle of religious bondage and superstition. All hail to these emancipated brothers and sisters! In truth, wherever there are free schools and a free and untrammelled press we find religion

to be weak and tottering. Yes, "tottering on its last legs." The TORCH OF REASON will yet shed its beacon light to all the children of men, for so it is written upon the wall.

## THE OBNOXIOUS DEACON.

My pets, no doubt you are aware that our rich brother, Deacon Balldick, has made himself very obnoxious to the good looking lady members of this tabernacle, and you also know that we have longed to get rid of him. We have at last succeeded in accomplishing this object. Last Friday night Rev. Mrs. Roxey Jane Mortality sent one of our trusty male servants over to his house with instructions to mount upon the roof and cry aloud in angelic tones these words:

"Oh, thou greatly blessed of all men, arise and set out for the Cannibal Isles and preach the good word of salvation to the heathen. Take no script, silver nor gold in thy purse, but make over all thy wealthy possession to the tabernacle of which thou art a pillar and a bright shining light. Do this in my name, and great will be thy reward in the kingdom to come."

Early on Saturday Roxey went over to see our good brother. In a few minutes after her arrival at his house she frightened, ogled and flattered him into making over all of his vast possessions to her for the benefit of our tabernacle. No sooner had our dear brother Balldick taken passage for the Cannibal Islands than Roxey telegraphed the king and queen of the Isles to sharpen up their butcher knife and hinge their appetites, for she had forwarded them a toothsome holiday morsel.

Thus, my pets, we have rid ourselves of a troublesome brother and enriched the tabernacle with his wealth. Is not Roxey "a blooming daisy"? Her heart is certainly imbued with her religious duty. While it is true that dear Roxey is "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh," I cannot fully endorse the way and manner in which she keeps the cylinder of this tabernacle well packed; but still if it were not for her and other good ladies I would soon be compelled to vacate this pulpit. Women are the strength and bulwark of our religious bodies.

To conclude, Deacon Balldick is somewhat fat and tender, and no doubt will make a good roast. And Roxey? Well, Roxey will still remain "a blooming daisy" and a terror to meddling deacons.

Meeting is now dismissed. Amen.

We will send the TORCH OF REASON one year to five new subscribers for \$3.75, and the party getting up the club will receive fifty visiting cards for his trouble. These cards use, as they have an engraving of the famous Wettstein badge beautifully lithographed at the left of the name.

## LITTLE TORCHES.

By W. E. Johnson

Suffering is loved not for itself, but for what it brings.—[The United Presbyterian.

Perhaps you Christians do "love suffering", but we notice that you go howling for the arnica bottle every time you get a pain.

Calmly and candidly recount God's dealings with you.—[United Presbyterian.

All right; from an orthodox standpoint, he first made me and then damned me because an antediluvian savage named Adam ate an apple. Then he caused his only son to be foully murdered because he was mad, and he was mad because he himself damned me because Adam ate the apple. Then because he had so constituted me that I could not believe a lot of theological rot, he has damned me again and has fixed up an eternal hot-box for my soul. That is the way my ledger stands so far.

Our Heavenly Father often uses adversity as a purifier. "When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold," was what Job said after his possessions had been swept away. This keen wintry weather will kill off lots of vermin; so God sends wintry weather sometimes on His own people to kill off certain kinds of besetting sins.—[Rev. L. L. Cuyler, in the Evangelist.

That is a new idea; God makes us suffer so as to get rid of vermin and bed bugs, does he? In other words, God made us imperfect so that he would have the fun of making us miserable in getting the kinks out of us. What a great head your god must have!

There is an old legend of a traveler who was seeking the true answer to the question, "What is heaven?" He met a little child and propounded his inquiry, and the answer came prompt and clear, "Heaven is joy." He met an old man, and his answer was "Rest." The maiden said "Love;" the artist said, "Beauty;" and the poet, "Glory," and others gave other answers.—[Wesleyan Christian Advocate.

Keep right on. The Turk will say that heaven is where there are lots of beautiful women, the Indian will say that it is where there is good hunting and fishing, the Quaker will say that it is where there are no muskets or notaries public, the Jew will say that it is where the streets are paved with gold and where money draws 20 per cent per month, the darkey will tell you that there is lots of music and dancing there, the Baptist will have a flood up there and so on ad infinitum. Don't you think that you saints had better hold a convention and find out what this "heaven" is that you want us to give up everything for? We don't want to invest our all in a lottery ticket; we want to know what we are to get for believing your trash.