

Jefferies impounded a friend as second sponsor, and one Sunday they attended with a very youthful godmother at the font to be sworn in. The whole ceremony seemed to Jefferies extraordinarily like going bail that the baby would come up for judgment if called upon. He had to promise as "surety" for the infant, for the remission of whose sins the parson had already prayed with great unction, that he would renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, and all covetous desires of the same—which seemed to Jefferies rather gratuitous and uncommonly like an innuendo. After which he had to give a solemn undertaking that he would call upon his godson "to hear sermons" (he registered a mental reservation as to this) and to learn various holy injunctions "in the vulgar tongue." And, being thus bound over, and having a vague feeling that his recognisances would be estreated if he failed to produce his godson whenever the parson wanted a "deadhead" for a matinée sermon, he left the church with the mother and the baby, who uttered vigorous but unintelligible comments on the whole performance in a very vulgar tongue, whereat the church cleaners—aged females, whom Jefferies called "the moppers-up"—said to one another: "My! ain't the biby a picture; the little dear."

"Well! what does the Board say?" said the doctor to Jefferies, one morning in his consulting-room, a few weeks later.