

Mr. Whelan's Reminiscences

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THE Freethinkers' MAGAZINE.

H. L. GREEN, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

CONTENTS:

| | PAGE. |
|--|-------|
| CHRISTIANS BURNING BRUNO AT THE STAKE, | 58 |
| AN ENGLISH POET. By George Jacob Holyoake, | 59 |
| THE GODS (Continued). By Robert G. Ingersoll, | 62 |
| ALONE WITH THE HIGHEST LAW. By Herbert E. Crosswell, | 66 |
| RELIGION? OR NO RELIGION?—AN OPEN LETTER TO HUGH O. PENTECOST (Continued). By A. B. Bradford, | 73 |
| REMINISCENCES (Continued). By Lucy N. Colman, | 84 |
| THE PRESBYTERIAN DILEMMA. By Hugh O. Pentecost, | 92 |

LITERARY DEPARTMENT:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Omni-presence. By Emma Rood Tuttle, | 99 |
| Giordano Bruno. By Charles De B. Mills, | 100 |
| Liberalism in New York and Brooklyn. By H. J. Clark, | 103 |
| The Woman's Convention. By Matilda Joslyn Gage, | 106 |

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT:

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| A Freethinker, | 107 |
| Book Review, | 110 |
| All Sorts, | 112 |

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For a whole generation the secret influence of Rome has been toning down history in all our schools, especially in regard to the great reformations of the past. Our best text-books now in use touch these matters very gingerly, so that we have at last a generation of Protestants who know very little about the genesis of the reformations that made the Pilgrim colony and our free institutions a possibility.

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THE FREETHINKERS' MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY (E. M.) 290.

AN ENGLISH POET.

By GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

I N a recent number of your Magazine you published a "Sonnet to Colonel Ingersoll," by Joseph Ellis, a poet of no mean order in this country—a Liberal in theology beyond anyone of equal rank among us. Your readers may like to know something concerning him. When I had the pleasure to visit America I found your people had gratification in knowing "Who's Who" in the "old country."

Joseph Ellis was born in London at the close of the Napoleonic war (August 14, 1815), and is still in the full vigor of his cultivated powers. He was educated by the Rev. William Allan, of Richmond Surrey. His paternal home was for years on the site of that "Richmond Hill" so famous in song, where poetic fancy must be created in any susceptible mind. His preceptor, discerning his Parnassian bent, sought to seclude him for long in the groves of Academus, but, as has been elsewhere recorded, the paternal will was to attach him at once to "business." This, however, could not pervert his Literary and Poetic idiosyncrasy, but once embarked on the ocean of commerce it deferred a conspicuous exercise of the Literary faculty, until, indeed, he had mounted on the wave of Fortune at 50 years of age: not that he ever ceased from literary diversion in prose or in verse, but those fruits of perennial tendency were only occasional. At length his first volume (of poems) was published entitled, "Meletæ"; next came "Cæsar in Egypt," "Costanza," "Columbus at Seville,"

"Flight in Space," "The Dirge of Man,"—sonnets (between forty and fifty) and miscellaneous poems—all which it may be said, have *purpose in them*. "Cæsar in Egypt" is unique in form, being historical, dramatic, descriptive and archæological; it characterizes the great Caius Julius—nor does it appear that this, with exception of some slight, if pertinent, allusions to Cæsar, by Shakespeare, had previously been attempted; Cleopatra also is realized in a manner quite different to the popular impression, and the antiquities of old Egypt are graphically depicted. "Costanza" is an affecting and pure love story of the age of romance. "Columbus" is a pathetic picture of the trials and chagrins of a great, a brave, a daring and original man. The sonnets are formed on the classic Petrarchian model. The minor poems are not minor in subject or in elaboration. Like Browning's poems, Mr. Ellis's invoke thought—his teaching is evidently intended to be and often is, beyond the stretch of current thought; as to "Cæsar in Egypt," it deserves to be accepted as a record, historical and personal, of a very remarkable page in human events.

The sonnets long linger in the reader's memory. The shorter poems are striking, some pathetic, all graceful, with a classic quaintness having the flavor of the Elizabethan day. Some years after Mr. Ellis's "Columbus" appeared, Lord Tennyson published one on the same subject. Many readers of good judgment prefer Mr. Ellis's poem, which represents Columbus as a gentleman, as a man of his learned daring and genius must have been: while Lord Tennyson's Columbus is in some passages depicted as a roystering buccaneer in speech. If the reader wishes that were not so he must turn to Mr. Ellis's chaste and powerful poem. Tennyson seldom touches any subject he does not adorn, but if he has an exception it is "Columbus."

The last sonnet of Mr. Ellis is entitled "Biblos," and is a good example of his meditative thought. It has this passage—

Our "Book of God" by God Himself is writ,
The page all Nature, the sole student Man,
To whom, alone, is granted light to scan
Its myriad marvels, and interpret it;
High grant is this!—what exercise of wit,
What geometric art shall dare to span
The Empyrean and reveal the plan,
Whilst blank surcease, so soon, doth intermit?

Byron said of Pope that he had had more admirers, had he

been less perfect. Error attracts more attention than perfection. The super-critical are offended by perfection because there is nothing in it which they can seize upon to complain about. Mr. Ellis is master of his art and has taken pains to excel. Wordsworth owned that his merits cost him thought, and approved of Cooper's description of poetic art—

Th' expedients and inventions multiform,
To which the mind resorts in chase of terms
Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win ;
T' arrest the fleeting images that fill
The mirror of the mind and hold them fast,
And force them to sit till he has penciled off
A faithful likeness of the forms he views ;
Then, to dispose his copies with such art,
That each may find *its most propitious light*,
And shine by situation, hardly less
Than by the labor and the skill it cost.

The reader of Mr. Ellis's poems (as any reader of this Magazine will find, should they fall in his way), will be sensible of this noble skill in many a page, which Colonel Ingersoll has praised in his august and discerning way, in a letter to the poet, which has been shown me. A single passage from Mr. Ellis's preface to the volume of his poems, will show that his prose is not less remarkable for its compression and suggestiveness.

Speaking of the new volume (which contains an admirable portrait of the poet, and other illustrations which you shall receive for your own judgment), the author says: "The text of this reprint is the outcome of a line-by-line revisal, whether with regard to metrical euphony, clearness of meaning, good sense as the stand-point of fancy or punctuation—on which the effect of rhythmical construction so frequently depends. The labor of this pursuit is known to the worker, if unperceived by the reader, who, however, may safely ascribe to elaboration the satisfaction derived from perspicuity.

"A fine thought can be wasted by ambiguity, even excite derision when it could have deserved admiration: that be made grotesque which should have been elegant. The studious note with chagrin a high intention or delicate conceit marred by incompleteness. Many there are who in every-day life enjoy lofty ideas which they feel incapable of wording: the Poet makes the effort, with greater or less success, for his skill may be superior

to his genius, or his imagination exceed the power of expression. There is a charm in Art for its own sake; though the careless reader be blind to faults, he is a loser by them. To be uncritical—to be dull to blemishes—to be easily pleased, is the 'fool's paradise.'"

All this cannot be said too often, and few could say it better.

THE GODS.*

By ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

FOR ages all nations supposed that the sick and insane were possessed by evil spirits. For thousands of years the practice of medicine consisted in frightening these spirits away. Usually the priests would make the loudest and most discordant noises possible. They would blow horns, beat upon rude drums, clash cymbals, and in the meantime utter the most unearthly yells. If the noise-remedy failed, they would implore the aid of some more powerful spirit.

To pacify these spirits was considered of infinite importance. The poor barbarian, knowing that men could be softened by gifts, gave to these spirits that which to him seemed of the most value. With bursting heart he would offer the blood of his dearest child. It was impossible for him to conceive of a god utterly unlike himself, and he naturally supposed that these powers of the air would be affected a little at the sight of so great and so deep a sorrow. It was with the barbarian then as with the civilized now—one class lived upon and made merchandise of the fears of another. Certain persons took it upon themselves to appease the gods, and to instruct the people in their duties to these unseen powers. This was the origin of the priesthood. The priest pretended to stand between the wrath of the gods and the helplessness of man. He was man's attorney at the court of heaven. He carried to the invisible world a flag of truce, a protest and a request. He came back with a command, with authority and with power. Man fell upon his knees before his own servant, and the priest, taking advantage of the awe inspired by his supposed influence with the gods, made of his fellow-man a cringing hypocrite and slave. Even Christ, the

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supposed son of God, taught that persons were possessed of evil spirits, and frequently, according to the account, gave proof of his divine origin and mission by frightening droves of devils out of his unfortunate countrymen. Casting out devils was his principal employment, and the devils thus banished generally took occasion to acknowledge him as the true Messiah; which was not only very kind of them, but quite fortunate for him. The religious people have always regarded the testimony of these devils as perfectly conclusive, and the writers of the New Testament quote the words of these imps of darkness with great satisfaction.

The fact that Christ could withstand the temptations of the devil was considered as conclusive evidence that he was assisted by some god, or at least by some being superior to man. St. Matthew gives an account of an attempt made by the devil to tempt the supposed son of God; and it has always excited the wonder of Christians that the temptation was so nobly and heroically withstood. The account to which I refer is as follows:

“Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when the tempter came to him, he said: ‘If thou be the son of God, command that these stones be made bread.’ But he answered, and said: ‘It is written: man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city and setteth him upon a pinnacle of the temple and saith unto him: ‘If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, lest at any time thou shalt dash thy foot against a stone.’ Jesus said unto him: ‘It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.’ Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and saith unto him: ‘All these will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.’”

The Christians now claim that Jesus was God. If he was God, of course the devil knew that fact, and yet, according to this account, the devil took the omnipotent God and placed him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and endeavored to induce him to dash himself against the earth. Failing in that, he took the

creator, owner and governor of the universe up into an exceeding high mountain, and offered him this world—this grain of sand—if he, the God of all the worlds, would fall down and worship him, a poor devil, without even a tax title to one foot of dirt! Is it possible the devil was such an idiot? Should any great credit be given to this deity for not being caught with such chaff? Think of it! The devil—the prince of sharpers—the king of cunning—the master of finesse, trying to bribe God with a grain of sand that belonged to God!

Is there in all the religious literature of the world anything more grossly absurd than this?

These devils, according to the bible, were of various kinds—some could speak and hear, others were deaf and dumb. All could not be cast out in the same way. The deaf and dumb spirits were quite difficult to deal with. St. Mark tells of a gentleman who brought his son to Christ. The boy, it seems, was possessed of a dumb spirit, over which the disciples had no control. "Jesus said unto the spirit: 'Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.' " Whereupon, the deaf spirit (having heard what was said) cried out (being dumb) and immediately vacated the premises. The ease with which Christ controlled this deaf and dumb spirit excited the wonder of his disciples, and they asked him privately why they could not cast that spirit out. To whom he replied: "This kind can come forth by nothing but prayer and fasting." Is there a Christian in the whole world who would believe such a story if found in any other book? The trouble is, these pious people shut up their reason, and then open their bible.

In the olden times the existence of devils was universally admitted. The people had no doubt upon that subject, and from such belief it followed as a matter of course, that a person, in order to vanquish these devils, had either to be a god, or to be assisted by one. All founders of religions have established their claims to divine origin by controlling evil spirits and suspending the laws of nature. Casting out devils was a certificate of divinity. A prophet, unable to cope with the powers of darkness was regarded with contempt. The utterance of the highest and noblest sentiments, the most blameless and holy life, commanded but little respect, unless accompanied by power to work miracles and command spirits.

This belief in good and evil powers had its origin in the fact that man was surrounded by what he was pleased to call good and evil phenomena. Phenomena affecting man pleasantly were ascribed to good spirits, while those affecting him unpleasantly or injuriously, were ascribed to evil spirits. It being admitted that all phenomena were produced by spirits, the spirits were divided according to the phenomena, and the phenomena were good or bad as they affected man. Good spirits were supposed to be the authors of good phenomena, and evil spirits of the evil—so that the idea of a devil has been as universal as the idea of a god.

Many writers maintain that an idea to become universal must be true ; that all universal ideas are innate, and that innate ideas cannot be false. If the fact that an idea has been universal proves that it is innate, and if the fact that an idea is innate proves that it is correct, then the believers in innate ideas must admit that the evidence of a god superior to nature, and of a devil superior to nature, is exactly the same, and that the existence of such a devil must be as self-evident as the existence of such a God. The truth is, a god was inferred from good, and a devil from bad, phenomena. And it is just as natural and logical to suppose that a devil would cause happiness as to suppose that a god would produce misery. Consequently, if an intelligence, infinite and supreme, is the immediate author of all phenomena, it is difficult to determine whether such intelligence is the friend or enemy of man. If phenomena were all good, we might say they were all produced by a perfectly beneficent being. If they were all bad, we might say they were produced by a perfectly malevolent power ; but, as phenomena are, as they affect man, both good and bad, they must be produced by different and antagonistic spirits ; by one who is sometimes actuated by kindness, and sometimes by malice ; or all must be produced of necessity, and without reference to their consequences upon man.

The foolish doctrine that all phenomena can be traced to the interference of good and evil spirits, has been, and still is, almost universal. That most people still believe in some spirit that can change the natural order of events, is proven by the fact that nearly all resort to prayer. Thousands, at this very moment, are probably imploring some supposed power to interfere in their behalf. Some want health restored ; some ask that the loved and

absent be watched over and protected, some pray for riches, some for rain, some want diseases stayed, some vainly ask for food, some ask for revivals, a few ask for more wisdom, and now and then one tells the Lord to do as he may think best. Thousands ask to be protected from the devil; some, like David, pray for revenge, and some implore, even God, not to lead them into temptation. All these prayers rest upon, and are produced by, the idea that some power not only can, but probably will, change the order of the universe. This belief has been among the great majority of tribes and nations. All sacred books are filled with the accounts of such interferences, and our own bible is no exception to this rule.

(To be continued.)

ALONE WITH THE HIGHEST LAW.

By HERBERT E. CROSSWELL.

THE nature of the hidden source of life, so perplexing to ancient philosophers, assumes the same vast proportions when modern thought would wring its secrets forth. This occult power full fledged is the axis around which whirls every form of doctrine, faith and belief. But the great solvent for this supreme mystery will be perceived only as the light streams through the windows of mind and man sees Truth. Pulpit oratory says, "We teach Truth, this is the way, give us tithes of your corn and oil." But we know not what they teach. One thing we know, it is not Truth, for our thirst is not quenched, we come away from their dry springs famished to the very edge of death. When Truth is uttered we will know it, but this juggling for tithes is the parent that gives dark creeds their power and would stifle the mind with the poverty of ancient miracles, the yoke in which humanity has worked to feed their oppressors. We have the semi-leaders crowding the pulpits of Christendom and the Orient, but wisdom is not heard, their speech is dread mutterings, unintelligible to man. The demonstration of Truth is yet clothed with an infinite silence that does not speak. Men there have been who were fearless in their endeavors to clear away the obstructions upon which mankind has foundered, but the storm is heavy and the seas run high, though the air is emptied of many darts once hurled at free thought.

The physical walls of life are thick, but they must crumble till the structure falls and man walks in the presence of absolute Truth. If faith was wanting in this respect, and there were no better way than patient scorn, "the heart of Boundless Being is a curse, the soul of things fell pain."

We bow before thought if power is there. We want no guess-work. Truth must have its origin in man not exterior to him; and we must listen for its voice or the rush for merchandise will clog our perceptions of the higher law. It is not found in the noisy marts of trade, nor does it issue forth clothed in surplice, gown, nor cloistered chancel; these keep us famished while the free truth feeds all who dare to tear away this veil of darkness. Truth is what is commonly called God, though not the God of orthodoxy. The sufferings of little children alone sweeps away such a God beyond reason. Help there is, but we must look higher than creeds, and higher still, and higher yet, and higher, till the God of passion fades, as fades the darkness when morning dawns and lights up the eastern edge of earth's night into the great arch of heaven's own brightness. If orthodoxy is truth the air of freedom must accompany it. Do its followers escape the woes of life? Is the Deity known and loved by His absence when the cry of sad lips reach out into the dark void? Does the silence speak? We have gambled with our intellect, yea, with our reason too, till they are well-nigh spent! Priestcraft plays with loaded dice, using education for despotic purposes, for gain; subsisting on the toil and bonds of ignorance; and, worst of all, would keep the masses in darkness lest they, too, should climb the rounds of knowledge and see the material from which their yoke is fashioned. The true teacher never resorts to the source of fear in man, but kindness, love and charity marks the speech of him who would show the way. Men have set fast trust in those who imprisoned their understanding, ruled them out of the temple of thought. But time, the healing balm for many woes, filches in between the towers of despotism and its subjects and saps the foundation of rite and ceremony, as it destroyed the ancient temples of pagan gods. When absolute Truth is found it will not be merchandise, bought with dollars, it will wear no covering of letters patent; he that would possess it must be quit of priests and books, leave the dusty library and go into nature; penetrate the solitude of thought by the ocean's edge, on the mountain slopes,

far into the forest, and farther yet, and the heart of silence will cause the fluttering pulse of thought to bound with liberty. Where else shall we look for light? The history of all nations, ancient and modern with their art, culture, learning, yield no reward in the search after truth. If we dig into the depths of chemistry; into the cloistered cells of plant-life; into the origin of species, yea, into the foundation of the physical universe, we come away empty. The aching craze that throbs in the breast of humanity is not stilled by laying siege to the material; this is the expression only; in the power behind the physical is the accident of hope. It opens the petals of the lily and scatters abroad its fragrance; it sends the jungle-cat to its lair, and tames the passions in man. The fading rose, the gorging beasts are the evils of its absence. The law of Good, the principle of harmony knows neither discord nor pain, or is there no immutable right. The law of Good paints with colors that fade not. The decaying bloom of summer is not a necessary condition or part of this law. Nor is the creeping age which filches in between youth and beauty its gift to man. We do not find the principle of Life in evils of any sort. Darkness is ignorance; we are all groping to find the light. It shines about us, but we are not accustomed to its brilliancy, and it blinds us—our appetites are whetted for grosser things. The mind wanders too much amidst the history of the world, so that our horizon is only in a westerly direction, looking backward where the deeds of men have set in a sky crimson with the blood of despotism.

The present condition of society is the applause of cruel warfare of the past. It is the inside life of selfishness that cries "I." We are kin to the jungle-cat—the murderer of the forest—who creeps upon his victim so if he but lives. The mind that would see truth must think aright; let the details of national histories pass quickly from view; divorce yourself from this vortex of strangled lives, quit its atmosphere, let Brutus be buried by Cicero, and Alcibiades by Pericles. Let the great names of fame die with the birth of higher inspiration and we are astonished at our advance toward the ideal. Let the mind transcend all discordant effects and the actual cause is seen to be Good. It shines through Cicero's *De Officiis*. We see it in the philosophy of

Plato, Guatama and Jesus. Its pulse beats when men's thoughts crowd the material world into the void of night—when the soul melts into the unity of wisdom, justice, love.

Anthropomorphism is an evil, is the prince of darkness in the present era of thought ; the forgiveness of sin is the fruit thereof ; there is no pardon with the arithmetic of the infinite, we must pay our own debts.

If you would see Truth trust yourself with silence, let the sunlight of by-gone years in the open fire-place be your company ; tarry with your thoughts, and matter as the source and end of life fades out of consciousness. The books teach matter first, then mind. The muse saith mind first and the material world a conception of mind, and for a perfect world there must be an unsullied mind to conceive it. Truth is omnipresent, is spiritual, we must cease digging into matter for its origin. What of the Great Systems, or Æons: Cänozoic, Mesozoic, Paläozoic, Eozoic, —what then ? Who knows ? We must burst through these walls of matter that would shut us in as a pendulum swinging to its limit. The soul is tethered to crystallized formulas in the evolution of man from naught—we may as well say naught—for what but nothing is the source of nebulæ ? Why not advance from the void as well as fire-mist ? The limit of mortal mind is the perspective of the material universe, but Truth, the Immortal Mind, is the eternal principle without limit, vast as boundless space, inconceivable, reaching far beyond thought, and farther yet till it fades from consciousness. The religious aspect of this power is in activity now, can be as sensibly felt as when ancient teachers were enriched by its presence. Monopoly of this power by sects and theorists, as though its influence had ceased, is an evil. Why should an eclipse of Truth be on in this age ? O, soul, withdraw thyself from the maze of creeds and tangle of limitations and drink from the source of wisdom !

The cruelty of ancient Christianity to liberal thought is echoed in the examples of not a few sects that would in this era of unshackled thought yoke men to their God of passion, hate and revenge. This is friction to the generous soul whose royal road to life must be smoothed with soft speech, love, justice, charity. Soar into the freedom of your own interpretation of infinite love. The true man—better than the orthodox definition of God—striving incessantly with the vastness and agonies of life, the

prison of the senses—conquers; not by fixed rules, but when he, too, is awakened by the morning of Light. “Zeus and Apollo scan the ways of men. But of mortals here why should the prophet have more gifts than I? What certain proof is told?”

Physical sense, the avenues of knowledge give of themselves not so much as a hint of the existence of spirit. But there is an intelligence in man that speaks of love, mercy and the moral law that is not displayed in the physical universe—the source of all evil; for so far as one knows to the contrary there are countless numbers of worlds whose inhabitants are struggling under the same cruel forces; where the surgeon’s knife has little rest from its consecrated work; where the operating-room sends forth the same agonizing cry of its unhappy victims, as on our own planet with its crowded hospitals, Caligula’s, Nero’s and modern tyrants, and all the hosts of them who stifle with the smoke of decaying creeds the budding thoughts that would burst the bonds which for so many years have enslaved the human mind. When the mind is free—let loose in this broad arch of the universe—there must be a receptive mood for the Light. He is a close reasoner who finds truth without a gleam of inspiration.

Religion is of the soul, not of the head. Creeds sever our connection with the great Law of Life, and classifies divinities, moulds them into forms for worship which dry up the springs of thought. “I have pressed,” said a lady, “the forget-me-nots in my prayer-book, so every Sunday I shall see them.” Expensively cheap is popular faith! From pole to pole the cold wave of majority rolls in upon us and blights the intellect as the hard foot-prints of science dwarfs and bends into abnormal shapes the tender shoots of thought that would rise rather than dig.

There is in us a chamber, the door of which no science nor creed can unlock, that opens without force when enlightenment comes. The invisible conductor of Truth leads direct to its center, and the highest event of life is when the current flows. From its silence ever comes a boundless wealth of virtue, love and right. He who thwarts it loses, and the power of wisdom is gained to him who lives as its offspring. The pleasures and pains of life indicate the presence and absence of this divine intelligence; shows our understanding or ignorance of its munificence. The blind, deaf and maimed are so many examples of our infant understanding of Truth. From the heart of the universe ever flows the

pure, unsullied secret which makes for harmony and peace. It is ours by right of ancient lines of ancestry, and we know it not, we are orphans in a strange land. The pessimist wonders at the stability of humanity amidst the myriad woes of life. But good is in the ascendancy or the world would collapse.

“Before beginning and without an end,
As space eternal as surety sure
Is fixed a power Divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.”

Harmony is Truth. It is forced upon us, we cannot swell evil to the majority. Though our prisons are full, the free world holds the balance of life. The faculty to perceive truth is born of inspiration, insight vast, a consciousness to apprehend the absolute law behind the visible shows of physical limitations.

No branch of physical science will ever crown the most assiduous application of thought with so much as a hint that Truth exists at all. There is nothing stationary. From an atom to the sun change germinates new birth, the old passes away. The same is true of sociology: civilizations, governments, art, poetry, all must go—so will societies' standard of honor, morality and right, give place to higher conceptions of the immutable. Hence we are not bound by creeds of science nor orthodoxy; the soul is free to interpret the revelation of truth whenever and wherever the light shines. Man has no refuge in decaying forms of any sort, they are like the Roman bath of the forced suicides, an ebbing to a final mental inactivity.

If the term God means anything it signifies Truth. Teachers of Christianity would have us believe that everything is settled beyond dispute, that to doubt their interpretation of Truth—offensive as it may be to lofty natures—is gross heresy. But who is man that he knows the whole of Truth? Who are the leaders of the popular mind? What are their thoughts? Are they from the source of Life, or do they rise no higher than fame, love of power and aggrandizement? The insignificance of such a life, cramped between the walls of self, was truly portrayed by Juvenal, when he said on the death of Hannibal:

“Produce the urn that Hannibal contains,
And weigh the mighty dust, which yet remains ;
AND IS THIS ALL? YET THIS was once the bold,
The aspiring chief, whom Afric could not hold.”

Is the fate of all flesh too fast for man? Is this deep disease of life, this terror of living without aid? Good begets good. Evil begets evil. In every man dwells the power invisible—the law of good. From the soul it spreads throughout limitless space, far beyond the utmost walls of the universe. Nothing thwarts its divine purpose. Evil is a consciousness of its absence only. It has no reality apart from the ignorance of discerning truth. Good, sooner or later, will be, must be seen, as the absolute and eternal law of life.

The size of individuality in the future life—if, as need not be doubted, life can never die—is in proportion as we perceive and possess truth. This assertion is self-evident though not supported by the physical law of death. There is less proof of immortality for man in death than the living personality. The law of life speaks to us in a thousand ways; we know it. Truth alone is life—is all that will ever survive. Illustrations are daily and hourly before us; we *do* know. In each of us dwells the monitor of immutability. We appeal too much for demonstration, vainly we ask from the silence that doubt may vanish. If truth could be dressed in speech the Englishman might starve if unacquainted with the language of his foreign neighbor. But the dawn or noon-tide of light shines for every nation alike. We all know the ocean when we see it, by whatever name it is called. The same power of interpretation is felt in the solitude of the pathless forest: in the country when the landscape is white with winter's covering and the keen air gives a sharper twinkle to the midnight stars. Who can deny this sure expression of the soul; this sixth sense in man which solves the doubt of desire, and fortifies the seeming insecurity of the law? He who feels it not must neither deny nor assail. Though he stand upon the pinnacle of scholarship and science, if he hears not the voice ever speaking to him from within, let him wait ere he denies that which physical sense can never own and does not know. The noted philosophers who have torn away so many objectionable appendages prominent in the orthodox creed are examples of the influence of this power, and illustrate how love, justice and truth are attributes of the highest law. So with the great masters in the field of music. The grandeur of their compositions show, that they too were conscious of its power to transcend our finite sense of things. This same supreme energy is in no wise moved save in working out a

final good, and is not observed by those who are caught by the coloring of popular writers. The soul that feels the throb of this immortal beauty will respond without effort, for this consciousness is a perception of the absolute law; and by its presence the inquiries concerning the essentials of life are no longer open to conjecture, but their authentic signs are sure as when the silence robes the waiting earth with the soft arms of spring and weaves its garlands of grace to beautify and charm the morning of approaching summer.

Our minds are stored almost wholly with the knowledge gathered from former workers, and increased still further by contemporary search into the various hidden causes which yield a limited acquaintance with physical laws only, but so far as known not the smallest reality of absolute law is discovered. We are continually looking for a DeSoto or Columbus to unravel the tangle of human events and causes, while soothing our wounded faculties by drinking deeper of truth's opposite,

We must let go our firm hold on the crumbling forms of material things for finding Cause. It is all about us. In the last analysis Good is seen as the consummation of the law, and before the end must reign supreme.

RELIGION? OR, NO RELIGION?—AN OPEN LETTER TO HUGH O. PENTECOST.

By A. B. BRADFORD.

(Continued.)

II. THE TWO CONFLICTING MEANINGS OF RELIGION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE period which transpired, after man had evolved from his brutal condition, conquered the rest of his fellow-creatures on the earth, and had taken his place at the head of the scale of being as the distinct genus "*Homo*," covered a long interval of time, during which religion was not organized into an association, but took the form of a blind, dogged, cowardly, stupid, bigotry of the individual. The Priest, although he had sagacity enough to control his brethren, had not intellect enough to form a creed of dogmas; but the reign of ignorance continuing, his will was lord over all, and the people were content. I now leave our

remote ancestors, passing over those long ages on which history sheds little or no light, and in tracing the progress of the religious sentiment, come down to the time immediately after which, Christianity, so-called, began its career in the world.

The Greeks, a highly intellectual and fanciful people, had given a modified form to the religious sentiment in what we call their mythology, or system of fables. They made Zeus their chief god, but recognized numerous other gods and goddesses, who presided over the different departments of human interests, and to whom they paid a formal worship. When the Romans extended their empire, and absorbed the most of the known world, they adopted the religion of the Greeks, only giving Latin names, instead of Greek, to the heavenly divinities. This was the religious system in vogue when Jesus of Nazareth appeared. It had religious ceremonies, but no creed of dogmas, the people being free to believe what they pleased, and to worship a hundred, or none, of the gods and goddesses of the Pantheon.

1. Christ's, and the Apostle James's Theory of Religion.

Jesus set up only as a reformer, and his mission was, primarily, to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The burden of his preaching, according to the first three evangelists, was, love to God, and love to man. He laid it down in didactic teaching, and in parables, over and over again, that the sum total of human duty, necessary to be done in order to inherit eternal life, and meet the requirements of the Law, and the Prophets, consisted, not in believing a set of incomprehensible dogmas, and observing religious ceremonies, but in simply doing in all the relations of life, as we would have others do to us. This seems to many a small and easy business, but those who reflect upon it will see that, to bring about this condition of things on the earth, is the whole object of civil government, of philosophy, and of science. If the essence of Christ's teaching consisted in this love to man, as it certainly did, on the authority quoted, it was not a new thing in the world, but a mere re-affirmation of what ancient philosophers, Jewish Rabbis, and Confucius in China, had taught, centuries before. There was but one man among all the Apostles of Christ, and writers of the New Testament, who seemed to comprehend the extent of these teachings of Jesus, and to be imbued with their spirit. It was James, whose paternity, for rea-

sons unnecessary to be mentioned here, has always been a matter of dispute. He was, however, a member of the Apostolical College, and the author of the Epistle in our canon of Scripture, which bears his name. He alone, of all his cotemporaries, has given a definition of the word religion, as he understood it, saying (chapter 2) that : *Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this : to visit the fatherless, and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* I suppose these words may be fairly taken as expressing the same idea as that taught by Jesus, that the whole duty of man, so far as his fellow-creatures were concerned, consisted, not in universal *benevolence*, or mere well-willing, but in *beneficence*, which not only *wills* well, but actually *does* to others the good we would like them to do to us in circumstances of need. Then, upon this definition, the Christian Church should have been a system of voluntary associations, acting under the impelling power of universal love, and scattered over the whole world, whose sole aim was to remove the evils of the social state produced by ignorance, and to make all its members happy. And as knowledge is the cure, and the only cure, for all evils ; and the acquisition of knowledge, in all its various departments, the source of the only unalloyed happiness that mortals can enjoy, the opening up of these fountains of happiness would be the main purpose of such associations. This indeed seemed to be the design of those institutions called Lyceums, and Academies, which originated in Greece, and spread over the world.

In those ages when the art of printing was unknown, and men got all their knowledge through the medium of the ear, instead of the eye, it was the Lyceum, and the Academy that kept alive the spirit of inquiry on all subjects of human interest, and prevented it from being smothered to death by the deadly influence of the Church. This service to science and good morals the Church would have rendered to humanity had it been founded on the teachings of Christ, and his most loyal Apostle. But it is only by courtesy, and in common parlance, that we now use the phrase, " the Christian Church." The Church is not Christian : it is Pauline. Jesus never wrote a line, never taught a creed, and never organized a Church. But Paul did all these, and much more, by embodying his religious notions in his Epistles to the Church, and impressing them on his own age, which has trans-

mitted them to ours. Had the Church organization stood upon the teaching of Jesus, the tie binding it together would have been, what is called in modern times the enthusiasm of humanity, or a deep feeling of sympathy between all the members of the human brotherhood, and a determination to right all wrongs by the practical method of repealing the laws which created them. The pulpit of the Church would not be the property of any one man, but a rostrum for free investigation in all branches of knowledge. Its emblem would be the sun, shining in a cloudless sky, and giving its blessed light and heat to grow and develop the plants and animals in every part of the revolving globe. Its teachers would carry their commissions as such, not in printed diplomas, but, as Socrates and Plato carried theirs, in their recognized ability to impart their stores of knowledge to all who desired them. The dull monotony, for speakers and hearers, of the modern pulpit, would be absent from its assemblies, and the teachers would have no need to petition government to suppress the Sunday newspaper, because it drew away their audiences, and regaled the public mind with a pleasing variety of useful knowledge, which the creed-bound pulpit could not supply. Such a church would be the center of attraction everywhere, since it would be an arena of debate: not the debate of attorneys for their opposing clients in a court of law, but for the ascertainment of the eternal truths of the universe, and their bearing upon the interests of humanity. The weekly recurrence of such a Sunday would not bring with it the gloom, and mental stupidity of our present Sabbath, but would be anticipated with delight as a feast of fat things for all the people, and of wines on the lees well refined. What a world of light and blessedness ours would be to-day, if, during the last 1800 years, the Church had devoted itself to carrying out the ideas of Jesus, and exemplifying the practical religion of the Apostle James, instead of the creedal religion of the Apostle Paul! There would be no schism in such a Church: it would be the Church universal. There would be no infidelity in the world, for, having no creed of unintelligible dogmas, all would gladly accept whatever was proved to be true. By this time there would be but one language over the civilized globe; the sword of war would be beaten into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning-hook, and the human family would be one brotherhood, and in point of intelligence and happiness, a

thousand years in advance of where we are to-day. My heart glows with joyous enthusiasm, even at the thought of the possibility of such a condition of things for our unhappy and degraded race; and I will die in the belief that these ideas in all their fullness, will yet be realized.

We have seen a little of what religion, under the auspices of its most eminent Apostle, has done with the liberties of mankind, when it has gone into *politics*. Let us now glance at what it has accomplished when it has gone into *theology*,—the science of the “*unknown God*.”

2. *The Apostle Paul's Theory of Religion.*

This hackneyed word, religion, does not occur in the Old Testament at all, and but six or seven times in the New. Since the practical repudiation of the teachings of Christ, and of the Apostle James, it is a purely ecclesiastical term, and grew out of the doctrinal theory taught in Romans (5th chap.), where Paul undertakes to solve the enigma of how the human family got into their present condition of total depravity, and how some of them are to get out of it, thus: Adam, in the Garden of Eden, stood, not as a private person, responsible for his own acts alone, but, as a public person, or representative of all his constituents, embracing the whole human family to the end of time. Being created in the image of God, holy, he was not mortal, and as long as he was faithful in his allegiance he was entirely happy. Had he remained in this condition all his descendants would have inherited, as a birthright, the same blessing. But when he partook of the forbidden fruit, offered to him by his wife Eve, he committed the act in his representative capacity, broke away from his allegiance to God, and involved, not only himself personally, but all his constituents, through all future ages, in the guilt of disobedience, and rebellion. And so death, and moral delinquency, have passed upon all men, because all have sinned.

The wisdom of Jesus, and the Apostle James, is seen in their taking for granted the unhappy condition of the human family, and proposing a method of relief, in the exemplification of the all-powerful sentiment of love. The folly of Paul is seen in undertaking to diagnose the case, and in requiring all men to accept his prescription as a remedy. As to the remedy itself, it is hardly worthy of the name, since it is so limited in its application. He

sets up an analogy between the representative character of Adam, and that of Christ, declaring that, as in Adam all *his* constituents died, so, in Christ shall all his constituency be made alive; and therefore, through the Apostles, Christ has organized a Church, and sends out the clergy as his agents, to hunt up, and gather together in it, the chosen ones out of the human family who were elected, and fore-ordained to eternal life, and for whose sins alone Christ made an atonement to satisfy the justice of God in their behalf; leaving the overwhelming majority of mankind, in the present, and in all past ages, to suffer the doom of predestinated reprobates.

Now, according to this theory, when one of these natural-born, but elect, rebels, to whom the sin of Adam is imputed, and who, in addition to this imputed guilt, has added, and will add, numberless actual transgressions, is converted, and baptized, he becomes "*religious*." That is, he takes the oath of allegiance to God, which allegiance, he, as a constituent, broke in the person of his representative Adam, and is thus *re-bound*. The Latin word "*ligo*" means to bind; "*re-ligo*" means to bind *again*; and the noun "*religio*"—translated religion—means the sentiment, or impulse, which a man feels, who, having broken away from his former allegiance in Adam, is brought back, and re-bound. It is this theory of Paul, when formulated in a creed, which makes it necessary in all who hold it, to accept as true the legendary account of the origin and fall of man in the Garden of Eden. If we grant the premises of Paul's argument, which he finds in the book of Genesis, we are compelled to go with him, step by step, to the conclusion; and therefore, very soon, one Christian father after another, notably Saint Augustine, embodied the ideas into a creed, which, from that day to this, has been the basis of all the creeds of Christendom. Then the gloom of the Dark Ages settled down upon the world, after which came the fifteenth century, bringing with it Martin Luther. At the beginning of his career Luther preached but one doctrine. It was, that, whereas the Bible is a revelation of God, and his will, to the human race, every member of that race has a right to read it, and judge for himself as to what it teaches. This was the nearest approximation ever made in the Church to the teaching of Christ, and his Apostle James, as to what constituted religion; and through the preaching of such a Gospel it is no wonder that the

Reformation spread rapidly through Europe. But this great man had no idea at all of the comprehensiveness of this doctrine of the right of private judgment, for, he was so imbued with the Pauline-Augustinian ideas of God, and our relations to him, that he committed the fatal mistake of attempting to bind the free men, and free thinkers he had made, in the chains of a theological creed. He practically ignored the teaching of Christ that the world should be, and could be, ruled by the divine sentiment of love, instead of a belief in dogmas, and because the Epistle of James, with its plain, but adverse teaching, stood immediately in his way, he denounced it as "an epistle of straw," and struck it from the canon of Scripture as an uninspired book. Then came the era of creeds, which wound up with the Westminster Confession of Faith made in the reign of Charles I. and containing more than two thousand phases of faith for the saints to believe.

The avowed object of a creed, iron-linked, and dominant over both the mind, and conscience, is to silence controversy, and bring about a uniformity of belief, and so make the Church one. And in order to have force in accomplishing its object, it must, of necessity, have a hell in it, as a penalty for all who do not believe it. But, as might have been foreseen, its practical effect has been the very opposite of what was intended. It has divided, and sub-divided opinion, until now, Protestantism presents scores and scores of distinct sects, all warring against each other, and each insisting that it has a clear warrant for its creed in the Bible. It is not at all essential, and religion does not require, that a creed should be understood, by those who accept, and swear to it. It demands implicit faith, not only without evidence, but against evidence; for that eminent Father-in-God, Tertullian, of the second century, expressed the idea with great exactitude when he said: "*Credo, quia impossibile est*;" that is to say: I believe the creed, although it is impossible for the dogmas to be true, simply because the Church teaches it, my faith thus triumphing over my reason, and on that very account, the more acceptable to God. This accords precisely with Paul's definition of "faith," by which he means religion, when he says, in his Epistle to the Hebrews (ii: 1), that "*faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*;" which may be paraphrased thus: "Religion converts things merely hoped for, into positive realities; and as to things unseen and eternal, is a substitute for evi-

dence." The Greek word evidence, denotes a strict proof, or demonstration; and the Apostle's meaning is, that faith, or religion, answers all the *purposes* of a demonstration, without the trouble of examining the proof, or, caring whether the proposition be true or not. Those who read the chapter will see that the religion of the Old Testament saints, in the opinion of Paul, consisted in their *faith*, without the least regard to their moral characters. On the authority of the Old Testament itself, some of the persons glorified as model saints, were liars and cheats, some were deliberate murderers, others were polygamists, and nearly all of them, if now living in this country, would be sent to prison for their crimes.

The ground I take is, that, whoever constructs a creed of dogmas, which, in itself, is incapable of being proved, and understood, invades the sacred rights of the human intellect, and converts himself, and all who believe it, into persecutors. Such people easily bring themselves to feel that their creed is unquestionably true, and that all others who do not accept it will be eternally punished for their unbelief; and the very benevolence of their nature leads them to burn the body of the unbeliever by slow fire, as mere discipline, in hope that at the last moment, he will recant, believe the creed, and be saved. This is the philosophy of persecution; and the terrible thought in it is that men, otherwise good, prompted by their religion, can practice the greatest cruelties without feeling that they are doing wrong.

There is a large body of people in this country and Europe called Spiritualists, who have no God that requires them to believe a creed. Although so numerous, they are not organized into a corporate body upon the basis of any dogmas which must be subscribed to as a term, or condition, of fellowship. Unlike the religious sects, they have no sacraments, and no stated times, and forms, of worship. As to the existence of a personal God, multitudes, if not all, are Agnostics, neither believing, nor disbelieving, in such a being, but maintaining that every man has a right to form his own opinion on that subject. They repudiate all supernaturalism, and the distinctive idea of their teaching is that, it is as natural to live after death as it was to live before birth, and equally natural for disembodied spirits who belonged to this earth, under favorable conditions, to return, and hold converse with their friends. The Spiritualists neither proselyte, nor perse-

cute, nor boycott. Not one of all their millions of people has ever been known to breathe out threatening and slaughter against those who reject, and ridicule their theory. Their system is not a religion, but a philosophy, and their lecturers never denounce unbelievers, but only urge their hearers to investigate the subject, and judge for themselves. But let the Spiritualists allow a committee of their enthusiastic leaders to forge out for them a religious creed, with, of course, a penalty in it of eternal damnation for all who reject it; and if it were cordially received and subscribed to by them, it would not be long before their character would be changed into that of the religious sects around them. Then, invest them with political power, and we would soon have a hell upon earth. Let a man, or a corporation of men, called a church, have political power, and the consciousness of it would wake up the tiger in their characters, and they would thirst for blood.

Had you been a passenger in the *Mayflower* in 1620, when the Puritans, driven by the religion of the English Church and Government from their native country, were seeking homes in the wilderness of the New World; had you listened, during the long and dreary voyage, to their recitals of the cruelties practiced upon them in England; had you seen the heavenliness of their daily devotions, and how Christ-like they appeared to be; you would have reproached yourself for suspecting that, slumbering in the hearts of these pious men was the same demon of persecution as that which made them exiles. But it was even so; for, as soon as they landed at Plymouth, and got themselves organized into a political government, and had *power* to do so, they persecuted the Quakers and Baptists in the very same way they themselves had been persecuted in England. I say this, not to disparage the Puritans, for the *Mayflower* blood flows in my own veins, but to show what religion will do with good men when they put themselves under its power, and have a creed of dogmas with a hell in it.

I had just finished the preceding sentence when the mail brought me the *Twentieth Century* containing your Sunday discourse of the 28th July, in which you speak of one of your prominent church-members,—when you were a preacher—who, in conversation with you, said that, “ignorant heathen *ought* to go to hell, and that he knew of some persons, concerning whom it

would be a personal satisfaction to know that they would not escape the torments of the damned." Yet, you say of this very person that, "he is one of the kindest men in all his human relations." Now, Mr. Pentecost, it was this man's *religion* that made him so inhuman and bloodthirsty in spirit. Give him *power*, and enough victims, and he would wade to his knees in the blood of his fellow-men. Real, genuine religion, such as the Church always exemplified when in power, made every man who possessed it a persecutor. It was the hell in the creed of your prominent church member that put the devil in his heart, and made him wish to inflict the torments of the damned upon his fellow-men.

This is not a mere speculation. It is a truth of history so awful in its import, that the founders of this Republic, in forming a Constitution of Government, ignored entirely the very existence of a God, knowing well, that, if that word, or the word religion, were put into the text of its articles, there would be plenty of religious fanatics who would form round them a creed of religious dogmas, and never rest till they got it enforced upon the people by law. Every one of the old Churches which had a hell in their theology—the Catholic, the Church of England, the Presbyterian, and the Independent, or Congregational, when they had political power, as they all had, in the olden time, one after another, proselyted and persecuted like incarnate devils. The modern sects, which, except the Baptists, are scarcely a century old,—the American Episcopal, the Methodist, the Disciples, and the Mormons, all proselyte, but never persecute, only because, under our secular Constitution they can exercise no political power. But the spirit of persecution is in them, as it is in the old churches; for each of them believe that to secure an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, a candidate for that high honor must not attempt to climb up some other way into the Lord's sheep-fold, like a thief, or a robber, but must pass in through their door. If they do not really believe that salvation from the wrath of an angry God is confined to membership in their sect, but that a good man is as safe in one church as another, why do they go to the expense of organizing, and keeping up, a new one? They all hold that to organize a new church out of old materials, when there is no need of it, is to commit the unpardonable sin of schism—rending the body of Christ; and is only justifiable, as it was at the time of the Reformation, because all the other churches had become syn-

agogues of Satan. Hence, they gird the world round by voyages, and spend millions of dollars every year to make converts to their respective creeds.

If any believe that religion, which, they admit had, in times past, the character of a cunning and ferocious beast of prey, has been so tamed by modern civilization, that it has now lost, in a great measure, its old attributes, let them read the literature of the movement now progressing, for revolutionizing the Government of the United States, and making it a mere agency for the propagation of religion. The leaders, as well as the followers, of this movement claim to be, and are, the quintessence of the piety of all the churches in this country. They are the model saints of the age, and the courageous spokesmen for Almighty God. Like all others of the American people they enjoy the most absolute freedom of religion guaranteed to them by the laws of the land. But they are not satisfied with this. Their religion will not allow them to feel entirely happy, unless, by an alteration of the Constitution and laws which they would call an "*amendment*," they can compel the overwhelming majority of the American people, either to accept their theological creed, and their religious observances, or, be subjected to fine and imprisonment. I speak not here, as I will again, of the methods pursued in reaching this end, but only of the utter disregard for the sacred rights of their fellow-citizens, exhibited in the spirit and policy of this revolutionary party. They deny, and repudiate, the fundamental principle upon which the Republic rests—that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the people governed, and propose to set up a theocracy in which they themselves shall be interpreters of the will of God, and his spokesmen to communicate that will to the State Legislatures, and to the National Congress. Nothing but this sentiment of religion could possibly stimulate an American to commit such treason to the State, and such a crime against human liberty, as this would be. It is only equalled in wickedness and folly by what, under the incantation and magic of the same religion, our Southern brethren undertook to do in 1860—break up the National Union, and inaugurate a bloody civil war, in order to found a new government upon the divine institution of Negro Slavery.

(*To be Concluded.*)

REMINISCENCES.

BY LUCY N. COLMAN.

(Continued.)

WHEN I was eighteen years of age I was married, and was too happy in the relation to think much about the slave. Universalism was my religion, in which my husband also believed. I was almost content. Our removal to Boston gave me opportunities for intellectual improvement, that were so grateful to me that I felt myself a most favored person; but alas! for human happiness, it is usually of short duration. My husband was a victim of New England's scourge, consumption. Six years completed my life with him, and at the age of twenty-four I was a widow. At twenty-six I was again married, and at the age of twenty-eight became a mother. I always like to write the word Mother with a capital M. To me it is the most wonderful word in all the language; it means joy that has never been equaled. I can never forget the ecstasy that came over me when I first looked in the face of my child, and knew that it was mine; but with the joy came the remembrance of the slave-mother's agony, as she looked upon her child and knew its fate.

I had not then given much thought to the marriage laws of all the states. I did not realize that only because my husband was too good to take advantage of the law, that *he*, the father, instead of *me*, the mother, who had gone down to death's door to give life to the child, *owned* it and could control it, at any and all times, against my will.

I was very sick for many months, but in this time of my new motherhood I waked to the understanding of what it is to be obliged to submit to laws in which you have no voice. That the North was by the *United States* laws just as responsible as the South; for the terrible crime of slavery had become entirely apparent, but what could a woman do to abolish these dreadful laws? She was admonished by the Church that she was to quietly ask her husband at home for knowledge, and to submit to him as to God. I determined to find some way to work for the slaves' deliverance, and from that time till the Emancipation, by and through the War of the Rebellion, I faithfully earned the reputation of an earnest Abolitionist. Some of the scenes through

which I passed, as I have related them to my friends, have seemed to them worthy of record; and so, as the work of my seventieth year, I record them.

I shall also find a place in this Autobiography to relate something about wrongs that do not belong exclusively to the "Anglo-African." In a life of so many years a reformer cannot be very narrow. "Woman's wrongs and rights" must claim much attention. I worked specially for woman till I felt that her cause was in a way to take care of itself; but there come to me, as I look back, many anecdotes bearing upon the subject that I shall not fail to relate.

I have told one instance of the bigotry of a Presbyterian minister. Lest I should seem to look upon the leaders of that sect as more unjust than the Methodist, I will give an instance of injustice that proves the contrary. In my husband's long sickness of four years, he was visited by religionists of many kinds, but in the last year of his life a Methodist minister became greatly interested in him. He used to call upon him frequently, and try to convert him to his belief, always telling him "Universalist faith would do to live by, but not to die by." My husband's last words were: "My religion is even better to die by than to live by, tell Mr. Morse" (the minister). I accordingly sent the clergyman a note, asking him, in consideration of having made my husband's case a subject for the pulpit, to have the honesty to say from the pulpit how triumphantly he had died. He did not even mention his death. Such is the honesty of sectarianism.

When my child (a daughter) was seven years old, my husband was killed on the Central Railroad, by an accident caused by the penuriousness of the company,—I perhaps ought to say, the criminality of the officers of the road. A switchman, who had been employed by the company for quite a number of years at the meager wages of seventy-five cents a day, "struck" and demanded one dollar. It was refused and the switchman discharged. A foreigner—I do not know whether the nationality was English or Irish; no matter, he was an ignorant man who landed a week before—was employed in place of the discharged switchman. My husband was an engineer, and at that time ran the lightning express. At the station where the accident took place this train never stopped. The whistle was sounded to announce the approach of the train.

The new man in his confusion thought he must do something, so turned over the switch, letting the moving train into a freight train standing on the side track, and in a moment my husband was dead, I again a widow, and not yet forty years of age. My husband was buried from Corinthian Hall, Rochester, N. Y., where we then resided, Andrew Jackson Davis officiating at the funeral. I was at that time a Spiritualist. I had given up the Church, more because of its complicity with slavery than from a full understanding of the foolishness of its creed. The Universalist and the Unitarian churches were offered for the funeral, but I did not accept their use. I was no longer in sympathy with them. My husband had belonged to the Odd Fellows association in Boston. That particular Lodge had disbanded, but the Odd Fellows of Rochester voted to attend the funeral in a body, and take charge of the same when it should leave the hall. I consented to this arrangement, only stipulating that they should omit the prayer—I had at that time fully outgrown *public* prayer.

I may, in the course of this Autobiography, give a chapter on Spiritualism as it came to me, and I think if those of my friends shall read it who have accused me of not studying its different phases, and putting myself in the way of seeing its phenomena, they will at least acknowledge their mistake. But for the present I have something to say of the great railroad corporation, and here a little of "woman's wrongs" will be admissible. I waited a suitable time, expecting some one of the officers would call to see me, having no doubt they would expect to do what money would do, to atone for their criminality. They had run extra trains from Albany and Buffalo, giving free passage to the hundreds who came over the road to attend the funeral. Mr. Colman was a very popular man with all classes of railroad men. He had served seven years to learn the blacksmith's trade, three years as a machinist, and then ran one of the very earliest trains over one of the first roads in Massachusetts. Besides this he was one of the members of the first brass band in this country, playing second to Kendall's first bugle. Hardly a musician of any reputation in the country but knew him, and musicians as well as mechanics came to his funeral. It was computed that more than five hundred people went away from the hall (the hall seated fifteen hundred) without gaining entrance, every possible spot being filled. Thus much honor was paid to the memory of the

murdered man, and the railroad paid the expense. But a large funeral would not support a family, and Mr. Colman left only a home, and that mortgaged. And so because of what the company *had* done, I confidently expected more.

I waited some weeks, and then made the journey to a more eastern city. I went to the office of the superintendent, but he was not in. When told he might not be in for hours, I went to his home, with a determination to stay until I should see him. It was nearly night when he came. He told me he never attended to business at home; but I persisted. He finally asked me if I had had dinner, and, in his great condescension, asked me to dine with them. At length, as I persisted, he was obliged to talk business. This was his decision: They, the corporation, acknowledged no obligation to an employee,—it would be a bad precedent. They had already done more for me than for any other case of the kind. They had paid the expenses of the funeral, and *a number of the officers had attended the funeral*. It would be wrong to take the company's money. Many of the stockholders were *widows and orphans*. They had no right to take their income *and give it to me*. This man had common sense, strange as it may seem, was a shining light in a Christian church, and more than all else, he had caused the discharge of the experienced switchman, replacing him with the ignorant man. Finding him the official incorrigible, I left him, and in the course of a month I had consulted nine lawyers, some of them considered the best in the State. All agreed that it was a clear case, that any jury would give the sum demanded; but they also agreed that I would never get a cent. The company would appeal the case, the "Court of Appeals" was already made over to the railroad, by deciding that a person employed by a corporation becomes a *member of such corporation*, and of course could claim no damages in case of accident. I asked if a petition to the Legislature to annul such a decision might not be a good thing for some bereaved family in the future. I found the Legislature was controlled by the great Central Railroad of New York.

I then asked the company to give me employment in some of their offices—a ticket office, I suggested. The official lifted his hands in respectable horror. "Why, Mrs. Colman; you would not put yourself in such an exposed situation! You have a little daughter; she might be degraded by the mother taking a position

of such publicity. Can't you take boarders? We could send you twenty-five of our laborers next week." A little girl would be in no danger of degradation by the daily presence of twenty-five boarders, of not a very elevated class. The price paid would not give mother or child many luxuries, and the mother would not be apt to get out of her sphere in such occupation, but I was not ready yet to take the boarders.

I called on the postmaster, and said, "You have established a ladies' window; will you not give me the position as clerk at that window?" "I wish I could," said the gentleman; "a woman ought to have it, but I dare not make the innovation." Not entirely discouraged, I next went to a printing office, which had advertised for boys to learn type-setting, and said, wouldn't you give me such a place? "No; a printing office is no place for a woman!" "Where is her place, sir?" "At home." "But if she has no home, only as she earns it, what then?" "She can't come here."

This was nearly forty years ago; now we have women in post-offices, printing-offices and ticket-offices. This was a time of *Woman's Wrongs*. Has she to-day conquered all her *Rights*? Not till she helps to make the law by which she is governed. I next applied for a place in a public school, and obtained one by taking the place of a man, and doing his work, for which I was paid three hundred and fifty dollars a year. The man who preceded me was paid eight hundred dollars per year. I had an object in view in taking that school, which I accomplished, other than earning my living. There had been for many years in Rochester a school called the *colored* school, at which all children having colored blood, who accepted public instruction from the city, were required to attend. The house was the basement of the African Church, situated in a low part of the city, speaking either physically or morally, and no matter what the distance from the homes, this was the place. I presume it was because of my known Abolitionism that I was offered the school. Quite a difference between eight hundred dollars and three hundred and fifty. I took the situation, determining in my own mind that I would be the last teacher, and that that school should die. It died in just one year. I persuaded the parents in the different districts to send the more advanced children to the schools in their own districts, suggesting

that they always see to it that they went particularly *clean*, and to impress upon the pupil that his or her behavior be faultless as possible. I then advised the trustees of the church to withdraw the permission for any further use of the building, save for church purposes. When the time came for the opening of the new year's school, there was neither scholars nor school-house. The death was not violent. No mention was made of the decease in the papers, and I presume there were not ten persons in the city that knew, or if they had known would have cared, that the disgrace was abolished. I was given another school, for perhaps no more laudable reason than I obtained the other, but this time it was not to save money.

If I were not writing an Autobiography, I should feel that there was a good deal of egotism in many of my anecdotes, but I was in them, and my *experience* is what I am writing. At this time Susan B. Anthony was recognized as a school-teacher, and at the annual meeting of the State Convention of Teachers, held the previous year, had by great adroitness or skill gotten a lady teacher appointed to read an essay the next year; she herself being already on the list. The lady appointed was rather of the milk-and-water kind, and what she would have said, had she not lost her courage for the attempt, I cannot tell. I know what she would *not* have said. She would not have said anything against the Bible, nor the use of it in schools.

When Miss Anthony found the lady would fail her, she came to me, saying she worked very hard to get the appointment for one of her own sex; asking me to prepare something and take the place as a substitute—a place I never like. I said they would probably not hear me, but be glad that one woman had failed to meet her appointment; but her persuasions were at last successful.

I had, in the weekly or monthly meetings of the teachers in Rochester, tried to induce the teachers to abolish the use of corporeal punishment in school. This was not pleasing to any of the teachers, save one; all with this one exception were sure there could be no order without the whip. I thought if I could be given the opportunity, I would at least say why my opinion was against whipping children, and accordingly prepared an essay which would take about twenty minutes to read. After writing it I carried it to our city superintendent, asking him to do me the

kindness to read and criticise it,—not the argument, but the style. He read it, and said, "You use the personal pronoun *I*. It would be more elegant to say *we*" (you see, my friends, I began very early to be egotistical). I said, "How can I say *we*, when I know no one agrees with me?" "Well, then, it is all right; but I warn you you, will raise a hornet's nest about your ears." His prophesy proved true. Said one of the learned teachers, a minister, by the way (many of the teachers were ministers), "What will you do with the words of the wisest man, Solomon, 'spare the rod and spoil the child'?" I answered, just what I would do with the example of Solomon, if a Mormon were to say to me, "Solomon had seven hundred wives; why should not I have seventy or seven?"

I ought to have told you of the difficulty I had in getting permission to read that essay. I was not known to the convention, and in the discussion, in which the pros and cons of the propriety of a *substitute* taking the place without having been appointed at the same time of the regularly appointed essayist, I kept entirely still. I felt sure that some one of the Rochester teachers had *whispered* the words, *Infidel Abolitionist*, and I did not care to be known unless accepted. A teacher sitting by me said, "What is there about that Mrs. Colman, that they object so much to hearing her? Here they have taken the entire time of one session discussing whether or not they will hear her. Do you know the lady?" I said, "A *little*," but was not disposed to be communicative. But when I announced, in answer to the question, "What would you do with the words of Solomon?" that I would tell the Mormon that the civilization of the nineteenth century had *outgrown* Solomon and his wives, the silence for a moment was ominous. Then the hisses came, with "She is an Infidel; I told you so." I was greatly embarrassed when I began the reading of that very simple paper. Now I was not in the least frightened. I am not of the material that can be frightened by opposition, nor thrown from my position by insult. I said in answer to the *mournful* assertion that "She has taken away my Bible," "If your Bible is a bundle of rods, or a license for adultery, the loss of it will be a blessing."

The session was continued till after the hour for adjournment, and when the evening session came, it was again Mrs. Colman and her Infidelity. I suggested to the chairman that, in my opin-

ion, it would be more profitable to the convention to discuss the subject matter of the essay, rather than the religious opinions of the writer. It was a hot discussion, lasting till eleven o'clock at night. Miss Anthony's essay was hardly noticed (it was "Education of the Sexes Together"), as she in those days, thirty-five years ago, did not trample upon holy ground. Whether she does to-day I do not know. It is many, many years since I have heard her. I am glad to know that her life-long friend and associate, Mrs. Stanton, does sometimes allow herself to be advertised to speak for the Freethinkers.

Now what was the penalty put upon Mrs. Colman for her Infidel essay in Rochester? I was appointed to School No. 1, at the time confessedly the most difficult school to govern in all the city, made up of all nationalities, and over-large for the room, with two assistants, each with a whip in hand. The State Superintendent at the convention where I had declared against the whip (the convention was held in the City of Troy), did me the honor to say that I had convinced him that the Legislature should abolish corporal punishment, and he should ask them to do it that season; and so, by his advice, I took the whips from the young ladies, told them I was senior teacher, and would from that time do the whipping. Suffice it to say, I had no trouble in managing the school. But the Legislature did not abolish the rod.

In Syracuse the Board of Education, when the Rev. Samuel J. May was chairman of the same, abolished corporeal punishment in its dominions. Mr. May was a reformer in the true sense of the word; an Abolitionist of the most pronounced type, and an open advocate of suffrage for woman (alas, how much woman has missed him, when an advocate for any particular claim has been needed!). He died some years since. His pulpit was always free, almost the only Unitarian pulpit open to Theodore Parker, after his denial of the inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures, as in any sense different from other histories. He was particularly emphatic in his demand that *one code* of morals should obtain for both sexes. But though Mr. May's memory is revered and monuments are erected, in no city of my knowledge are the *two* moral codes more literally indulged than in Syracuse. The long-propheesied millenium is not yet.

I did not remain teacher long in Rochester. The small salary and the wide difference made because of sex, was a bitterness

that I could not easily swallow; and then I was not popular among the teachers. I always insisted that the schools were for the benefit of the pupils, and that is not allowable. "Dickens' Nurses" are not by any means the only officials whose comfort is the principal thing to be thought of. Everywhere the rule holds good, that the official is the one to be benefited, not the persons over whom he is placed. The exception proves the rule.

(*To be Continued.*)

THE PRESBYTERIAN DILEMMA.*

BY HUGH O. PENTECOST.

WHEN I lived out West I used to see what was called the chain gang. It was a number of male human beings working at street cleaning, each of whom had a large iron ball attached to one of his ankles by about six feet of heavy chain. These persons were taken from the jail every morning. They were prisoners for minor offenses, such as drunkenness or small disturbances of the peace. The balls and chains were attached to them to prevent them from running away. They could move about and do their work, but, of course, the balls and chains were a heavy drag upon them.

The chain gang is a fine illustration of things as they are. The men represent the human race. The balls and the chains represent the Church and the State. The human race would move forward in thought and accomplishment. But upon one ankle is the ball and chain of superstition, and upon the other is the ball and chain of repressive government by force. The human race *is* moving forward. But it cannot move very rapidly because the priest pulls it backward by one leg and the politician pulls it backward by the other. It is an unequal contest, because the human mind is so restless, so disposed to ask questions and so determined to have answers to those questions—the force of evolution is so strong—that nothing can prevent it, not even the ghostly terrors of the hereafter, nor the clubs, handcuffs, prison cells and gallowses of this material world. The priest and the politician are doomed. The day is coming when there will

* Delivered Sunday, December 15, 1889, before Mr. Pentecost's New York audience.

be no Church with its supernatural terrors and no State with its gunpowder and gibbets. The mind will some day be free to think, unfrightened by black-robed sycophants of wealth and power. The body will some day be free to move about untouched by uniformed ruffians.

One indication of the dawning of that better day, in which even the menial priest and the self-loathing politician will rejoice when it comes, is the ferment that is now going on in the Presbyterian church. That church is the last stronghold of the most monstrous and revolting system of supernaturalism that ever cast its poisonous shadow upon an unfortunate world. I have studied somewhat closely, the birth, growth and development of religions from the earliest days of human history until now. I have familiarized myself, somewhat fully, with the religious beliefs of the people whom we call savages and of those who represent whatever of civilization the world has yet known, and it is my deliberate opinion that the Westminster confession of faith embodies the most horrible theories of the character of God and the destiny of man ever devised or even remotely dreamed of in the human brain. The science of devilolatry and the philosophy of the infernal religions reached its climax in the Westminster catechism. If you do not own a copy of that document I advise you to buy one at once before it is suppressed as something of which the world is ashamed. And when you have bought it find one of the most repulsive idols that heathenism ever produced, place them side by side and observe how handsome the idol is by contrast.

But Presbyterians are becoming ashamed of Presbyterianism. Young candidates for the ministry are beginning to avoid the Presbyterian Church as an intellectual smallpox hospital. And many of the older clergy, who ceased to believe in Calvinism long ago but were too dishonest, too cowardly to say so, are now coming together, timidly, and cautiously suggesting that perhaps the Presbyterian God is just a *little* disagreeable, and that, possibly, the Presbyterian hell is not the best place that might be thought of in which to place the tender infants whom a God, whose mouth foams with wrath, snatches from their devoted mothers' breasts.

It does not appear that these concessions are making because the ministerial mind is shrinking from the logic of Calvinism.

That is, no doubt, true, in many cases. But as long as Calvinism could be profitably worked nothing was said about modifying the creed. But it is now being observed that the number of students in theological seminaries is falling off, and that there is a disposition among the people to leave Presbyterian churches for others less logical but more amiable. And as there is nothing that the average minister dislikes so much as to play a losing game, to be on the unpopular side of any question, there comes about this timid effort to get a new photograph of God and to slow down the fires of hell. Every other church has yielded to the popular clamor, and now quite a large and growing number of the Presbyterian clergy are coming to see that their church will have to fall into the line of surrender or be left a wreck upon the beach of conservatism.

The delay of Presbyterianism in submitting to the inevitable has, no doubt, arisen from the more or less conscious recognition by her ministers that, unlike other churches, Presbyterianism has a perfectly logical creed which cannot be tinkered with. The Westminster confession of faith begins with a premise and goes fearlessly on to a conclusion that logically grows out of that premise. Each part of the creed dovetails into every other part, and you cannot alter it in any part without ultimately destroying the whole. The Presbyterians cannot revise their creed. They must either write a new one, beginning with other premises, or they must keep the one they have. And this constitutes their dilemma. They *must* change their creed, or enlightened public opinion will pass them by and leave them, as an organization, to crumble into the dust of death. But if they begin to alter their creed there is no logical stopping-place for them but in the abandonment of the idea of a personal God with a purposive will.

Very few see it, but there is, in fact, no logical stopping place between Calvinism and Agnosticism. If you believe in a personal God you must, logically, become a Calvinist. If you are not a Calvinist you must, logically, become an Agnostic. The only reason why all persons, in the present religious situation, are not either Calvinists or Agnostics is simply because all persons are not logical. Calvinists and Agnostics are the only persons who can answer all your questions upon the subject of religion. If you ask an Agnostic any question about God or the supernat-

ural, he will tell you that he knows nothing about either. That answer is perfectly truthful, and it puts an end to the subject. If you ask a Calvinist a question about religion he will tell you that you must assume the existence of a personal God. Why? There is no reason. You must just assume it. Having assumed the existence of a personal God all else is easy. If you are one of his elect to heaven you go, no matter how wicked you are. If you are one of the non-elect to hell you go, no matter how good you are.

All other Christians except Calvinists hem and haw and evade you, because their sentiment destroys their logic. But a Calvinist has a perfect system.

I am an admirer of the Westminster confession as a system of thought. It is horrible, but it is honest. It is cruel, but it is brave. It cannot stand the light of to-day, but it is consistent. And when the Church gives up Calvinism she confesses herself beaten in the battle of opinions, because with Calvinism goes the Bible as an authority, and with the Bible goes the Church, and with the Church goes the ball and chain that now drags upon the human mind. When the Presbyterian Church takes one brick out of the structure of Calvinism the beginning of the end has come.

Let us see, now, what Calvinism is.

The basis of Calvinism is the idea of a personal God. Given that idea and it follows, of necessity, that he must exist for himself alone—for his own glory. There can be nothing outside of God. He can have no objects outside of himself. Having assumed the existence of a personal God all goes merrily or horribly on. He creates the world out of nothing. It is absurd and impossible, of course, but it goes. God can do anything and, therefore, he can do impossibilities. He creates man for the purpose of having him sin. He creates hell in which to punish man, in soul and body, throughout eternity for doing what he, God, meant that he should do and, therefore, which he, man, could not help doing. He creates himself in the person of Jesus Christ, who is entirely God, himself, and is yet somebody else at the same time, for the purpose of receiving upon his devoted head all the phials of divine anger against sin which he, God, brought into the world, and thus become the savior of enough persons, previously fore-ordained to be saved, to make manifest his glory. But as his glory shines more brightly in the light of

the flames of hell than anywhere else the redeemed are to have the exquisite joy of looking over the railings of heaven at the ceaseless agonies of their own parents and children, who were created for the express purpose of being damned.

There is a lot more to it in detail to which I need not refer. You know the whole story of foreknowledge and fore-ordination; of election and non-election; of the shameful hell and the far more shameful heaven—a heaven in which no decent person could possibly consent to live. You know the story of Calvinism, based squarely as it is upon the Bible, and some of you will agree with me that the never-ending wonder is that the Christian world was not turned into a madhouse by it. How could people who believed it ever dare to have children? How could anyone ever smile when he knew there was no means of knowing but what he and his friends were fore-ordained by this unspeakable God to spend all eternity in the unphraseable horrors of hell, or in the base meanness of heaven? The only reasonable answer to these questions is that nobody ever could have believed the horrible doctrines except those who *did* go crazy, or succeeded in mentally dehumanizing themselves, as did John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards.

A great deal is said against long-faced Presbyterian ministers, but I declare to you that a Presbyterian minister who is *not* long-faced shows that he does not believe in his creed, in which case he is a deceiver and a humbug; or else that he does believe it and can still be jolly, in which case he is a loathsome monster.

Calvinism is a horrible doctrine, but it grows out of the belief in a personal God by logical necessity. Because it is horrible Presbyterians are beginning to shrink from it, but because it is logical they do not know what to do with it. And this is their dilemma.

If you will have a personal God he must be a devil. It was the logical necessity of this that led to the invention of the devil, who is simply a bad God upon whom all the ugly things may be blamed. But I leave it to any thinking person to decide whether the devil isn't a gentleman beside the Presbyterian God. It is no use to talk about putting a God of love in place of Calvin's God. The theory will not work. It does not fit the facts. There is no use to talk about there being a good God while popes and archbishops live in palaces, supported by servant girls and sewer

cleaners; while Christian villains are in office and good Atheists are in prison; while rotten men are millionaires and pure women are paupers. There may be a bad God, but there is certainly not a good one. The question that is up for decision is whether there is a Calvinistic God or none. There is no logical middle ground. The great thought battle is on, and if the world gives up its Divine Monster it must go on to Agnosticism.

But the funniest thing imaginable is to observe how the Presbyterians are going to settle this question about their creed. They are going to settle it by majority vote. A number of doctors of divinity—the thing is sick enough, in all conscience, to need doctoring—are going to come together and decide whether there are any non-elect infants in hell or not. And they are going to decide it by vote! If ninety-nine Presbyterians say the infants are in hell and a hundred say they are not, why, then they are not. Facts manufactured by a vote of the majority! If I owned a marble statue that couldn't see the fun of that I'd break it all up.

I can understand how a majority can make a minority *do* something. Because they possess the necessary power. But I cannot understand how a thing that is not true becomes true by a majority vote, or how a thing that is true becomes not true by a majority vote. How perfectly absurd the whole thing is. Some two hundred and fifty years ago the Holy Spirit, who leads the Church into all truth, taught the Westminster divines all that is in the famous confession. And now the same Holy Spirit is about to tell the Presbyterians of to-day that he was only joking then in what he said about heathens and infants being damned. Why, one of the Presbyteries has already decided, by vote, that only non-elect adults go to hell—that there are no non-elect infants. They say nothing about the exact age at which the non-elect person is in danger. But that was, no doubt, an oversight. They might have specified, as well as not. All they need is a majority vote to decide it. And now the interesting query arises as to whether the vote of this Presbytery settles the question or whether we shall have to wait for more returns.

I suppose it is not in very good taste to joke about such things, but, really, if there were not a funny side to it, I should lose my temper, or else burst into tears, over what seems to me to be one of two things: hopeless idiocy or shameless hypocrisy.

And yet I suppose there are persons among the Presbyterians to whom it appears quite possible to create facts by a majority vote.

But there is one thing this voting does. It offers the tangible evidence that what I am always telling you is true. It shows you at a glance that every Church is simply a machine for the management of religious politics. A creed is not meant to be a declaration of what is true. It is the formulation of a number of compromise statements upon which the religious politicians are willing to agree, and is therefore, necessarily, *not true*. The Westminster confession was framed for the purpose of uniting several parties in the Church. Every other creed is formed for the same purpose. A creed is to the Church exactly what a platform is to a political party. The Church is nothing more nor less than a religious political party. In the Catholic Church things are settled in the star chamber, because that Church is a monarchy. In the Protestant Church things are prepared in a caucus and settled in a convention, because that Church is a republic. The Church has its office-holders chosen from among the clergy, and the clergy constitute a set of politicians, as ambitious, as scheming, as time-serving, as dishonest, as tricky, as any other set of politicians in the world.

Look at them as they sat in the Metropolitan Opera House a few evenings ago, almost within arms-length of the suffering poor, spending two hours over a course dinner, talking and laughing gaily, while an orchestra gave them music, and strains from the German opera in the main room of the building floated in upon them. After such a dinner, in such a place, the reverend politicians arose and began to discuss, in witty speeches, whether the heathen and non-elect infants are really damned through all eternity or not. And by and by they will decide that the Church has been teaching lies for two hundred and fifty years, and will start out with a fresh political platform, and declare that everybody will be damned who believes the old and does not believe the new creed.

How can sensible people have any reverence for such an institution? How can you fail to see that it was against such hypocrisy, such Phariseism, that the noble Jesus flung himself in scorn and hatred? How can you fail to see that one of the things that makes life worth living is the privilege of fighting against this organized hypocrisy, this infamous debaser of the mind, that has created a God who is the scandal of the world and will not give him up, if by any skill of platform making he can be kept upon his cruel throne?

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

OMNIPRESENCE.

BY EMMA ROOD TUTTLE.

LISPING Blue-eyes went to church,
For she 'd pretty things to wear,
And she listened, as she ought,
While the preacher did declare,
In his most Talmagic style.
"God, our Lord, is everywhere!"

Blue-eyes had a roguish bent,
Sweet, and harmless, but she thought,
"I don't want Him watching me;
In some mischief I'll be caught,
For nobody's little girl
Can do *always* as she ought."

She was worried, and next day
Sought her mother's sympathy.
"Mamma," said the little one,
"Is God in this room with me?"
"Yes, my dear." "And on the lawn?"
"Yes, in every place there be."

Blue-eyes dropped her flossy head
On her dog in earnest thought.
No philosopher could have been
More provokingly distraught,—
Such a bothering thing to know
Had the preacher's sermon taught!

Half in pretty petulance
Out among the flowers ran she.
Dash ran after, but she stamped,
"Dog, go back, and leave me be!
It is bad enough to know
God is always 'tagging' me!"

GIORDANO BRUNO.

Editor Freethinkers' Magazine :

I see that you have given a large amount of space of late in your Magazine, to articles on *Giordano Bruno*.—articles generally of great intelligence and high value, and well adapted to draw attention at this time to his name and most worthy memory. This is fitting, for Bruno was incontestably one of the noble confessors in the army of witnesses and martyrs for Humanity, well meriting to stand among the signally illustrious in that sacred band. He has hitherto been for most part among the unrecognized, uncrowned heroes in history, little known, and generally, so far as spoken of or recognized at all, maligned and misknown. The time for his vindication, for the rescue of his name from the obscurity and the obloquy that had fallen upon it, has fully come, and I am glad to see that so goodly a number are rising up to do this man the justice that has so long waited, in his case, to find its fitting champion and defender.

Bruno was one of the ante-reformers, viewed in relation to the comprehensive and deep-reaching reforms that have come and are coming more and more in our time. He was the forerunner of Spinoza, then of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and through them of names like Emerson and Parker in our own country. He is in important sense the progenitor, early apostle and father of the movement for Free Thought now going forward with such ever-increasing and resistless force in America not only, but throughout the world at the present time.

In philosophy he was signally gifted, and of profound insight; in scholarship in whatever pertains to the history of speculative thought, in enthusiasm and commanding eloquence, he was perhaps without a peer in his day, while in moral heroism, in devotion to an ideal, in quenchless courage and invincible fortitude, he has no rival in that time, and very few that can stand beside him, in any age. "Approved in action and in suffering," Carlyle says of Fichte. We may emphatically declare that of him.

I was strongly drawn a good many years ago to the study of this name, and read at the time with some care several of his writings. An account I prepared of him—giving such facts as I could gain of his life and his thought—appeared in the *Christian Examiner*, Boston, March, 1865. This was, so far as I am aware, the first paper written in this country upon Bruno. First beginning as it was, it was crude and partial, undertaken and done amid many difficulties.

Since that time great progress has been made in this matter. To say nothing of the valuable works that have appeared in Europe, giving careful account of this man's life, writings, philosophy, quite recently Mr. Davidson's admirable lecture has been published in our own country, more complete, thorough, and in all ways satisfactory, than anything I had been able to give. Fresh sources of information, hidden through these centuries of intervening time since the burning of Bruno, have been laid open, explored, and the interest in him, his thought, his brave, tragic career has, with all thoughtful minds, greatly risen.

I transcribe herewith a few paragraphs from the article referred to, thinking

they may possibly have a measure of interest for your readers. You shall be wholly free to use them or not, as may seem best to you.

"The divine influences, he affirms, are constant, uniform, perennial, ever present to the soul, 'always knocking at the door of the perceptive and apprehensive powers.' Man's entire business in his relation to them is to take attitude, 'to open the window' that the sunlight may come in. * * * Virtue is its own reward, sin 'bears within itself the principle of its own punishment.' Jesus stands pre-eminent through all ages, 'Shepherd of shepherds,' but Moses, Hermes, Zoroaster, Zamolxis, and the like, have wrought to the same high end, and are of like relation and merit with him. Truth is Bible, and the volume of the sacred canon is broad as the inspired utterance of man, confined not to Greek and Hebrew tongues, but extant in fragments more or less complete in all the monuments of human speech. Let all the records be searched, and by careful scrutiny and sifting of 'profane' and 'sacred' both, the sentences of the immortal Scripture be gathered up. This was 'abomination' No. 2, found against him by the court, an atrocious heresy in those days, and not become approved orthodoxy even in ours. The Church is no narrow ecclesiasticism, no petty conclave set apart by solemn rite, and maintained exclusive by certain rigorous specialties of belief and observance, but is evermore the brotherhood of the true, its ritual broad as the practice of all virtue, its fellowships deep, spontaneous and living as the communion of souls. Its priesthood are the interpreters of Nature, expositors of the Divine, anointed not with Oil but with Truth, wielding the keys of a kingdom of heaven not fictitious but real, opening day by day the immensities of Life to men, and lifting them ever to new freedom and blessedness, a hierarchy of wisdom and nobleness, God-ordained and perpetual.

"These last, according to Monk Scioppius, whose hints, although partial and distorted, are yet without difficulty intelligible, were among the grounds on which Bruno received condemnation. The doctrines were accounted blasphemous, 'horrid absurdities,' 'abominations,' far more monstrous than anything yet found in Lutheranism. The common people in Rome had it on the day of the martyrdom, that a Lutheran was burned; 'and I might,' says Scioppius, 'have thought the same, had I not been present at the sacred tribunal when sentence was pronounced, and so been in position to know what sort of heresies he held.' 'So absurd and monstrous,' he declares, 'have not been maintained by any philosophers or heretics, whether ancient or modern.'

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"And first among these (viz.: the eminent thinkers who stand at the opening of the modern time, and to whom reference had been made, viz.: Des Cartes, Spinoza, Kant, Schelling etc.), is Bruno. He taught the teachers. He is the earliest apostle, as also a sainted martyr, in that Church. Marching in the van, he bears the first torch-light in that grand illuminating procession. All see clearer for his ray, all articulate plainer for his word. The debt of these thinkers to him, it is not easy to compute. His presence appears constantly; and the traces of his thought are in every page from Des Cartes to Hegel.

"But more than this, higher than any speculative service of whatever value rendered by Bruno to mankind, is his brave, manly life, his heroic death. Philosopher of the infinite, proclaiming the soul, the wealth of its privilege, the exhaustlessness of its powers, he sought to realize this in life, to incarnate it in character. The history, partial as it is, tells how well he succeeded. To the end it was a glorious march, every step a triumph. Here was the consummation of culture, the conquest of circumstance, repose in the inner verities of truth and being, untouched by any utmost severity of infliction and loss.

"The trials he was called to endure were of no ordinary type. In point of intensity, of severe unabated rigor, they have perhaps no parallel in the history of suffering. A lone, unfriended man, everywhere obnoxious, he was hated and hunted from country to country, no foot of 'free soil' for him in all Europe, at

length seized and immured, wasted by long confinement, and broken again and again by the most excruciating tortures. Shut out during those eight long years from the dear sunlight he loved so well, and seeing in all the time never a friend's face, hearing never a friend's voice,—only the hollow mockery of false lips,—kept, moreover in a state of harrowing suspense, not a syllable broken to him of the nature of his fate, or the probable duration of his sufferings. No pen has drawn the record, the darkness of the dungeon shuts down upon it,—the prisons at Rome purposely are without echo,—and this history, like so much else of tragedy, must remain forever unwritten.

"But we know the issue. There was such temper in this steel that no extremest heats could draw it. Dungeon and rack and impious breath were alike powerless to soil this purity or touch this virtue. Bruno came out as he went in, a true man, a loyal spirit, unreduced, nay, indefinitely enriched, invigorated and exalted.

"And the martyrdom seems fit close to the career, fit crown to so grand a life. There was no shrinking. Cheerfully that form, pale, wasted and broken, seeming too attenuated for human, the feet scarcely touching the ground, the eyes glancing upward into the unbarred immensity, issued from the dungeon's gate and glided forth to meet the last infliction. Himself prophetically present in the scene, he gives us his word to the thronging multitude: 'If of the infinite ill ye have dread, give me place, O people: guard you well of my consuming fire!' And again: 'Open, open the way; in kindness, spare this sightless, speechless face, all harsh obstructions. ye dense multitude; while the form, toil-worn and drooping, goes knocking at the gates of less painful, but of deeper death!'

"Without fear or sorrow he placed himself against the stake, and accepted the fiery torture. In all the multitude of men and women gathered that day about him, no friend's face beamed, no friend's voice spoke to lift with cheer the heart of the dying martyr. All was hate and cursing. But not unused to solitudes, he was able to stand now in this deeper, to walk this howling waste also, alone.

"And after that they had no more that they could do. Flames could not quench this life, nor wild, exultant shouts rending the air drown this voice to silence. Higher and more than before it rises, sounding over the world, and mingling herewith the eternal. Bruno could in no other way have achieved such success. It was transcendent, sublime. The majesty of an unbroken will, a soul equal to its utmost occasion, rising superior to all considerations of condition, knowing only to walk with God, to do and endure for Truth, Virtue, Mankind, laying down the life freely at the hand of those it toils to save, its magnanimity exhaustless, its faithfulness invincible,—there is no such grandeur in nature, no like miracle in history.

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"It cost sacrifice; all greatness does. He stood at the opening of life, the full years yet before him. He had not yet wrought anything, had not uttered himself. All thus far written was only rudest hint of what he felt within him. 'preludes,' as he describes it, 'of the piece, dim outlines and shadows of the picture, threads laid and arranged for the web.' He would fain have remained so as in some sort to finish the work hardly yet begun. Plans peer out in these youthful writings of many things yet to be done, and far more entire and worthy than aught yet realized. 'I purpose,' he says in the *Spaccio*, 'yet to treat moral philosophy according to the inner light wherewith the divine sun of intelligence has illumined and does illumine me.' A little farther opportunity were a priceless privilege. Might he not have it? But great necessity called, and he was ready for the answer. Bowing manfully in resignation, he accepted the mandate, and retired from history.

"Bruno died, be it remembered, by no extrinsic, outward necessity. The necessity was intrinsic, the requirement from within. Only eight days before the burning, he might have saved his life by recantation. But dear as was the

gift, and precious as seemed the advantage, he refused to purchase it at price so fatal, and chose rather the stern alternative.

"And the surprise was better than any fulfillment. He, too, was building greater than he knew. Whatever gift of speech had in his best hour been his,—and we are told he was an orator of singular range and power, perhaps no such voice in Europe,—Bruno was never so grandly eloquent, so resistlessly powerful as now. The apostle of the soul, it was fit that he should utter also this testimony, should baptize his evangel in blood, and go up in the fire-chariot to heaven.

"Nor may we say that this death befell too early, cutting off young life in its opening, and forbidding the promised performance. The mission of the visible is *intimation*. It cannot give more. Any life, though of the longest, is but a hint, and completest scripture only a fragment, a broken paragraph of the Universal Volume. This done, its errand is performed; it has completeness such as in any case is possible to history. Faces pass away, beaming but for an hour. We look, but can see them no more; yet the reality that there dwelt enshrined in symbol, abides untouched of death. Jesus likens his appearance among men to the lightning, which flashes from east to west, for the instant, illumining the heavens with its splendors, then vanishes from the view forever. But that eye-glance, albeit but for a moment, was omnipotent with effect. It wrote with sunbeams, and touched the heart of all the generations. Bruno came, and remained for his hour, glistening with light, and filling the air with music. It availed for the purpose of destiny. He had made sign manual, had dropped his hint, and he also withdrew.

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"As speculative *thinker*, Bruno may, in any time, be known to but few. Perhaps the dialect is too rude, the things given many of them too initial and embryonic, that any considerable number should ever feel drawn to their study. But in *character*, which was the flowering of his thought, the consummation of his philosophy,—as *doer*, great in action and suffering, triumphant amid the utmost rigors of trial, unshaken and loyal to the last,—he speaks in universal tongue, intelligible and impressive to all hearts. And as age after age, men come more and more to draw from these sacraments of the past, gathering baptisms from all noble deeds, and bread of life from every heroic example, so more and more shall they bless Heaven for the gift also of this soul, and for the high record of wisdom, loyalty and love, wrought out in this shrouded, but resplendent history."

CHARLES DE B. MILLS.

SYRACUSE, N. Y., JAN. 1, 1890.

LIBERALISM IN NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN.

Editor Freethinkers' Magazine :

Freethinkers in New York and vicinity have no lack of opportunities to hear their glorious cause advocated.

"The Society for Ethical Culture" meets every Sunday morning in Chickering Hall, where Felix Adler, or his assistant, M. Mangasarian, speak. Hugh O. Pentecost, who has evolved so rapidly lately, speaks every Sunday evening in Masonic Temple; also in Newark in the morning, and in Brooklyn in the afternoon. The Manhattan Liberal Club meets every Friday evening at 220 E. 15th street.

The Brooklyn Philosophical Association meets Sunday afternoons in Fraternity Rooms, cor. Bedford avenue and So. Second street, Brooklyn, and the

Brooklyn Ethical Association meets alternate Sunday evenings in J. W. Chadwick's church; and then there are a large number of Single Tax Clubs, Nationalists' Clubs, etc., where the members and speakers are generally very radical.

I have been in the habit of visiting these places for some time, and thought perhaps some of the readers of this Magazine, who are not so fortunate as to live in the midst of these warriors for universal mental freedom, would like to hear from them occasionally.

Sunday, January 5th, I went to hear Mr. Pentecost. These meetings commence with an overture by the orchestra; then the audience sing a hymn, taken from the Liberal Hymn Book. Next Mr. Pentecost and the audience read, alternately, extracts which he has printed on the programme, generally taken from some reformer's works; in this instance, they were by William Lloyd Garrison. This is followed by a soprano solo by Mrs. Pentecost, which is really worth going a good ways to hear. Another hymn, announcements and collection, another song by Mrs. Pentecost, and then Mr. Pentecost is ready to entertain, instruct, or shock his hearers, as the case may be.

He spoke this Sunday on his two years of freedom from the Church. He started by saying that the meetings had outlived the longest term that was allowed them by any of the prophets. He said: "We have no 'movement,' no 'creed,' no catch-words, nothing that would be responsive to the 'hoop-la!' of the priest or the politician. The priest gets along because he is part of the machinery of the Church. A man needs very little sense to get along somehow in a pulpit. But an isolated individual like me has no Church to catch him when he stumbles morally. So you see there is nothing for me to do but to stand up to the rack and follow logic to its conclusion, as nearly as I can."

A few of the other good things he said were: "A good deal of fun has been poked at me because I have changed my mind during the past two years. But I do not mind it. Some persons never change their minds, just as some persons seldom change their underclothing. But they are not pleasant companions. I read of a fire which burned the house of an Episcopal rector, and he lost two or three hundred sermons he had written up ahead, so that work would be easy in his old age. What a comfortable mind he had. He not only never had changed it, but he knew beforehand that he never would. I never really began to live until I learned how to change my mind. It is a perfectly delicious sensation to discover that you have enough mind to change."

Once he believed three times one was one and one times one was three. It was bad arithmetic, but good theology to some. "If any one should call me an Atheist," he said, "I might not choose to take the name, but I would have hard work to win a libel suit against him."

He said although he had changed his mind very often, he had never gone sideways nor backwards, but always ahead and a little nearer to the truth. He closed by saying that he hoped the audience shared with him in the hope that "before another year rolls round, the dawning light of Freedom's day will have grown brighter with the promise of the rising sun."

After the lecture he stood at the door and shook hands with every one as they passed out. He has a table out in the hall where the FREETHINKERS' MAGAZINE and other Liberal publications are on sale.

Sunday, January 12th, the most gifted little woman that treads this earth spoke before the Brooklyn Philosophical Association. I refer to Helen H. Gardener, whose book, "Men, Women and Gods,"* should be read by every woman on the face of the earth. She delivered her well-known address entitled, "Sex in Brain." As it has been delivered several times before, and has been published, I will only give a few extracts from it. After telling how she started out interviewing the most prominent physicians, to get their idea on the difference in the male and the female brain, and how they all referred her to a certain physician, she says when she called on him he told her no such investigation as she was making had ever been made, although no fair record of the difference of sex in brain could be possibly made without it. He was also frank and honest, and told her where knowledge stopped and guessing began.

She said: "It has grown to be a very general belief, that there are great and well-defined natural anatomical differences between the brains of the sexes of the human race; that these differences are well-known to the practitioner or anatomist." Dr. Hammond says there is a perceptible difference in the male and female brain, and it is only necessary to compare an average male with an average female brain, to perceive the difference *at once*. She offered to supply him with twenty adult brains, part male and part female, and defied him to tell her the difference. And although this offer was made over a year and a-half ago, he has not called upon her for the brains yet.

She discovered that no remarkable woman's brain had ever been examined. "Woman is ticketed to fit the hospital subjects and tramps, the unfortunates whose brains fall into the hands of the profession, as it were, by mere accident; while man is represented by the brains of the Cromwells, Cuviers, Byrons, etc. By this method the average of man's brains is carried to the highest level, that of woman is kept at its lowest; and then there is claimed only one hundred grammes difference." This being the case, she thinks it will be as well for women to take a hand in future investigations; and hopes some of our able women's brains may be examined after they are through with them. "Until that is done," she says, "no honest nor fair comparison is possible. At present there is too great a desire on the part of these large-brained gentlemen, like Dr. Hammond, to look upon themselves and their brains as 'infant industries,' entitled to and in need of a very high protective tariff, to prevent anything like a fair and equal competition with the feminine product."

The lecture was very well received, and the platform was given up to discussions on the lecture, in speeches of ten minutes each. Among those who spoke were Mrs. Whitehead, Mr. Burton, Mr. King, Mr. Pink and Mrs. Beckwith, who got thirty-nine votes for mayor of Brooklyn, at the last election. It would take too much space to tell all the different ideas of the lecture. A Mr. Blanchard who spoke, said he should think a woman, so far advanced as Miss Gardener was, would not wear ear-rings, as they were a relic of barbarism, when she surprised him and caused a good deal of laughter, by stepping up in front of him and showing her unpierced ears.

Of course it is needless to say she had no trouble in "doing up her critics."

* For sale at this office. Price 50 cents.

She said : " We don't want any help from the men, —just keep your hands off." Among the other things she said were : " I don't know of any man in this world that knows enough to run himself and me too." " When I want to hear good common-sense, I listen to Mrs. Stanton or Col. Ingersoll." " You will never have a race of good men, until you have a race of free women." " The men have got to get their brains from their mothers." " Women have no rights, men have no rights, rights have no sex, rights are human."

She accused her critics of being emotional, and said they had not got the Bible idea out of their heads yet, in reference to woman. " But I don't care a snap for the Bible," she said, " St. Paul is getting mouldy."

In my next letter I will tell you of some of the other places I have mentioned.

H. J. CLARK.

THE WOMAN'S CONVENTION.

WE very gladly publish the following call for a National Liberal Woman's Convention, and hope it may be generally and generously responded to. It will be, we are sure, the first convention of the kind ever held. If it shall prove a success, it will startle the theological bigots of the Church, who now feel sure that they hold the women of the country in the most loyal subordination to their dictation. They are aware that when the women leave them their occupation is gone. EDITOR.

TO LIBERAL WOMEN.

The Convention referred to in the January Magazine, for purpose of uniting the liberal-thought women of the country in an organization, will be held Feb. 24th and 25th, in Willard's Hall, Washington, D. C. There has been wide approval of the plan from both women and men of distinction in the lines of radical thought, and it is hoped a large number of delegates will be present. Some of the best speakers—Liberal, Suffrage, Freethought, broad-minded Agnostics, etc.,—will take part in opposition to a change of the secular nature of our government, and the retardation of liberty through false clerical teaching. This Convention will mark an era in freedom and liberation of the human mind from that power which for ages controlled the conscience, under pretence of Divine authority.

Headquarters will be at Willard's Hotel, where delegates are requested to report to Mrs. Gage upon arrival in the city.

Further information can be obtained by addressing

MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE,
Fayetteville, N. Y.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

A FREETHINKER.

WHAT constitutes a Freethinker? This question is often asked and we will try to answer it. It is to be perfectly honest intellectually. That is, to be able to examine every question from the stand-point of reason, using all the means in our power to arrive at the exact truth, and when we have thus formed an opinion be honest enough to express that opinion regardless of the opinions of others. And as Freethinkers it devolves upon us to lay aside, so far as possible, all prejudices, and to clear our minds of everything that has a tendency to give us a bias one way or the other. And further than this, it is necessary, to be a consistent Freethinker, to grant to other persons the same right to hold and maintain their views that we claim for ourselves; always remembering that they are no farther from us than we are from them.

And some of the readers of this Magazine may desire to know the position the Freethinkers take regarding the Christian's Bible. It is this, as we understand it: Freethinkers have no war with the Bible—they should have no prejudices against it. Here is a book that has been handed down through many generations. It consists, in the first place, of two great divisions, the Old and the New Testament. Each of these great divisions is composed of many separate books, evidently written by different individuals, and at different periods of time, but no one knows for a certainty who wrote any of these books or when they were written. We see at once that this Bible is made up like all other books—that it is printed on paper and bound by the book-binder. There is nothing about its construction different from other books that we know are made by men. Now the Christian presents this book to a Freethinker and says to him: This book is written by the inspiration of God—every word of it is true and you must believe it or incur the penalty of eternal damnation; and further than that, it is dangerous to doubt any part of it. To this the Freethinker will naturally reply: My dear sir, how am I to know

that what you say in relation to this book is true? On what authority do you make these statements? Are you prepared to give reasonable evidence to sustain the claim you make for this book? And the Christian's reply will be something like this: These inquiries that you are making are evidences to me that you are unregenerated—that you are full of sin and on the highway to perdition. You are not to ask for *evidence* to satisfy your carnal reason, but you are to take what I and other Christians tell you about this book on faith. We took it on faith, our fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers took it on faith, and that is what you must do if you desire to obtain the benefits to be derived from its sacred pages. "He that *believeth* shall be saved, he that *believeth not* shall be damned."

Now this is a kind of argument that does not commend itself to the judgment of a Freethinker. He has an entirely different method of arriving at an opinion in relation to this book—the same method that he employs in examining any other book. And in the investigation of this work he is not so much interested in its authorship or its antiquity as he is in what it contains. Our Christian friend claims that God is its author. But the Freethinker will insist that whether it be written by a god or a man it must accord with science, reason, and with justice and purity, to entitle it to commendation. He can't understand that an error made by a god or an unjust or immoral sentence expressed by one is any more sacred than it would be if Man was the author of it. Therefore the Freethinker puts the book on its own merits without regard to the claims made for it on the one hand or the objections urged against it on the other.

Then the Freethinker takes this view of what is known as religion. When he looks over the world he finds that there are a great variety of religions; nearly every race of people have one of their own and some races a number of them, and these great divisions are, many of them, subdivided into hundreds of smaller ones, and the advocates of each claim that their particular religion, or section, is better than any of the others, and much the safest passport to the "Kingdom of Heaven." And like the claim for the Bible, you must take these religions on faith. When any of these religions are pressed upon the attention of a Freethinker, and he begins to ask questions in relation to them, he is at once informed that it is dangerous to "cavil" with this sub-

ject, that the only safe way to pursue is to immediately fall on your knees before God and admit that you are a vile sinner and implore his forgiveness. That to question these claims put forth by the Church, is to imperil the eternal welfare of your soul. But the Freethinker takes an entirely different view of the subject. He contends that his best and safest friend is reason, and that, consequently, he must not accept anything, or indorse anything, until he has thoroughly investigated it. He contends that if this thing called religion is what its friends claim for it, the more thoroughly it is tested, in the light of reason, the brighter it will appear, and nothing makes him more suspicious of its real value than to see its friends trying to protect it from the scrutiny of reason. Therefore the claim that the Church puts forth, that religion is "above reason," is to the Freethinker very suspicious sophistry.

But, notwithstanding the Freethinker rejects the Christian view of the Bible and of Religion, he is an earnest advocate of certain views and opinions of his own. He accepts truth wherever found. For this reason, although he rejects the claim made for the Bible and Religion, he accepts whatever is true or good in either. The parable of the Good Samaritan he fully indorses and the Golden Rule is his daily rule of action—that is if he is a consistent Freethinker. He rejects the Christian doctrine of the atonement without any reference to whether it is taught in the Bible or not, solely on the ground that it is unjust for an innocent man to suffer for the crimes of a guilty one. He rejects the idea of forgiveness, as held by the Church, and proclaims the doctrine that the violation of Nature's laws *always* and *everywhere* produce misery, and that the only way to escape the penalty of sin is not to commit it. The Freethinker does not believe in sudden conversions—that is that a vile, bad man can be changed into an angel of light in a moment. He believes that improvement is, and must be, of slow growth and by constant development. He therefore insists that if children are to become perfect men and women, the process that is to bring that about must commence in their childhood—in fact farther back than that. Freethinkers believe in heaven and hell, but they believe that each individual is already in one or the other, or more properly in both alternately, the one more than the other according to their character and life: and as to a future state of existence, unless he be a Spiritualist, he knows nothing about it and honestly says so, and consistently confines himself to the work of making the most he can of the present life. His motto being "One world at a time."

BOOK REVIEW.

GREAT SENATORS OF THE UNITED STATES FORTY YEARS AGO; with Personal Recollections, etc., of Calhoun, Benton, Clay, Houston, J. Davis and Webster. By OLIVER DYER. Robert Bonner's Sons, N. Y.; pp. 316; price, \$1.00.

An esteemed friend, laying down this little book, said: "Now that reminds me of the oxen an old farmer used to brag about when I was a boy. 'That nigh ox,' he would say, 'is just the biggest and best fellow that ever was, but that off ox is just a little bigger, a little better and always ahead of him.' Our 'Uncle Sam,' with Mr. Dyer to tell the story, is in the position of that old farmer. His herd of statesmen were a wonderful set of good fellows, but Calhoun topped the heap, until Webster came and carried off heap and all."

We could hardly believe that all these good recollections and stories about our great men came from one who actually knew them, and from intimate intercourse with them. But such is the fact; Mr. Dyer, as reporter for many years in the United States Senate, learned to know these great men at first hand, and what he tells of them has the vivid interest of personal presence. It is some relief to know that though "no man is a hero to his valet," he may be to his reporter. Fortunate is it, too, that this reporter has given us the truest insight into the motives and characters of these men as they were acted out in real life. The book is therefore inimitable and invaluable. We wish every American could read it, and know what giants there were in those days, and what "incomputable" services they rendered to our country. Especially is this remark true of Daniel Webster. As Mr. Dyer paints, describes and appreciates Webster, that great expounder, orator and statesman takes rank between Washington and Lincoln, and forms with them the trio

of great Americans. To Webster belongs the glory of the intellectual victory which made the continuance of the Union possible. Without him Lincoln, Seward and Grant would have striven in vain. When Webster finished with Hayne and Calhoun in 1830 and 1833, the Union had a solid bottom under it which made it invincible in all the subsequent contests of politics and war. When we think that the great republic thus saved is the *ars* of Liberty, the ideal and the hope of the world, we may well say that the services of Webster were indeed invaluable. His reply to Hayne is probably, and as Mr. Dyer seems to think, the greatest speech ever delivered—the greatest, when we consider the man, the subject, the occasion and the consequences. All other speeches seem insignificant when compared with it, for it kept us one people. It is buttressed by the almost equal reply to Calhoun in 1833; and the wonderful orations on the settlement of New England, Washington, Adams and Jefferson, Bunker Hill, and the Capitol at Washington.

These productions belong to a class unsurpassed in the annals of eloquence, statesmanship, patriotism, and, may we not say, *of inspiration*? Other countries may boast of the greatest poets, generals and philosophers of our race, but America has the unrivalled orator. The celebrated passages of Demosthenes, Cicero, Chatham, Burke, Mirabeau, Danton, etc., pale before the grandeur of the new world and the new hope of mankind that rose victorious from the mighty heart, and brain, and voice of this "God-like" American. Do you think this is all wild talk? Notice how he appeals to the generations, and links the Republic to Humanity in continuity and solidarity as the highest motive for its preservation and welfare. Take time to read the great speeches of Webster. Let Mr. Dyer tell you how he

saw and heard this man. How he appeared in ordinary life; how he rose above the limits of sections, the chicanery of party; how the "howlers" (of whom Mr. Dyer was one) were silenced when his sons had fallen in battle, and marching armies kept time with the rhythm of his prophetic periods. Then think where Webster stands among those who have made republicanism *safe* and great and glorious in the history of the world?

T. B. W.

ACTS OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY APOSTLES.

By PARKER PILLSBURY. Concord, N. H. Pp. 503. Price \$1.50. For sale at this office.

This volume was issued a number of years ago, but recently came under our notice, and we can truly say that in our opinion it is one of the most valuable publications in this country—that is as an educator to the rising generation. One thing may be stated for a certainty: It will never be placed in our Sunday-school libraries, nor be advertised by the clergy. The reason why is this: It shows precisely what the position of the Christian Church was on the slavery question before the war, while it existed. It proves conclusively that Judge Birney spoke the truth when he said: "The American Church is the bulwark of American Slavery." It is a large volume, well bound and printed on good paper, and every Freethinker in this country ought to have a copy in his library.

"THE TIGER STEP OF THEOCRATIC DESPOTISM, by HUDSON TUTTLE, is a pamphlet of eight pages (price 5 cents), and is for sale at this office. We know of no publication better adapted for use by the American Secular Union than this one, and we here take the liberty of calling President Westbrook's attention to it. This is the first line of the pamphlet: "The people of this country are sleeping over a volcano, but know it not." Those of our readers who desire to acquaint themselves with the work of "The God

in the Constitution Party" and their allies, will do well to inclose five cents for this tract, when writing to this office. We can assure them they will be both interested and instructed, and their vision as to their duty as good citizens made clearer than it was before reading it. Hudson Tuttle is one of the most vigorous and pointed writers in this country, and, as the old saying is, always strikes the nail he is driving squarely on the head.

MEN, WOMEN AND GODS, by HELEN H. GARDENER, has often been noticed in these columns, and we desire merely to say here that the Truth Seeker Company has just published a new edition in paper covers, containing Col. Ingersoll's Introduction and a fine likeness of Miss Gardener, that we are selling for fifty cents.

"THOMAS PAINE'S AGE OF REASON" is an old publication, but is always new to those who have never read it. We have a number of copies we are selling for twenty-five cents.

"THE CANDLE FROM UNDER THE BUSHEL," we noticed a few months since. As we then stated, it consists of *thirteen hundred and six questions to the clergy*. All of them pertinent and to the point. The book has 208 pages, and we sell it for fifty cents. Every Liberal ought to have a copy.

THE FIGHT WITH ROME. By JUSTIN D. FULTON, D. D. Marlboro, Mass. Pratt Brothers, Publishers. Pp. 397. Price \$2.00.

This large book is very fully noticed in an advertisement on the second page of the cover of this number of the Magazine and we ask all our readers to peruse it carefully. Dr. Fulton is a very able man and he has his "Fight with Rome" from a Protestant Christian's stand-point. But we think he is growing more radical and fast learning that all ecclesiasticism is about the same thing. Although this book does not ask *all* that the American Secular Union demands, it is a most valuable arsenal from which to draw arguments in favor of State Secularization. For sale at this office.

ALL SORTS.

ANDREW D. WHITE shows up the Myth of Lot's Wife in the February *Popular Science Monthly*.

COPIES of the eig'th volume of this Magazine are now bound and ready for delivery. Price \$3.21.

WE are sure Mr. Holyoake's article on our first pages will be read with interest by all our literary readers.

WE have just issued a second splendid edition of the engraving of the Bruno Monument for framing. See advertisement.

THE One Hundred safety fund list is again crowded out. Only about one-half the stock is taken. Friends, let us hear from you.

WE will send ten or more numbers to any *one person* during this year, commencing with the late January number, for one dollar each.

Do not fail to read carefully the advertisement on the second page of the cover of this number entitled, "The Fight with Rome."

THOSE of our friends who have been notified by postal-card that their subscription has expired will please let us hear from them soon.

WE will here repeat the clubbing terms for this Magazine. For a club of five up to ten \$1.50 each; for a club of ten and over \$1.25 each.

READ over carefully all the "Freethought Gems" on the third page of the cover of this Magazine and see how much you can get for \$1.00.

NOW that the Magazine is enlarged, we can send but *eight* numbers of one issue for \$1.00. We hope many will often order that number for missionary purposes.

The Truth Seeker Annual and Freethinkers' Almanac, for 1900, has made its appearance. It is full of most valuable matter. We have it for sale, price twenty-five cents.

THE March number of this Magazine will be one of the most valuable we have ever issued. We intend that every number shall be an improvement on all former ones.

WE have received many books and pamphlets during the last month that should have been noticed in this number, but want of space compels us to wait until next month.

DR. JAMES L. YORK, the well-known Freethought lecturer, has just issued a beautiful

volume of Lectures and Select Poems. The price is \$1.00. Order them of him at San Jose, California.

READER, if you have any Presbyterian friends request them to read Mr. Pentecost's lecture in this number. It will not prove dry reading to any one whatever may be his or her religious or non-religious views.

"WHY PRIESTS SHOULD WED," by Justin D. Fulton, D. D., is a book that has caused great commotion throughout the country. It has heretofore sold for \$1.50. We can furnish it to our readers for \$1.00, post paid.

KATE EUNICK WATTS, wife of Charles Watts, has just written and published a very valuable pamphlet of twenty-four pages, entitled: "Christianity, Defective and Unnecessary." Price ten cents, for sale at this office.

"THE HORRORS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION," by Charles Watts, is a pamphlet of twenty-four pages that every Freethinker in America should purchase and circulate. The price is ten cents. We have it for sale.

P. H. FOSTER of Babylon, Long Island, N. Y., as should other good Freethinkers, advertises in this Magazine. Read his advertisement on the fourth page of the cover, and then if you need trees and shrubs, write to him.

WE have just learned of the death of Mrs. Elizabeth H. Church of San Francisco, Cal. She was an earnest Freethinker and a noble woman. We expect to publish her likeness, a short sketch of her life, and Mr. S. P. Putnam's able address, delivered at her funeral, in our next number.

NO one should fail to read the communication on Bruno, by C. De B. Mills, in this number. Mr. Mills is a most learned man and one of the deepest thinkers in this country. Years ago, before many of us knew much of the history of Bruno, he had made his life and death the subject of a very able and popular lecture.

MR. CHARLES WATTS is doing a grand work for Freethought in Canada, and also in this country, as editor of *Secular Thought*, one of the best of Liberal journals, also in the lecture field, in which he has but one superior; besides he is constantly writing and publishing in neat and convenient style most valuable pamphlets for Freethought missionary work. The Liberals of America ought to give Mr. Watts and his journal a most generous support.



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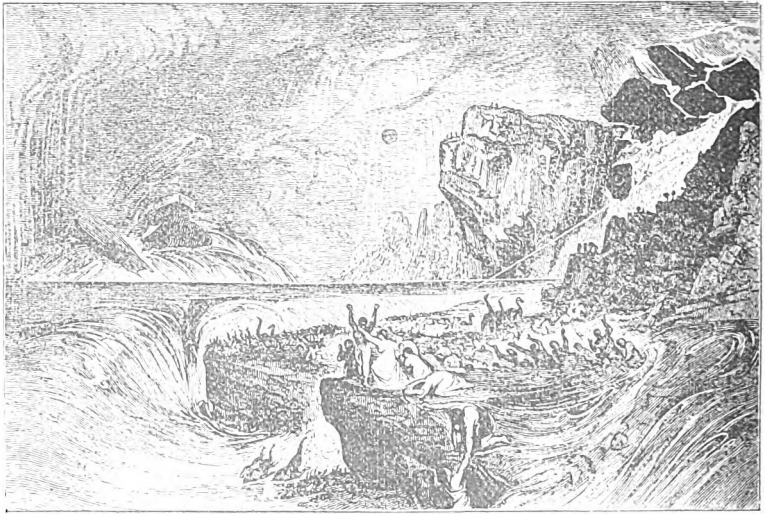
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If any one living to-day believes, from the bottom of his heart, that there was once a great Deluge that destroyed everything on the face of the earth but one family, and that rather poor stock, I am sorry for him. Let that one, whosoever he be, read this pamphlet of thirty-two pages by James M. McCann, and he will wonder how it was he has been fooled so long. Mr. McCann has made a careful research, and gives facts and figures—facts well authenticated and figures that do not lie. All of which show that the whole thing about the Deluge as told in the Bible is a wholesale myth and nothing more. Read the little pamphlet, then circulate it by the thousands and let the people see what idiots they have been to swallow such an idle tale. —*Susan H. Wilson.*

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