

THE TRUTH SEEKER

A Freethought and Agnostic Newspaper.

BELIEVE EVERYTHING THAT IS TRUE, AND NOTHING MORE. PROVE ALL THINGS.

AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.

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THE ERA OF REASON.

The Religion of This World Is Increasing Its Influence Over the Conduct of Men.

Where in the world are change and transition not taking place? In what field or phase of human thought or effort is not the transforming process at work? Look toward any of the departments of human life, one thing confronts us in each, the vast difference between the condition now and that within the memory of men. In the business world within the third of a century the entire plan has been changed. In the industrial world and in the applied arts, we are living in a world greatly different from that of our childhood. If we look to the political phase we find everywhere in the civilized world a strange, vital unrest. Never until with the recent years has the world witnessed a party with one plan, one ambition and having among its adherents representatives of every nation upon the globe. The teachers and writers of socialism assert the fact that there is no flag beneath which their comrades do not march, no government in which they are not citizens, and the inspiration and purpose of that body of men is simply political freedom and human justice. Or, if we look to the religious phase of human life, it is the most familiar fact that everywhere there is seething, yeasting unrest. Everywhere thought is billowing high and breaking in wild impetuous surges upon the rocks and cliffs of dogma and conservatism. Within a week the House of Commons of the English Parliament by a vote of more than two to one, has passed a resolution calling for the disestablishment of the church. What has taken place in France is beginning to have advocates in Spain, is already an accomplished fact in Germany, are things well known.

Every man is a willing or an unwilling factor in the progress of the world.

According to the old interpretation of life and the world, the functions and pretensions of the church were consistent and logical, but this life that we are living now had no meaning, no sanctities, no obligations and no rewards, except with reference to the life that is beyond. Man was in this world simply to prepare to go to some other. He lived here to get ready to meet his God. He was here only in a probationary state and was to be pitied for coming and congratulated when he left. The fundamental teaching was "Prepare to meet your God," and the church served as an instrument to help man in that preparation, to mediate between him and this terrific, threatening, dangerous being that he was destined soon or late to meet.

No attention was paid directly and primarily to this life. It was beneath the dignity of an immortal soul born to die to let his mind and heart be filled with the interests and attentions of the life that now is. Poverty was considered a blessing. Misery was construed as a certificate of good religious standing. The more a man suffered and was afflicted, the more certain he might be that he was looked after by God. If a child died, it was an act of God for the parents' good, and I myself have seen one man who,

BY DR. J. E. ROBERTS.

when told that God took his child in order to draw him, the father, closer to him, the God—I have seen one man and honored him for it, who said from the depths of agony and scorn, "If I believed God wilfully took my child, I would hate God."

That was the construction put upon life under the old teachings in the time of our childhood. If a man were prosperous, it was an occasion for suspicion. If he was poor and miserable and feeble and frail, he was looked upon as a fitting candidate for sainthood. The saints were always sickly and anemic. Sainthood meant feebleness, depression, loss of appetite, and melancholia. Heaven was a hospital. The only people that could be sure of the kindly providence and affections of God were the failures in this world, those who had lost out, the earthly bankrupts. Heaven was a kind of celestial poor house for their reception. Hell was peopled with the red-cheeked the robust, the happy and the prosperous, with the men that had found the world fairly pleasant to dwell in and had succeeded in getting the most of what was coming to them.

There is no language that can exaggerate or over-state the gloom that these old teachings hung like a cloud over human life. We were here to be solemn, to be miserable. Laughter was the siren's voice, and happiness was disloyalty to God. Every day was solemn and Sunday was made the most solemn of all. In those days we used to go to church and Sunday school and then come home and study the New England catechism, read the Bible, sing hymns, repeat the commandments and kneel in family prayer. The child was not allowed to pluck a flower, or pick and eat an apple, or whistle, or use his pocket-knife to whittle a stick. We were taught and believed that "I must not work, I must not play, upon God's holy sabbath day." We sang about how "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood stand dressed in living green," but we were taught that there was no beauty, no pleasure, no attractiveness, in the flower-gemmed fields this side the river of death. We were taught to sing, "I would not live always; I ask not to stay where storm after storm gathers dark o'er my way," and every one of us sang it, the little liars that we were. We were taught that the earth was a vale of tears, a desert drear, a place to be shunned. Religion did everything possible to make that thing true. We were cheered and reassured by the song that heaven was a place "where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths never end," and we were justified in thinking that if in the other world Sabbaths were any longer than they were in this, it would not take many of them to make a real eternity.

Once when a child I drove the cows to pasture of a Sunday morning, and on the way back the dog ran down and killed a squirrel. As any boy

of nine or ten years would do, I carried the squirrel home in a rapturous triumph. It was Sunday. The dog had killed it on Sunday. And I was forthwith ordered to take the thing out and bury it. The Sabbath had been desecrated, its sanctity had been violated by the dog!

And older brother of mine went hunting on a Saturday some number of miles from home. He hunted all day and returned early Sunday morning, bringing, with other things, a wild goose. The scoundrel did not say a thing at first about when he got it. The day after, but one, it was dressed and stuffed and put in a long iron drip pan and roasted in the oven with onions. We children sat around filling our lungs with the aroma that came from that oven. Dinner was at last ready and on the table. We children were all sitting there, eager, impatient, our appetites telegraphing rush orders, when that older brother, that twofold scoundrel, confessed that he had shot the goose on the way home Sunday morning. There was no argument. There was not a moment's delay. No one dared to make a protest. The stern head of the household ordered the guilty brother to take the platter with all of its contents, roast goose, onions, stuffing and brown gravy, and throw it to the pigs. That happened more years ago than I would willingly own. Many times since then I have eaten roast goose and onions, but never yet have I found one that tasted as good as that one smelled.

The argument that the church is out of date may be stated in two forms. In the first place, the church was always based upon absolutism. It has no part, no mission with philosophy, with science, or with reason. Look at it this way. Suppose the revelation, as the church claims, is of God. How does the church stultify and degrade itself and cast an aspersion upon its God by an attempt to prove the revelation divine? Suppose it is based upon the credibility of miracles. How does it degrade those miracles by deducing proof for them! Does any man think that if I believed that I had in my hand or in my heart a commission from the Almighty One to speak, I would attempt to justify or vindicate that commission before any tribunal of men? I would stand there, satisfied with that conviction, proud with that distinction and resistless with that dignity. Absolutism is the only foundation for the church. The church abdicated when it undertook to prove its pretensions. The one consistent churchman in this world is our friend the Pope. He makes no apologies to science, nor to governments, nor to politicians, nor to religionists. He says, "I, we are infallible; I, we hold the keys of heaven and hell; tremble, ye recalcitrants; fear, ye sinful men; outside of our benedictions, and beneath our curse there is everlasting death; here and here only is the way of salvation." That is consistent. That gentleman has my respect. The foundation of absolutism, I repeat, is the only possible founda-

tion for the religion that pretends to be supernatural in its origin and divine in its authority.

Little by little the separation will take place. More and more the division will come until at last all this civilized world will be either Roman Catholic or Freethinker.

The second argument is that the church did business on promises. The church has always existed for the other world, not for this. There was a time when this world was such a poor proposition, when men were so ignorant, when a living was so hard to get, when returns from labor were so poor and meager, that men spent a great deal of their time in dreaming about a better world; but as man advanced in knowledge and his experience widened, as science threw light upon his way and aided his efforts, the world became such a fairly respectable place that men forgot, for the time being, the other world, and commenced to live in this. Other worldism is losing more and more its hold and this worldism is increasing its influence over men.

From the standpoint of a social force the church has been a failure. It has demonstrated its inefficiency. What contribution has it ever made to the knowledge of the world, to the intellectual wealth of mankind, to science, to invention, to discovery? What do civilization and progress owe to the church? In every land where it has been supreme the nation has remained in superstition and ignorance. It has declined and retrograded and been left far behind in mankind's march of progress. The church and religion have been the bane of Ireland, the handicap of Scotland. France, in order that she might preserve the life of the republic, has been compelled to subordinate the church. Germany was never so mighty as since she subordinated the church to the state. Italy has entered upon a new national existence since she rescued herself from churchly dominion. In all of Europe, once the abject servant of the church, there remains Austria alone that acknowledges her ancient subjection. The church has been tried in every circumstance, under all conditions, with all possible variety of materials. With what result? Look at Mexico, at any of the South American republics, at any of the Latin nations where from time immemorial the church has held sway.

Why do we say these things? Why not be silent? Why not let well enough alone? Simply because well enough does not exist. Well enough is never good enough as long as better is possible. This nation is called a Christian nation. I suppose by that is meant it is a nation under the control and supreme influence of the church. If it is, then this nation constitutes an indictment against the church. Do you know that crime increases in the same ratio that the population does? Where is the influence of the church? Do you know that poverty is not being lessened in this land of ours, a land of unexampled abundance and incomparable plenty? What is the reason? I will tell you one reason and then I will tell you a possible cure. One reason is that the church has always held that poverty was a blessing, for somebody else. And the other reason is that it has always held that it was a divinely good thing for men to take care of the poor, that to build almshouses and asylums for the care of the needy and the indigent and the suffering was one of the most beautiful tributes man could pay to man, and I want to say to you that it is just that kind of delusion that has kept poverty increasing in the world. When we come to look upon the poor house as a disgrace to a community, when we come to regard any eleemosynary institution as an indictment against the humanity, the goodness and the justice of the community that requires it, then we shall begin to abolish poverty. The great preacher of the mount said, "Poor ye have always with you," and he uttered a truth altogether too true, but if religion had been a thousandth part divine as it claimed to be, if it had been striving to disseminate intelligence, justice and love between man and man, then we should have had better politics, better government; then poverty would have been abolished long ago.

It is a disgrace and a crime to be poor, not the disgrace and crime of the man that is poor, but the disgrace and crime of the community or the state or the system of government that makes

and keeps that man poor. I suppose that—not to be misunderstood—the statement must be modified and let it be modified to this extent: It is a good thing to feed the hungry and clothe the naked and visit the unfortunate in prison and wait upon the suffering, the needy and the sick; it is a good thing, and as long as those conditions exist we trust there will be kindly and generous hearts to perform the service, but as long as we exalt that service as the best that man can render his fellow man, so long will we continue the conditions that make poverty and crime compulsory. Either God Almighty made a mistake in making this world, or else He made a mistake in making man, or else man has made a mistake in his ministration of the world.

It is a patent fact that there is enough in this world so that no one needs to go hungry, so that no one needs to go ragged, so that no one needs to sleep out doors. There is plenty in this world if we could only get at it justly and decently. What has the church done? What does it have to offer as a solution of these pressing questions? Why, there is no sarcasm that surpasses this: The church, followers of the meek and lowly, the poor, unfriended, outcast, despised Nazarene, the church, teaching the blessings of poverty and the beauty of humility and subjection and obedience to the church, and the church at the same time supported by men who have had arms that reached around the world and greed and rapacity that reached farther still and have gathered in the welath of the world by hundreds and thousands of millions, while their poor fellow men starved, and every one of the notoriously and enormously rich men a shining light and gilded pillar in the church of the poor and lowly Nazarene. No sarcasm can surpass it. And whenever the church takes the money of a man like that, the church puts a padlock on its lips. It cannot speak out. It dare not. So, the church has always been a slave, because it has always been a mendicant. The beggar, the dependent man, can never be free.

We have lived through the era of religion. For 1900 years the church has had sway. We have come upon conditions the church cannot meet. Humanity must find a new solution for the problem. And, first of all, the end of effort, of ambition, of thought must be the welfare of the human world, not my salvation, nor yours, nor the salvation primarily of any individual, but the uplift of the whole human world. Not our nation at the expense of another nation, not our community at the expense of some other, but a universal aim, the emancipation and uplift of universal man. Do you know that some of the great words have been extremely narrow in their significance? What is patriotism? The love of country. But the love of mankind and belief in justice for all the world is infinitely better than any meaning patriotism can possibly bear. By the uplift of humanity I do not mean merely its temporal welfare. The progress of humanity in the real sense does not imply merely the production of iron and coal or wheat and corn, it does not mean simply the size or magnitude of armies and navies, it does not mean simply clearing house reports and trade balances; it means the happiness of men and women, their comfort and enjoyment here; it means the abolition of poverty, it means the decrease of compulsory crime, it means the destruction of special privileges, it means the equality of opportunity, it means the open road for all.

Under the old ordering we were taught that the power of the world's emancipation was a divine power. It rested in God. The church was to call mightily upon the Lord and He would make bare his arm for the salvation of mankind. Well, he may or he may not do it. He has not done it yet. After waiting 1900 years, isn't it surely time to call one some other arm? What other arm is that? Man must be the savior of man. Humanity must work out its own salvation. And I say to you that with man as he exists today there are energies sufficient, powers that are adequate and all elements that are required for the emancipation and the glorification of mankind. There are no evils in this world but those that come, as Diderot said, from bad education and bad institutions. The average man and the average woman each is better than

they have a chance to show. We speak about business being piracy, the hard and fast lines of competition, the tremendous rush for wealth in which the weak must go down, and I say there is not a business man in ten thousand but would rather do business in a fair and just way than to transact it the way he does now. There is not one in ten thousand who would not rather pay every girl and every woman in his employ a fair living wage than to keep them in his employ at half wages, as at present. There is not one of them but would rather not have children employed in his factory or in his establishment than to have them there. But what can he do? He can only do what the whole business world does. As long as one man employs women and girls at less than a living wage, for less money than will buy their clothes and pay their board, then others must do the same. As long as one man employs child labor, thus reducing the cost of handling the goods, his competitors must do it. As long as one merchant buys of the factories that sell cheaper because they are degrading womanhood and asphyxiating childhood in their factories, another must. It does not do any good to convert a man. Not a particle of change is affected in the business world when the evangelist announces that one merchant or one manufacturer has been brought into the fold of God. Humanity is the thing that must be converted. The system is the thing that must be cleansed and purified.

The real reformer, the real teacher of men, is the man that makes himself unnecessary. The church, for instance, if it had taught well enough, would be unnecessary now. Because it has not taught well enough it is unnecessary as it is. Otherwise, it would have been unnecessary through its excellence; now it is unnecessary through its inefficiency. The real teacher is the man that has no personal aim, nor ambition, nor inspiration, nor desire except just the uplifting of his fellow man.

And yet, my friends, there is no final good that can come or ever did come to this world except through the instrumentality of the fanatic, or the man in his time called a fool, or the martyr; in other words, of the man without any spirit of calculation or thought of consequences who spoke his honest thought and took the chances.

I had in mind to violate the proprieties so far as to say a personal thing or two. One is this: The only claim I make for what I say is that it is my honest thought. I have no communication with the skies; I have no revelations from Almighty God, direct or indirect. I only have my mind and my conscience as a guide and strive to follow them. I do not ask you or any one to believe a thing I say because I say it. I have no desire for followers, no ambition for this or any institution. I think that the race, that mankind, that men and women in the great vast sum are more necessary and more divine than any individual or any institution under the sun, and I think the only way to benefit and help them is for any teacher, whoever he may be, to speak his honest thought. And in the second place, I have no personal feeling or animosity toward any living human being. There are certain old ideas that I have no respect whatever for, but I beg of you to understand that in attacking an idea no attack of a personal kind was or is ever intended. I have been informed within a few days that my usefulness in this field was to be summarily ended. "The future is with God alone and man has but today." Of that usefulness, I shall say this: No enemies of mine shall decide the question, but the liberal people of Kansas City, and whenever they say my usefulness here is ended, I go at once. Until they say that, I propose to stay indefinitely. I have also been informed within a few days that if I did not stop these teachings I was in danger of being killed. The only reply to that which I wish to make is this, that in the near future I shall ask you to arrange for next season for two lectures a month instead of one.

A man may know nothing about the amours of the Holy Ghost and still be able to practice kindness. It is not necessary that a man must understand the doctrine of vicarious atonement in order to understand and practice justice. It is not necessary to believe in miracles, viola-

tions of law and indictments against the wisdom of the Highest, in order to love one's neighbor as oneself and be kind and just and true. We can then eliminate formal religion.

In the era of reason man will care less and less for religion, less and less for the church, less and less for the pretensions of priesthood and dogmatists, less and less for foolish rites and selfish prayers, and more and more for kindness, justice, brotherhood and love.

RADIUM.

I remember well the enthusiasm I felt on reading the account of the discovery of Radium by Madame Curie, wife of Professor Curie, of the French Academy, she herself having been born and educated in Poland. The grandeur of the discovery at first occupied my thought, the incalculable possibilities involved in that already certified fact, the impetus thereby given to further examinations and experiments concerning as yet unrecognized material substances perhaps containing power to change relations hitherto supposed to be unchangeable. The field suddenly opened to imagination appeared infinite! Next came an emotion of gratified pride on account of the reflected glory bestowed upon my sex by this brilliant achievement of a woman, and lastly, I sympathized with her in view of the honor she was bringing to her, politically, long humiliated native land.

On that momentous day both Professor Curie and his wife were, as usual, in their private laboratory, but occupied with separate work and in separate parts of the room. In the course of her experiments she became conscious of the existence of a hitherto unknown force and soon the discovery revealed itself as a scientific fact. She called her husband's attention to her work and its results and the new force was announced under the name of Radium. Soon the world settled down to the knowledge of the discovery, and scientists continued their labors with due reference to the newly recognized power.

Then came the sudden tragedy—the blotting out of Professor Curie's useful and honored life through a street accident, leaving his widow and children desolate in their once happy home.

Madame Curie's services to her adopted country were appropriately recognized by her appointment as successor to her deceased husband in the same official position, and on Monday, November 5, 1906, she began her lectures at the Sorbonne before a sympathetic and enthusiastic audience.

Her ability to fill that responsible office was undoubted, and her performance of the trying initiative task showed that she would be equal to every emergency. Her appearance was greeted with prolonged applause, and her extemporaneous address was listened to with respectful attention, interrupted only by an outbreak of acclamations when, shortly before its close, at a sign from her, the hall was suddenly darkened, allowing the mysterious blue flame of a morsel of Radium to assert its illuminative power through the iron box which enclosed it. Renewed applause expressed the satisfaction of the audience as the lecturer ended her discourse and left the hall as quietly and modestly as she had entered it.

Certain published comments upon this event betrayed a disposition to consider the scientific discovery as her husband's rather than, or as much as, her own. She is called (in Germany) "die Mitentdeckerin des Radiums," "the co-discoverer of Radium"; whereas she, and she alone, was the discoverer, according to the first account. It would be well to have this question settled; otherwise (the first statement being correct) the credit, owing to the hitherto prevailing unwillingness to admit the equality of woman with man, may in course of time be given entirely to the man, and the woman be relegated to the post of assistant, or merely to that of looker-on. Perhaps the triumph of Madame Curie may help lead to a peaceful solution of the much-vexed question of the equality of the sexes, as her position is above criticism in every particular. She was wife and mother before being forced into fame as a scientific leader, and there is no danger that her more personal and private sacred calling will be neglected for her public and world-wide activity. ELIZABETH E. EVANS.

"INSPIRED" ASTRONOMY.

Pagans Far in Advance of the Hebrews in Knowledge of the Earth and Stars.

BY L. H. DANA.

The article on "Theism or Atheism" in a recent number of The Truth Seeker, claiming inspiration for the first chapter of Genesis, brought back to my mind a sermon that a Methodist minister preached a good many years ago. He said: "Brethren, behold the wonderful astronomical truths revealed in the Bible; compare the enlightenment of the Hebrews with the ignorance of the surrounding nations; and you will become convinced that the holy writ came to us straight from the mind of divinity." I remember this impressed me at the time as powerful argument, if true; and being then young and beautifully ignorant of astronomy among the ancients, I began to look the matter up with all the diligence I could. I discovered some things, these among them: That the Greeks, Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, and Archimedes, all thought the earth spherical in shape; that Thales (639-546 B. C.) believed that the earth had a motion on its axis from west to east; that Pythagoras (born in the 6th century B. C.) did not suppose the earth to be the center of the universe; and that Aristarchus of Samos (320-250 B. C.) placed the sun among the fixed stars and said that the earth moved in an orbit and rotated on its axis, thus practically giving voice some centuries ahead of time, to the Copernican theory. Cleanthus, an orthodox person of that time, no doubt conceiving it gross materialism and lack of dignity thus to send good folks whizzing through the air, expressed the opinion that it would be well to prosecute Aristarchus for impiety, since he taught that the "hearth of the universe" was movable. But Athens had become disgracefully tolerant in those days, and so Aristarchus got off without being invited to hemlock tea with no after-party calls from guests; and Cleanthus had to take it out in writing a book on the subject which nobody read. In later times Galileo held the self-same views about the "hearth," and found Cleanthus more in power.

Anaxagoras (born 499 B. C.) was guilty of trying to do a little "higher criticism;" he said that Jupiter was not a god at all, but simply represented Mind, as his daughter Minerva stood for Art; and that the sun was not a deity driving a fiery chariot, but a great mass of molten stone instead. This was too much for the guardians of the public conscience in those times; they got after this notorious unbeliever with the terrors of the law, and clapped him in the common jail; and Pericles had to risk his popularity with the pious before he could get the man of science out again.

Turning from the status of astronomical knowledge in Greece, what does one find in the Hebrew Bible to confirm the faith of the preacher in the inspiration of this book?

Joshua told the sun to stand still; it has no motion that is perceptible to us. One of the Psalms says: "In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race; his going forth is from the end of the heavens and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." Sounds as though the "Lord" was not as well informed as Aristarchus, doesn't it? In Deuteronomy we hear about the "ends" of the earth again; and in the 38th chapter of Job the "Lord" said to Job: "Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?"—an inexact statement if the spherical form of the earth were held in view, but perfectly applicable to a flat plane, which was the popular conception of the shape of the earth down to the time of Christopher Columbus—perhaps some clergymen still hold to it! Also, this same Hebrew deity inquired: "Where wert thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?" There was scarcely a Greek thinker that didn't have a better idea of things than this. Job spoke about the pillars of the heavens trembling; in Revelation we find four angels standing upon the four corners of the earth (which is round); and again in Isaiah we learn that the Lord is to gather together the

dispersed of Judah from these same mysterious four corners of the globe.

There is no intimation whatsoever in the Hebrew Bible, that the earth is round in shape, turns upon its axis, and rushes with tremendous speed through space. A revelation from the Maker of the universe should certainly have thrown light upon these facts; and no minister will have the effrontery, we may hope, to fall back on the old defense that these were barbarous people and times of ignorance. The revealing of such secrets could not have harmed the morals of the most benighted man; rather, they would a hundred times have increased his wonder at the stupendous mechanism and perfect order of the universe. No, the truth is that it was the Hebrew priests who thus wrote down their childish ignorance, so that to this very day he who runs may read; and yet in the twentieth century A. D. there are thousands of people in America who regulate their lives and thoughts (and attempt to manage those of other folk) by codes of morals made by men knowing no better than to speak about the "pillars" and "foundations" of the earth.

"The only divine religion known to man," says Beveridge of Indiana; and such fanatics make the laws by which the rational are thought to live!

The first chapter of Genesis needs no more miraculous explanation than does the 38th chapter of Job. True, science tells us that all beings probably originated in water; but does not Homer say that River Ocean, a deep and mighty flood, encircling land and sea like a serpent with its tail in its mouth, was the source of all? The old Greeks said, too, that Chaos was a yawning abyss containing Night and Mist and Fiery Air; that Time caused the mist to spin around the central fiery air until the mass, assuming the form of a huge world-egg, flew, by reason of its rapid rotation, into halves, one being heaven, the other earth. Here is a good hint at the nebular hypothesis that goes, indeed, far beyond anything to be met with in the writings of the Hebrews; and although we do not think that any god waxed confidential and whispered it into the ear of any Greek philosopher, none the less are we reminded that the world is very old, and that men have now been thinking for a long, long time. Some say the ancients held the clew to things we moderns do not know about, and maybe never will!

Regarding the sermon of that Methodist clergyman, however, we might observe that the men who speak with pity of the "benighted heathen" are every whit as lost in ignorance as those for whom they then proceed to take up the morning offerings of the faithful; but where ignorance is pecuniarily profitable, no doubt they think it "folly to be wise."

Why Ministers Fall.

The average minister has only to preach a twenty-minute or half-hour sermon on Sunday, and this, with a mid-week meeting, constitutes his week's work. The rest of the days he is often loafing, trying to kill time. Even the weekly sermon may not be his own effort. He may be either too lazy or too ignorant to compose a sermon of his own, so he simply treats the congregation to a rehash of some other man's work, and for this he often receives a good salary. Do you wonder that the worst passions of these men become inflamed by their lives of idleness? They are only human. They eat and drink of the choicest products of earth; they visit only the homes of the wealthy, where they are sumptuously entertained; they do not try to keep the body in subjection to the spirit by any kind of restraint or mortification and so their carnal passion becomes the master of their being and they fall away from grace, shocking the community and scandalizing the Church of God. I would make all work for their money. —Madison C. Peters.

A thousand men can go to work at 7 o'clock in the morning without the ringing of a bell, and why is it that 300 people cannot assemble in a church without a previous ding-donging lasting half an hour?—Detroit Free Press.

The way of the divine revelator is hard. Dowie died discredited, Sandford has skedaddled, and Mrs. Eddy is scared out of her wits.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.—We shall be obliged to our readers if they will send us the name and address of any Freethinker who is not a regular subscriber.

Natural History, Sacred and Profane.

The writers of animal stories are the last bunch of prevaricators to be placed on the list of Ananiases by President Roosevelt, who puts them there in an article, or interview, which he contributes to Everybody's Magazine. The piece is entitled "Roosevelt on the Nature Fakers." In one paragraph Mr. Roosevelt says:

"The preservation of the useful and beautiful animal and bird life of the country depends largely upon creating in the young an interest in the life of the woods and fields. If the child mind is fed with stories that are false to nature, the children will go to the haunts of the animal only to meet with disappointment. The result will be disbelief and the death of interest. The men who misinterpret nature and replace fact with fiction undo the work of those who in the love of nature interpret it aright."

We do not doubt that the natural history of Jack London, C. G. D. Roberts, Ernest Thompson Seton, and the Rev. William J. Long is often imaginative, but it is incapable of doing much harm so long as its readers are left free to exercise the prerogative of doubting it. The strongest objection to erroneous zoology lies against that to be found in the work which Mr. Roosevelt believes to be inspired, and which children are not permitted to question. We refer to the Bible.

There are numerous stories of animals in the Bible, and so far as we can recall, they are all "false to nature," and if they are read with an open mind "the result will be disbelief."

The book purports to give, in the first place, an account of the creation of the animals, which, it is needless to say, will not be found in accord with ascertained facts if the children look for the latter in their school books. The writer of the account introduces us to certain modified land animals called sea monsters before there were any land animals to be so modified, and in other ways contradict the order of nature. He also gives us to understand that all of the animals on the earth, of which there are perhaps a million species, were brought before one man, Adam, to be named, and that Adam christened them on the spot. As the names then and there bestowed upon Adam's contemporaries of the animal kingdom were never recorded or otherwise preserved, it seems to have been a labor of nomenclature thrown away, and except for religious purposes children are not expected to believe it was ever performed.

Equally contrary to scientific knowledge is the animal story involved in that of Noah and his ark, where all of the million or more species were gathered under one roof and set afloat by a deluge. Besides recognizing such a thing as impossible, the intelligent child will inquire why such care was taken for the preservation of species when so many species were permitted, according to verified science, to perish utterly and to become extinct before and since that time.

The child, too, will be apt to sit up and take notice when it reads in Genesis that the snake as originally created could talk; that it addressed the first created woman in language she could understand; that previous to its conversation with her, which resulted in fastening total depravity on her race for all time, the snake either walked or flew, and that it was condemned to crawl as a punishment for diffusing knowledge.

If the children are destined to disappointment when, upon visiting the haunts of the animals written of by London, Roberts, and Seton, they find them acting otherwise than as those authors describe, what would be their surprise and grief if they were to essay the role of Daniel and enter a congregation of lions only to be chewed after the manner of those beasts with strangers! And what, again, would the young folk say if, after dismissing modern writers as misinterpreters of nature, they picked up the Bible and read the story of the fish that swallowed the preacher and compelled him to keep an appointment against his will? Or if the story of Balaam engaged their attention, and they found a donkey debating with its master, and the latter expressing no surprise at the animal's plea for better treatment than it was receiving, would they not be likely to conclude that the nature faker had taken up his pen?

The natural history of the Bible may well be termed something fierce. Read the experiment of Jacob in producing ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted cattle (Gen. xxx, 37-39); the fall of quails by the camp of the Israelites (Num. xi, 31, 32); about the snake produced from a rod (Ex. iv, 2-4); the fiery serpents and the brass one (Num. xxi, 6, 8, 9); the rod of Aaron turning snake and swallowing other snakes with a similar origin (Ex. vii, 10-12); the frog story in the eighth chapter and sixth verse of Exodus; the cultivation of lice by Aaron in verse seventeen; the foxes that set fields of grain afire (Judges xv, 4, 5); the tearing of forty-two children by two bears (2 Kings ii, 23, 24); the fishes that multiplied themselves from two to a tubful (Matt. xiv, 15, 21), and so on. The young reader is likewise made acquainted in the same book with a beast with eyes all about him, like windows in a trolley car, so that he can see before and behind and has no blind side; a dragon with red hair, seven heads, and ten horns; and some long haired, human-faced, gold-crowned, lion-toothed, scorpion-tailed, breast-plated animals that the revelator distinguished as "locusts" because they bore no resemblance to those insects. Mr. Roosevelt foresees and severely predicts the result "if the child mind is fed with stories that are false to nature." He therefore condemns the "nature fakers," which is well enough, but to pronounce their writings false and injurious while presenting the Bible as something inspired and improving is inconsistent if not dishonest. Mr. Roosevelt has not the imagination to write fiction, and the charge of romancing, therefore, does not lie against his outdoor tales. It is in history that the President is weak. A child who turns from Rooseveltian biography to truthful records will not only be disappointed but pained. In natural history Theodore sides with "those who in the love of nature interpret it

aright." Why, then, as a historian, does he not range himself along with those who in the love of truth tell it?

As Mr. Roosevelt has hunted wild animals and imagined that thereby he became a student of nature, in the same way he has mistaken warfare for one of the arts of civilization and second-hand libels on unbelievers for history.

Torrey's Lunatics.

Among the criticisms of the Torrey meetings in Montreal uttered by Mr. Norman Murray, who by taking legal action extorted from the evangelist an apology and pecuniary penalty for defamation of character, was the charge that Torrey's preaching produced lunatics. In one of his sermons the preacher advised his congregation that if they heard any person make a statement like that they might tell the person, for him, that he was a liar. Either Torrey does not know the effect of sensational revivalism, or he is consciously guilty of untruth. He delivers his "message," collects his fee, and goes away, leaving others to care for the lunatics he has developed. The Truth Seeker has an important communication from a reader, a nurse living in Buffalo, this state, who writes:

"Dear Editor: I saw a piece in your paper in regard to the Torrey meetings held in Montreal—about his living in luxury and the souls he was saving.

"Now what I am writing I am telling from my own experience. I am a nurse, and I was called out on this case. It was a beautiful young lady, a bookkeeper by occupation. She had gone insane over the Torrey meetings. I was with her three days, and it took four men to hold her some of the time. She was finally taken to the insane asylum, incurable, as softening of the brain has set in since. I would say that this is the fifth case from the same meetings that I am knowing to.

"Now if Torrey comes to save souls, what becomes of those that he sends to the asylum for life? I would like the opinion of some of your valuable readers."

The relation of religious revivalism to insanity has long been recognized by alienists as well as by lay observers. The religious lunatic is one of the most familiar varieties, and more of them would be secluded if it were not so difficult to say where religious enthusiasm ends and mania begins. It is an open question whether all religious fervor is not a species of insanity. Certainly if thousands talked as irrationally about other matters as they do about religion, the seclusion of the asylum would be theirs. Torrey of course makes fewer lunatics than converts for the time being, but in the end the lunatics remain when the converts have forgotten their "change of heart."

As to Methods.

The radical attitude of The Truth Seeker toward religion is deprecated in some quarters as not calculated to make converts to Freethought. The language of some holds the thought that freedom from the bondage of superstition may be left to evolution, whose sacred processes it is sacrilegious to hasten; but anybody who does not know that human effort is as much a factor in evolution as any other force, only imperfectly understands the theory. They should know that evolution is assisted by endeavor. The idea that The Truth Seeker makes no Freethinkers out of persons who were orthodox before reading it is entertained, so far as we can judge, by those who have not watched the returns, or whose prejudice begets the thought. These say that there are other methods of making Freethinkers than by attacking religious beliefs. Possibly, but if so will they demonstrate the proposition, name the method, and produce results? We could produce, probably, fifty testimonies like the following:

"My father has been taking The Truth Seeker for some time, and I am sure I look forward to it every week even more anxiously than he does. I used to be orthodox before he started taking it, but would pick up one from time to time and read it, and it started me to thinking. I have read Paine's 'Age of Reason'

and most of Ingersoll's lectures, so I am now a thorough convert of Agnosticism."

We have known of ministers becoming advocates of Freethought through reading this paper. The late C. B. Reynolds was one of these, and a loose page of The Truth Seeker containing an article by Mr. Reynolds was picked up in Ballston Spa by a good Methodist, who became a life-time subscriber, rearing all of his children in the new belief. The timid ones who discourage criticism of the Bible and Christianity as likely to offend believers are what Pentecost called "meat for the priests."

A Roman Catholic Blatherskite.

The clerical assailants of Freethinkers like the Rev. A. C. Dixon who are best described by the term "blatherskites" as we understand it, are not all employed by the Protestant church. The Catholic church can utilize them in conducting its "missions," which are occasions of manufactured excitement corresponding to Protestant revivals. There is one of them in Utica, this state, who is mentioned in the Daily Press as "Rev. Father Burke." Burke has been conducting a mission for non-Catholics, one of his sermons on the divinity of Jesus Christ having reached The Truth Seeker. In the course of this sermon, after declaring that "either Christ is God or he is the worst impostor that ever trod the earth, and over three hundred million of men are fools and dupes," the Rev. Burke shouted:

"Stand forth, Renan and Strauss, with your pedantic arrogance and see whether men will choose you or the simple preacher of the sermon on the Mount! Stand forth, Colonel Ingersoll, and men of your stamp, sprung from a dead paganism and choking the flowers of the Christian garden—stand forth with your advocacy of obscene literature, with your defense of the coward's refuge, suicide, and see whether men will choose you or the teacher of a pure and sacred morality."

That is one of the cases where, as Ingersoll put it, both churches can use the same lie, and Burke can echo Dixon.

The unveracity of the clergy of today would have an important part in determining our judgment about the authenticity and trustworthiness of the gospels if we would only stop to think of its bearings. The priests, we know, had for hundreds of year the custody of the gospels whose genuineness and integrity depend altogether on the honesty of their custodians. Priests had every opportunity to forge, alter, or destroy the sacred manuscripts, and that in an age before such a thing as literary honesty had appeared. In our day lying is condemned and truthfulness of speech, outside the pulpit, is so generally approved that even ministers and theologians must feel its influence so far as to occasionally substitute fact for fiction in their discourse; nevertheless, while we know that the modern clergy are much given to untruthfulness, they expect us to believe without question that the clergy of an age when honesty was the exception told the truth every time and were above suspicion of deceit. The Rev. Father Burke should be shrewd enough to see that if he would inspire confidence in the veracity of the priesthood of the past, and thus lend probability to the reports they handed down, his best course is to stick to the truth himself. But he is oblivious to that important consideration, and so he calls upon Ingersoll to stand forth and be judged as an advocate of obscene literature. He might as well have accused Ingersoll of advocating the Catholic doctrine of eternal punishment, for he abhorred both about equally. Thousands of persons are aware that in speaking as he did of Ingersoll this priest set loose a falsehood to lodge in the minds of his uninformed hearers. Are we justified in thinking that his predecessors, the gospel fabricators, the recorders of miracles, and the writers of Catholic history, did otherwise?

We have lately been chasing a myth of modern origin, and have exterminated it so far as readers of The Truth Seeker are concerned. By those who have not seen this paper it will doubtless be accepted as historical. We refer to the assertion of the Rev. I. D. Driver of Oregon, or of his press agent, that thirty years ago the Rev. Driver met Ingersoll at Eugene City in debate, and not only defeated him but compelled him to admit that he was beaten. There never was any such debate; the lie has been put in circulation too soon, for men still live, with memories unimpaired and veracity unimpeached, who were in the neighborhood of Eugene when Ingersoll made his lecture trip through Oregon, and they know that a debate did not take place between him and Driver. But in the religious and Sunday school mind we expect this fact to be displaced by the fiction promulgated by Driver, and sooner or later the scene of the debate will be described in religious literature, and in glowing language the reader will be told how the Goliath of the Agnostics was verbally slain. There are scores of myths about Ingersoll already current. Their inventors did not even wait until he was dead before setting them afloat. They could not have expected to be believed by intelligent and informed persons; they knew the yarns would be disproved and themselves exposed as liars, but that did not deter them in the least. It is the discouraging feature of the business that the falsifiers are unashamed when caught. Whether or not a preacher is expected to lie if necessary to make out his case, it is indisputable that they do it.

Another difficulty of meeting men like Burke when they attack Freethinkers is the impossibility of replying in kind. The priest calls upon Ingersoll to "stand forth" as an advocate of obscenity and be compared with Jesus Christ, but what Infidel wants to adopt that method, and call upon Jesus Christ: "Stand forth, Jesus, illegitimate son of obscurity; stand forth, wine bibber and glutton, confederate of Beelzebub, friend of publicans and sinners, consort of harlots, defender of adultery." Would that be a fair description of the hero of the gospels? It would not, but it is exactly the kind of stuff that is handed out by evangelists and mission preachers when dwelling on the character of Freethinkers.

One day in Paris, during the Revolution, the insurgents held a parade in which an actress impersonated the Goddess of Reason. The enemies of reason assert that the woman was a prostitute, although for this slander of a woman who may have been wholly respectable they have no justification whatever. They have invented the prostitute to discredit reason. But when Jesus wished to hold up an example of faith, whom did he choose? Did he pick out a respectable woman, a nun or a virgin? Was even an actress disreputable enough to answer his purpose? Not at all. The woman was a harlot. He visited her house, and because she sat at his feet he said hers was a better part than that of her sister with domestic tastes. He suffered her to minister to him personally, permitted her to dress his hair and to lave his feet; and forgave her sins because she had "loved much." He made no pretense of studying sociology; he did not call upon a policeman to take her to the station house. She was his choice, not as a warning, but as an example. And the priest wants us to accept Jesus on the score of his pure and sacred respectability.

We would like to be able to reach the people who heard this priest Burke and ask them how they were impressed with his declaration that either Christ is God or his followers "fools and

dupes." Did their inability to realize themselves as fools convince them Christ was God? If so, could not the pretensions of all religious leaders be proved in the same way? Were all of the predecessors of Jesus necessarily gods or his followers fools? If Mohammed was not a prophet are all Mohammedans idiots? Does the same hold true of Brigham Young and John Alexander Dowie? How about Mrs. Eddy? Are the quarter of a million Christian Scientists, to the last man, woman, and child who accept her teachings, mentally subnormal? The person who should give an affirmative answer to these questions would best deserve to be called a fool.

Manifestation of religious belief is a phenomenon so old that its beginning cannot be traced. We only know that a class of men now called priests improved their chance to make a good living by catering to this primitive superstition. The gods and prophets have been innumerable, but there has been but one religion. Jesus, Mohammed, Joe Smith, John Dowie, Mary Baker G. Eddy, and the popes of Rome have used the same medicine, which is supernaturalism. They have begun where human knowledge ends and have taught only that which is unsusceptible of proof. The prophet says to the potential follower: "You believe in a sort of a something, don't you?" The man says Yes, and the prophet says, "This is it," and comes across with his religious system. The man accepts it because it looks as true as any other.

Religion, like disease, takes root first and spreads most rapidly among the poor and ignorant. Somebody higher up adopts it from policy, and it becomes the fashion, or an epidemic; and it is capable of being transmitted. With the ignorant religion takes the place of knowledge; with the enlightened it is hypocrisy become organic. With the priests it is a means of livelihood.

Brown University in Rhode Island, the principal seat of Baptist learning, is to petition the General Assembly of the state for permission to amend its charter so as to make the institution non-sectarian instead of Baptist. It would be gratifying and encouraging to think that this progressive step is impelled by the process of the suns whereby the thoughts of men are widened; but that is apparently not the case. Increasing liberality of mind resulting from the endeavors of Freethinkers has made it possible for Brown to become non-sectarian without attracting the fire of criticism, but Brown University does not allege this reason for amending its charter. Its object is purely mercenary, for the petitioners inform the press that "in many instances the college has been unable to participate in generous bequests owing to the denominational clause in its charter." The "denominational clause" consists in the provision that a majority of its board of trustees must be Baptists. The fund provided by Andrew Carnegie for the pensioning of retired college professors is not available when the charter of the college in which they teach contains the denominational clause, and it is doubtless with the Carnegie fund in view that the faculty of Brown petition to have the curse removed. Even the Wesleyan faculty has made overtures in the same direction. It seems that if sectarianism cannot be eradicated from college teaching in any other way, it may be bought out.

Froude told his friend, Charles Stewart, author of "Haud Immemor" (Blackwood and Sons, 1901): "I saw Carlyle this morning, and he said to me, 'Froude, I have just been reading an old book, a book that I read very often not long ago, but not lately. I thought I would go back to it and see what I thought of it now, and I may tell you that I am greatly disappointed with it. You ask what is the book. It is the Bible.'"—Agnostic Journal.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

HIS UNDERSTANDING AS PORTRAYED IN HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

It Is Time He Came off the Pedestal as the Greatest Mind That Ever Happened—The Temple He Built Would Not Have Afforded More than Comfortable Seating Room for His Wives if Used as a Church, Nor Have Accommodated the Rest of His Household if Turned into a Hotel—Sacred Labor Statistics.

BY A LAWYER.

Solomon succeeded his father David to the throne of Israel and for a period of forty years had an uninterrupted reign over all its tribes. The chief feature of a public character to mark his long reign was that he built on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem a temple which he dedicated to the Lord his God. David had intended to build this temple and had received from the Lord a pattern for the desired structure (1 Chron. xxviii, 11-19).

David would have executed this design and built the temple, but his God, upon mature reflection, declined to accept a temple reared by a man whose hands had shed so much human blood; and it was therefore arranged between the Lord and David, as a compromise, that Solomon should put up the building. David, however, went on gathering the material for the great work. I quote: "And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails of the doors of the gates; and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight. Also cedar trees in abundance, for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre, brought much cedar wood to David. And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent [sic] of fame and glory throughout all countries; I will therefore make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly for it before his death. Then he called Solomon his son and charged him to build a house for the Lord God of Israel" (1 Chron. xxii, 2-5).

Solomon, then, upon the death of his father, came to the throne with patterns for the temple, and with abundance of material which David had gathered; but before entering upon the work of building the temple he uttered before the Lord a specific prayer for wisdom; and the Lord in answer to this prayer gave Solomon such an overflowing dispensation of wisdom that his fame as the wisest of mankind has come down the ages. The Lord is reported to have said to Solomon in answer to this prayer: "Behold, I have done according to thy word; lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee; neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee" (1 Kings iii, 12).

Acting under authority of the covenant between the Lord and David that Solomon should build the temple, and in possession of the patterns which David had received from the Lord, also of the abundant materials which David had gathered in his lifetime; and armed with the "wise and understanding heart" which God gave him, Solomon addressed himself to the work of building the temple as follows: He made a contract with Hiram, king of Tyre, by which Hiram furnished for the temple some timbers of cedar and fir, and some skilled hewers, for which Solomon agreed to pay or to furnish, to the men at work, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, twenty thousand measures of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil (2 Chron. ii, 10). A bath of wine or oil was about seven gallons. A measure of wheat or barley was about a peck and a half.

Solomon levied 20,000 men of his own country to work on the temple, and of this levy he kept 10,000 men constantly at work. In addition to this levy and Hiram's force working for Solomon, the accounts say: "And Solomon had three score and ten thousand (70,000) that bare burdens, and four score thousand (80,000) hewers in the mountains, besides the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work—three thousand three hundred (3,300) which ruled over the

people which wrought in the work" (1 Kings v, 15, 16).

These figures put together are as follows:

Of the levy the men constantly at work were	10,000
They that bare burdens	70,000
The hewers in the mountains were	80,000
The overseers were	3,300

Total number of men at work 163,300

Thus we see that, in addition to Hiram's force, Solomon had a force of his own in the field, consisting of 163,300 men; and they worked on the temple for seven years (1 Kings vi, 38). The compiler of "Comprehensive Helps" in Wilmore's Analytical Bible says: "For seven and a half years 183,600 were constantly at work on the temple. This estimate includes all the men in the levy, of whom only 10,000 were at work at any one time." Let us now make an estimate of the cost of keeping Solomon's force of men at work on the temple for seven years. And to begin with, let us repudiate the idea that any of Solomon's working forces were slaves. If, because David's hands were bloody, God declined to accept a house to be built by him, it is hard to conceive that he would allow Solomon to build the holy structure with slave labor. On the other hand, let us imagine that Solomon with his "wise and understanding heart" would out of his great riches pay his laborers liberal wages. If Solomon could clothe, feed and pay his 163,300 men and keep the necessary working implements in their hands at a cost of one dollar per day, for each man, he was certainly an economist.

At one dollar per day for each man, Solomon's working forces would cost him \$163,300 per day. In one year of three hundred working days his pay roll would amount to \$48,990,000. In seven years the bill would be \$342,930,000. Let us suppose, however, that Solomon, in the fullness of his "wise and understanding heart," found a way to feed, clothe, furnish and pay his men at a cost of only fifty cents per day; then his labor account in seven years would be \$171,465,000, more than enough to construct the Panama canal.

How large was this temple upon which Solomon incurred such a vast labor account? It was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high; with some porches and annexes. Translated into modern mensuration, it was 96 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 48 feet high. Compared with the great buildings of earth which were then in existence and with others which have since been erected, Solomon's temple was a mere pigpen. Mr. Remsburg, in his splendid book on "The Bible," says that Solomon's temple was no larger than a courthouse, a storehouse, a church, or a hotel in many of our country towns.

As a courthouse building, Solomon's temple would be none too large to afford convenient court rooms, jury rooms, office rooms, and depository rooms for a thrifty county of twenty-five thousand population.

For church purposes, there could not be constructed inside of the dimensions of Solomon's temple an audience room which, after allowing good space for a pulpit, an organ, a seat for the sexton, aisles, a place for the choir and a mourners' bench, would afford more than good seating capacity for Solomon and his seven hundred lawfully wedded wives, especially if the ladies wore hoop skirts—and such, it is believed, was the fashion in Solomon's time.

As a storehouse building, if Solomon's seven hundred wives were women of diversified tastes, then Solomon could not have stored in his temple enough of dry goods and groceries to supply his own household.

For hotel purposes, if Solomon had laid off in his temple a kitchen and dining room, a reception room and parlor, the necessary bath rooms and halls, and had then cut up the remaining space into bed chambers, he could not have entertained in it, at one time, more than half of his three hundred secondary wives.

It may be that there was much heavenly wisdom in the large expenditure of labor which Solomon bestowed on his temple, and it may be that a person with a "wise and understanding heart" can see it and comprehend it; but to one who cannot comprehend with his heart, but must

understand and solve problems alone with the little amount of gray matter he may chance to have on the inside of his cranium, there is no wisdom in it.

Solomon's "wise and understanding heart" led him to marry seven hundred women. In his time and country polygamy or plural marriage was common and legal; and in all his long reign, as absolute monarch and ruler of God's chosen people, it seems never to have occurred to him to suppress polygamy or to discourage its continuance. It seems never to have occurred to him that one energetic woman is a whole household by herself. Solomon reasoned in his heart and not in his head, and he set the good example before mankind to have on hand as many as seven hundred wives at a time. Heavenly wisdom!

In addition to his seven hundred wives, Solomon had three hundred "concubines" (wives of an inferior degree in dignity)—another example which this servant of God, this king of God's chosen people, this wisest man of the world, this supposed writer of five books in the Bible, this hero with the "wise and understanding heart," set before his people and before mankind as a precedent for future ages! This, to one who does not possess an "understanding heart," looks odd.

But perhaps Solomon really did something which the secular man can appreciate as wisdom? Maybe he promulgated some good and wholesome laws among his people? It was in his power to promulgate laws for the suppression of polygamy, concubinage, and slavery; but he did nothing of the kind, and on the contrary was the greatest living exponent of all these evils.

But maybe Solomon was sound on the temperance question? No; he paid partly in wine for the men who wrought in the work of building his temple. He issued to Hiram's men 20,000 measures of wheat, 20,000 measures of barley, 20,000 baths of wine, and 20,000 baths of oil. If there were 20,000 of Hiram's men to receive these goods and divide them, then each man would get a peck and a half of wheat, a peck and a half of barley, and seven gallons of wine! Or, if there were 5,000 of Hiram's men, then each man would get a bushel and a half of wheat, a bushel and a half of barley and twenty-eight gallons of wine. Some one who does not read the Bible may contend that the wine of biblical times was non-intoxicating. To such an one I recommend that he read how that wine intoxicated Noah and righteous Lot. He might also read how Solomon himself regarded wine. In Prov. xxxi, 6-7, he says: "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish and wine unto those that be of heavy heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

Clergymen often tell us that whatever we give to them—or to the Lord, as they call it—will turn up to us again in the future as good seed sown in good ground. Solomon, in teaching this idea, said: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

If Solomon issued rations to his own men in the same proportions that he did to Hiram's—viz: For every three bushels of grain twenty-eight gallons of wine—it may be that the men had a good time and that they regarded Solomon as a wise man, but to one who got none of Solomon's liquor it is a wonder that the temple was ever finished at all.

What, then, did Solomon do to aid his fellow man in the race of life? Did he invent the printing-press, the magnetic needle, the cotton gin, a sewing machine, a hay-rake, a chilled plow, a turbine wheel, a rat trap? Did he discover the motions of the planets, the laws of gravitation, the force and power of steam and electricity? Nothing of the kind. Did Solomon found and establish any system of education among his people? Did he establish a college or a university? Did he do anything for his fellow man which would aid him in reaching the higher estate in laws, in morals, and in the intellectual attainments which man in other ages and in other countries has reached? On the contrary, he so oppressed his people that they longed to get rid of him. They were ripe for revolt; and at his

death did revolt and his kingdom was rent though not in twain, since ten of the twelve tribes of Israel rebelled and gained their independence.

Solomon's conduct was such that he finally turned his staunch old friend, the "Lord God of Israel," against him. He did this by building temples to other gods. No one could have known better than did Solomon that every favor the Lord had ever did him or his people was granted upon the express condition that they would not go out after other gods. Solomon knew, or ought to have known, that there was never a jealous wife so fearful that her husband would bestow his attentions upon some other woman as was the Lord God of Israel that his chosen people would by word, act, or deed admit that there were other gods besides himself. He could forgive Solomon for marrying contrary to law, forgive his polygamy, his concubinage, his wine, his avarice, his extravagance, his oppression of his people; but he could not and would not forgive him for in any way admitting that there might be some other god in the universe; and Solomon well knew it.

Not even if Solomon had made the acquaintance of a dozen other gods all hungry for his worship and his allegiance, and all with boons to bestow, was it wisdom for him to change his platform and offend the venerable old Israelitish deity, who had beaten Pharaoh, brought Israel up out of Egypt through the Red Sea, and stood by her so long through thick and thin? And yet in the face of all this, millions of little children are being taught today that Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived or that ever will live; that he was wiser than Shakespeare or Bacon, wiser than Lord Mansfield or Chief Justice Marshall, wiser than Washington, Franklin, or Jefferson; wiser than Sir Isaac Newton, Kepler, Galileo, Morse, Edison, Commodore Maury, and Christopher Columbus. Wiser than all!

What Is Spirituality?

Without usurping the prerogatives of the dictionary it seems to be a fair statement to contrast material and spiritual. From Haeckel's position the material is all there is and what is described as spirit is the product of the physical brain. That is to say that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. On the other hand the believers in spirituality think that the spirit is an entity and works in conjunction with the brain.

Some writers in *The Truth Seeker* seem determined to confound spirituality with certain forms of thought which may be described as mysticism or superstition. Starting with that error they proceed to muddle things most hopelessly by condemning certain forms of thought as absurd from the standpoint of materialism. They may be ridiculous enough, but from the materialist point of view they are simply products of wrong thinking. The brain that conceived them and those that adopt them don't secrete thought in a normal manner.

But these things are not spirituality. Spirituality pertains to the idea that a spirit animates man and uses his brain and body. With that basis the believers in the idea hold that the spirit survives the body or may do so, for all we know. The motto of *The Truth Seeker*: "prove all things," leads me to make this criticism.

Wrong thinking is bad whether the brain secretes it or the spirit suggests it. It ought to be exposed. Perhaps some day men will know more about themselves. An ingenious physician has recently added to the gaiety of nations by trying to weigh the soul. To the flippant individual that suggests that the souls of some people don't weigh anything to speak of. Other ingenious investigators take the ground that if there are spirits and they survive we can prove it by communicating with them. That offers difficulties, as the spirits (if spirits there be) are intangible. They claim to materialize and communicate, but do they? One researcher says: "Let the spirits prove their identity by referring to incidents in their earthlife not known to medium or sitters, as a man might prove his identity at the end of a telegraph wire." Can it be done? Oh, that's the question.

Is man a spirit? That's the riddle of the universe. Voltaire said: "Oh God, if there be a

God, save my soul, if I have a soul." He did not deny the spirit though he ridiculed the Christian religion. So far it is a matter of metaphysics. Perhaps science will settle the question some day.

GEORGE A. THACHER.

THE SPANISH BABY.

Its Birth Not the Most Important Thing the People of Spain Have to Think About.

BY G. W. FOOTE.

Flattery is poured into the ears of the living—and powerful. It is never poured into the ears of the dead. And for the simple reason that flattery is self-interest appealing to vanity.

Kings and princes, queens and princesses, are fed with flattery from the cradle to the grave. They are treated as belonging to a different species from the people, and must be more than human if they do not fancy themselves to be so.

Death is the great leveler. Only the most striking personalities and the most powerful geniuses affect us from their tombs. A dead lord ranks with commoners; the ashes of a prince mingle with the dust of a pauper. Death cancels the bonds of professed allegiance and concealed interest; dead kings are seen as they were—and the spectacle is sometimes monstrous and often ridiculous.

George the Third was the pattern of all the virtues while he lived; he was an obstinate old fool when he was dead. George the Fourth was the first gentleman in Europe while he walked the earth; he was a dirty scoundrel when he had lain a few years in his coffin.

Monarchism of every kind is an inherited superstition. It has been supposed that strong and shining qualities first won power in the world, but this was certainly not always true, and the latest researches of Dr. Frazer—which are to be incorporated in the third edition of his great *Golden Bough*—seem to show that the rulership of mankind has generally rested upon a superstitious basis. That basis is reflected in the inscription on our coinage, where we still read that the King reigns by the grace of God.

With the purely political aspect of kingship we have nothing to do in the *Freethinker*. Those who prefer the head of the State, for political reasons, to belong to one family, shall go uncriticised as far as we are concerned. What we deny is that there is anything sacred in the family. They are of common (sometimes very common) flesh and blood. If you tickle them they laugh, if you poison them they die; they sweat in the summer and shiver in the winter; they eat, drink, sleep, and procreate, just like ordinary mortals. Pull them from their positions, strip them of their finery, and what is there left to mark them out from the reeking multitude?

The superstitious aspect of royalty is traded upon by the newspapers. These so-called organs of public opinion are usually the parasites of human weakness. They serve up sensationalism on the one side, and sentimentalism on the other. When they get hold of a Thaw case, which combines both elements, they rejoice with an exceeding great joy. But such cases are not frequent. The newspapers have, therefore, to fall back upon the stock business; and one of its chief items is the "movements of royalty." Columns of gush are poured over a little boy going to his first school, or a young wife expecting her first confinement. No respect is paid even to the most private affairs of "the great." The public must have its news of them—steaming hot with the breakfast rolls.

King Edward's movements are carefully chronicled. He is said to be going round Europe as the very Prince of Peace. But all that remains to be seen. There are those who whisper that the key to his international policy is hatred of the Kaiser. They add that a game of this kind may very easily bring about a bloody war. Such things, however, are "outside our beat."

One of King Edward's fine strokes of statecraft was the Spanish marriage. King Alfonso being old enough (as royalty goes) to be mated, a wife was found for him in England. He was a Catholic and she was a Protestant. But she was practical. She was not going to lose a crown. So she said to King Alfonso, "Thy people

shall be my people, and thy God my God." And the whole world smiled. Religion, as a serious thing, was only meant for the multitude.

Now the enterprising princess has borne King Alfonso a baby. It is of the right sex. That was settled by going to church frequently and asking God to see to it. The whole of Spain is said to be in raptures. The day after the baby's birth the English newspapers said that she was going to suckle her child. They did not say suckle. That would have been too gross—in the case of a Queen. They merely hinted it. And they added that the Spanish nation was profoundly affected by this resolution of hers. Of course, the fact, if it were a fact, could not have been known so soon. The newspapers were simply gushing. It was a part of the good old game.

We wish that baby well—as we wish every other baby well. It would be canting to say more. We conceive that this "new birth" will not bring Spain the millennium. Seventy per cent of the people are illiterate; in the schools that do exist, and are state-aided, the Catholic religion is taught compulsorily. The average salary of schoolmasters is £10 a year. The best schools are owned by the Jesuits. The government is under clerical control, and freedom of opinion does not exist. There is nothing to exult over in the present condition, or immediate future prospects, of Spain.

We turn in imagination from the festive palace where the king and queen of Spain rejoice over their first born, to the prison cell where Francisco Ferrer Guardia is wondering what justice is left in the world. Twelve months ago a madman threw a bomb at the king and queen on their wedding day. Four days afterward Ferrer was arrested on suspicion of complicity in the crime. Not a scrap of evidence was forthcoming except the fact that Morral had applied to Ferrer, as he might have applied to anyone else, for employment. Ferrer was conducting an organized movement of Secular Education. That was his crime. They wanted to get hold of him, and this was their opportunity. They seized his property and closed his schools. Himself they kept in prison. His trial has been postponed again and again. He is in prison still. He is no nearer trial than ever. Probably they hope that he will put an end to all their difficulties by dying. Such an infamous spectacle as this treatment of Ferrer calls for more attention than the Birth of the Spanish Baby.—London *Freethinker*.

Jesus, Torrey, Murray, and Others.

No subject of equal importance is so much neglected at the present day as philosophy. The classics which have been re-discovered at the time of "The Renaissance" and which are the foundation of philosophy and modern improvement, have lately been discounted and as a result men of vast wealth cannot talk about anything but dollars and cents and horse races. Men living in palaces have such vacant minds that they have to resort to card playing for amusement. When it comes to public or private debate, theologians and politicians alike descend to billingsgate. We will not follow their example, however, in discussing the religion supposed to have been founded by Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth. The central figure in all discussions about Christianity is, or ought to be, Jesus.

I am quite ready to agree with Paine and Ingersoll in believing that Jesus taught excellent teachings but according to the rules of philosophy we cannot build a satisfactory and consistent system of ethics on mere belief. Ethics must be based on self evident maxims and principles which must be considered apart altogether from the personality of the teacher. The teacher may fall far short of his own ideals but it is a good thing to have lofty ideals to look up to. The false system of judging people by theoretical beliefs has been for a long time tried in the balance and found wanting. I shall, however, always treat the memory of Jesus with respect and I think it will be wise for *Freethinkers* in general to do so. As science and philosophy is a higher phase of thought than religious superstition its disciples ought to live on a higher plane which as a matter of fact they generally do.

We have good reasons for believing that his (Jesus') sympathies were with the poor and unfortunate and that he suffered martyrdom on account of his intense antagonism to Jewish priestcraft. Races that remain unassimilated with other races always reproduce the same types and I think the best key to open the riddle of the influence of the name of Jesus on certain classes of people is a careful study of Jewish socialistic and anarchistic types in our own day. There is no doubt about their motives but their emotions run away with their judgment. Bismarck once remarked: "The world will never be ruled from below." The rule that comes from those above us in the social scale is often bad enough but the rule of the ignorant mob which John Knox called "The Rascal Multitude," would be only the rule of Kilkenny cats of which only the tails were left after the fight. Chips, whether of wood or stone, may be very useful for packing purposes, but we can never build good houses with them on the top. Brains will always rule and have more of this world's goods than mere muscle. You never saw a big man with a small head boss anything but you may every day see a small man with a large head do it.

I deny, however, that we can point out one moral precept and say for certainty: "Such and such a precept originated with Jesus." The writings generally called the "Four Gospels" contradicted each other so often, that if we had all the apocryphal and lost gospels along with them, there would be confusion worse confounded. Any Bible scholar will admit that there are many interpolations in the "Four Gospels." Now if this is once admitted how are we to know at the present time what is the saying of Jesus and what is the interpolation? The most extraordinary thing about Christianity, however, is that the whole battle for two thousand years was about matters of no importance whatever, such as the parentage, supposed resurrection and miracles attributed to Jesus. Freethinkers also unfortunately waste too much time on these trifles. Now my position in reference to these fables is this: I do not care whether Jesus was the son of a ghost, the son of Joseph or the son of some one else, neither do I care whether he rose from the dead or not and as for miracles, instead of proving the genuineness of Christianity, they prove quite the reverse. Truth requires no miracles to support it. In any case the motion of the earth in which we live and thousands of other planets rolling perpetually in space with mathematical exactness, is so great a miracle that anyone who contemplates it, seriously, will not worry much about the childish fables of the Bible. Bible miracles never worried me either when I was in the church or since I left it. What I want to know is "Why a book that teaches immorality by placing bad characters, such as Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David and such like were, before the present generation as models to copy is tolerated, when the people who circulate this infamous historical romance, called the Bible, prosecute a man out in Utah if he has two wives." I insist on one of two things—either laws against Mormons should be abolished or laws should be passed against the circulation of the Bible as immoral literature. In conclusion let me inform Dr. Torrey and his followers that the "Golden Rule," the best of all sayings attributed to Jesus, acquires no additional importance from being connected with the name of Jesus, but Jesus derives great honor from having his name associated with such a beautiful precept. If he taught it all the more honor to him for it.

There is still another phase of this method of criticism and that is that it enables us to classify, if we wish, the cursing of the fig tree by Jesus for not bearing fruit out of season, the wholesale slaughter of a farmer's stock of pigs, and the command to hate father, mother, husband or wife, brothers, sisters and friends to become disciples of Jesus as interpolations of some fanatical monks in the middle ages who had some purpose of their own to serve by such interpolations. In conclusion, Jesus Christ in Christianity is like x in equations, an unknown quantity. "Quad erat demonstrandum."

NORMAN MURRAY.

The best persons in the world are those who do not need the church.

Where?

BY R. W. H. STAITE, B. A.

Where in this world and age can there be found,
Amidst the hosts of men, a mind profound,
Devoid of superstition and not swayed
By ignorance or greed and unafraid
Of things unseen, unknown; of god or man;
A perfect detail of a perfect plan—
A mind of reason and of sanity,
Dwarfed not by shame, puffed not with vanity,
But standing with bold mien before the throng,
Content with righteousness, condemning wrong?
Serene with the proud dignity of might,
No evil can assail nor terror fright;
No god of wrath can tame to bend the knee,
Nor tempting demon's wiles compel to flee.
With proud, uplifted crest to do, to dare,
No need to bow the head in suppliant prayer.
Sufficient to itself the law of love—
No thought of hell below nor heaven above;
Right for right's sake, desiring no reward,
Nor fearing future punishment from man or God.

Karl Blind Dead.

Karl Blind, the German Republican, died suddenly of heart disease at Hampstead, England, May 31.

Karl Blind was born in Mannheim, Germany, September 4, 1826. In the lyceums at Mannheim and Karlsruhe he took high honors and afterward pursued his studies at Heidelberg and Bonn. He was a leader in the German revolutionary attempts and was imprisoned five times in the years from 1847 to 1849.

He was a member of the provisional government in Baden and fought in the battle of Staufen. He was captured and sentenced to death, but escaped through a flaw in the grand ducal proclamation. Blind got eight months solitary confinement in Rastatt casemates. That was to have been the beginning of an eight years' sentence, but he was freed by the people breaking open his prison.

He was appointed a member of the Embassy of Baden and Northern Bavaria to France and arrested in violation of the law of nations after Ledru-Rollin's uprising against the second Napoleon, but after two months he was released and banished from France. From England he cooperated with Mazzini, Garibaldi, Ledru-Rollin, Louis Blanc and other Republican leaders on the continent. He interested himself in all revolutionary movements, in turning the Schleswig-Holstein movement, the Hungarian movement for autonomy and the Polish rising of 1863-4 against Russia.

He supported the North against the South in the United States Civil War, however, and was on the side of Germany in the Franco-Prussian War. He was for the Italians against the Papacy, and the Japanese against the Russians, and was in favor of the Russian movement for freedom. He wrote extensively on politics, history, mythology and Germanic and Indian literature. He was an honorary member of the Italian Academy of Literature.

Karl Blind was always a Freethinker, and his daughter, also a Freethinker, is known as the translator of Strauss's "Old Faith and the New," and as the author of the volumes on George Eliot and Madame Roland in "Eminent Women" series.

Bohemian Freethought Congress.

The Bohemian Freethought bodies of America will hold their first universal Congress in Chicago on June 13 to 16 inclusive. Two hundred Bohemian societies of Freethought tendencies, representing over 80,000 members, have promised to send delegates. The business of the regular meetings will be transacted in the Bohemian language, but Saturday evening, June 15, has been reserved for speakers of different nationalities. In this meeting representatives of the various Freethought societies are invited to participate. Inquirers should address Rudolph Janda, secretary of the Bohemian Society, 612 Centre avenue, Chicago, Ill.

The Dread of Being Comstocked.

We do not approve of making a feature of discussion and investigation of the sexual relations. We fully grant their importance and the need of their study. Men and women are cursing the day they were born, are fighting, going insane, driving others insane, making themselves devils and earth a hell, all for want of the knowledge that can only come from a free and untrammelled discussion of sexual physiology and pathology, by those who are competent. But this is exactly what is not to be had under present conditions. No such discussion is possible in any publication that circulates by post to a general public; hence any attempt in that direction is sure to be futile. It is not that the attempt to carry it on will surely bring trouble—to a man of the stuff before us martyrdom holds out allurements not to be resisted—it is because of certain failure and wasted efforts sadly needed in directions where success is possible. Our objection is not prudent cowardice but calculating utilitarianism.

There is this to be said about discussions of sexual matters. As one goes further into the topic, his viewpoint alters. The limits he first set to what is permissible in the discussion recede, until things appear as a matter of course that at first he would unhesitatingly have denounced as obscene. Then he is called to face a charge that is in itself a disgrace. And we sympathize with a friend who asked for vaccination because he preferred to "die of a clean disease." Once there was a soldier, noted throughout his division for his many heroic exploits. Time and again he braved and escaped dangers that daunted the boldest, but he seemed ever to hold a charmed life. At last he was tremendously kicked by a big mule, and this time death was inevitable. When informed of his fate, to the amazement of all he burst into tears. Seeing the contempt on his comrades' faces, he exclaimed: "It's not that, boys; not that I am afraid to die; but after all the high and mighty chances of dying I've had, to be kicked to death by an infernal, long-eared, heehawing son of a jackass!" Same as to Comstock!—Prof. Wm. F. Waugh in the Journal of Clinical Medicine.

Weary of the Pope's Censures.

A group of Italian priests has issued a remarkable open letter to the pope. It is a daring reply to the censures uttered by his holiness in his allocution of April 17 against the most modern school of ecclesiastics, and it accuses the pontiff of violating the rights of conscience in his treatment of Father Murri—who was suspended from priesthood for criticising the Vatican's policy—and of other priests.

The letter contends that Catholicism should abandon its archaic position, and by recognizing the claims of science and democracy regain its hold on mankind. It vindicates the right of young men in the church to a certain amount of liberty in their work.

Certain pontifical appointments to high dignities are strongly criticised. The pope is charged with paralyzing the work and institutions of his predecessor, and particularly of having introduced reactionary theologians into the Biblical Commission, while it is complained that the pope only allows Catholics to vote when the candidature of some Conservative is endangered.

The Whitman Dinner.

The Walt Whitman Fellowship, an organization of lovers of the gray poet, met at the Hotel Brevoort, on the afternoon of May 31, to celebrate the anniversary of his birth. The afternoon was given over to readings from "Leaves of Grass" and a musical programme which included some of Whitman's verse set to music.

Miss Grace Delle Davis recited excerpts from the poet's best known works. J. G. Phelps-Stokes read a paper on the poet's influence.

In the evening all those who had participated in the afternoon celebration sat down to a dinner in the hotel and the feast of Whitman was continued through toasts and after dinner speeches. Among those who praised the poet over the coffee were Leonard Abbott, Grace Potter, Edwin C. Walker and Bolton Hall.

Minor Editorial Note and Comment.

Decoration day in Kansas promises to become a Sabbath, with all of the unpleasant restrictions of that holy day. There is a law in the State prohibiting all amusements, and on May 30 this year virtually every form of diversion was suppressed, and all business houses were closed. They are not the friends of Memorial Day who thus endeavor to make of it a season of gloom.

May 27 was celebrated at Harvard University as the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Louis Agassiz, who was a Harvard professor forty years ago. Agassiz is held in high esteem by the orthodox for his opposition to the doctrine of evolution at a time when the theory was generally denounced as a vagary of Atheistic science. Ingersoll remarked of Agassiz that he preferred the good opinion of Harvard for a few days to the lasting applause of the intellectual world.

The church worker needs to be watched. A California subscriber writes: "Mrs. W. C. Brabender who has been a prominent worker in the German Lutheran church of Bakersfield has proven herself to be a skillful worker in other ways than those laid down by the master. After fleecing a large number of persons out of money given to her to relieve alleged need, and having contracted some hundreds of dollars in bills for merchandise, she has left the city and is traveling under an assumed name in other parts. She is a member of the Royal Neighbor fraternity and was prominent in the order here."

Among the dozen famous Americans, many of them nearly forgotten, to whom tablets were last week unveiled in New York's Hall of Fame, were the three foreign-born Americans, John Paul Jones, Alexander Hamilton, and Louis Agassiz. Although the greatest of foreign-born Americans was overlooked, his recognition must come, "not yet, but soon." It might appear as an affront to an exalted historian to immortalize one whom he has characterized as a "filthy little Atheist." It is bound to happen, nevertheless, for the fame of Thomas Paine is not measured by the length of time that the exalted are remembered by the world.

Probably the women of White Plains, N. Y., if left to themselves would be willing to tolerate Sunday games of ball outside the village limits. They might even attend them. But having been organized by the ministers into an auxiliary of the Women's National Sabbath Alliance, they have taken legal steps to stop the play. The manager of the games declares that the law is not violated, that the sport is carried on peacefully, and that he will fight the Association in the Supreme Court. A religion that sets woman against so harmless a thing as baseball, and makes her vicious enough to wish to put the players in jail, does not render her more lovely.

A man who professes to have been "a sinner at the inner shrine of Eddyism" writes to the New York Globe that the Christian Science sect is "against children" and in favor of what the philoprogenitive Roosevelt characterizes as race suicide. "It is an actual fact," he writes, "that if those holding prominent positions in the church are blessed with children they will be looked upon with disfavor. This accounts for the deplorably low birth rate among Christian Scientists." Except for the risk of evoking a protest from Mr. V. O. Strickler, we would reproduce the foregoing and suggest the possibility that children are frowned upon by Christian Science because the church would like to inherit the property of its devotees.

The woman preacher is evidently a novelty in Germany. In Berlin an Anglicized German woman, Gertrude van

Petzold, who is pastor of a church at Leicester, England, preached in a public hall not long ago, to the great scandal of certain Christians in her audience. There was much hooting and uproar. One man denounced her as an enemy of the Christian church and shouted: "It is a shame that women should be allowed to preach the gospel. The devil take Christianity of this kind." A woman in the audience shrieked hysterically that the preacher was Antichrist, and the Assembly broke up in disorder. It was a German preacher, Martin Luther, who observed that no garment so ill became a woman as that she should be wise.

"Foraker for Freethought" is the heading which one of the newspapers imposes on the Ohio Senator's address at Steubenville. It is disappointing to learn on perusal of the speech that the thought which is to be free appertains only to the affairs of the administration. As regards religion, Senator Foraker is still in the bonds. He especially regards himself as an expounder of the intentions of the Creator. Once he told the United States Senate that if Providence had designed a horse's tail to be short he (Providence) would have docked it himself. During the same session of Congress he lectured in Montclair, N. J., on the Panama Canal, the digging of which he approved, declaring that when God placed that narrow strip of land between the continents of North and South America, he intended that the people of the United States, in this generation, should cut a ditch through it. Such a "freethinker" will think freely regardless of facts and logic.

For calling the Rev. William J. Long, a writer of animal stories, a "nature fakir," President Roosevelt is exhorted, implored, and commanded by the offended author to withdraw and apologize. Dr. Long does not permit the high station of his detractor to deter him from calling for proof or retraction. A letter which he has written President Roosevelt closes as follows: "You cannot at this stage, Mr. Roosevelt, take refuge behind the Presidential office and be silent. You have forfeited your right to that silence by breaking it, by coming out in public to attack a private citizen. If your talk of a square deal is not all a sham, if your frequent moral preaching is not all hypocrisy, I call upon you as President and as a man to come out and admit the error and injustice of your charge in the same open and public way in which you made it." It is uncertain what the President will do. If he is to correct all of the mistakes he has made in his writings he will find himself short of time for making new ones.

In 1899 seven thousand Doukhobors, or, as the name means, "spirit-wrestlers," were brought into Canada from Russia, the expenses being paid by private subscription in England, by Quakers, and by the Canadian government. The sect are non-combatants, and suffered persecution on that account at home. Canada thought they would make desirable citizens, but is not so confident about it now. They do not remain on the reservation prepared for them. They have several times started on crusades for the healing of the nations, and whether or not there is any relation between holiness and nudity, they stripped to the skin before they went forth. Canada exempted them from military duty; they were permitted to exercise their right not to use force, to inflict pain, to shed blood, or to eat meat; but all of the government's plans, for them were defeated by their refusal to pay taxes or to take out patents on their land. As a consequence a large part of the 250,000 acres set apart for them is to be opened for settlement by others. The Doukhobors are the sect of Russian Quakers in whom the

late Ernest Crosby became so deeply interested after his visit to Tolstoy.

The evident zeal of the Rev. W. D. Clark as a Christian worker and exhorter won the esteem and confidence of the Young Men's Christian Association of Honolulu, Hawaii. He was one of the most effective preachers of the gospel that had ever struck the island. We observe from the Pacific Commercial Advertiser of May 8 that the reverend gentleman is now under arrest. Not long ago he was pastor of the Congregational church at Freeport, Mich., but he got the wanderlust, and took with him as a travelling companion the younger sister of his wife. That would not have caused his arrest if, before leaving Freeport, he had not forged a check for \$300 and got it cashed. It may brighten him up on reaching again the United States to learn that there are others of his profession in a fix much like his own.

Statesmen with policies for the more perfect governing of their fellow men took advantage of the crowds assembled on Memorial day to expound them. The most striking "reforms" were of course those outlined by the President, who spoke in Indianapolis, where thirty-one years ago the people first listened to Ingersoll's "Vision of War." How the past was brought back and glorified then by the orator's word picture beginning: "The past rises before me like a dream." This is the most significant passage in the President's address: "In so far as the common carriers also transport the mails, it is in my opinion probable that whether their business is or is not interstate, it is to the same extent subject to Federal control, under that clause of the Constitution granting to the national government power to establish post roads, and therefore, by necessary implication, power to take all action necessary in order to keep them at the highest point of efficiency." By another year, the memory of our heroic dead may inspire somebody to say that as the mails are transported over the streets of cities and country roads in wagons and by letter carriers, it is a necessary implication that the federal government should take all action necessary to keep said streets and roads at the highest point of efficiency. The resources of the Constitution, to the advocate of centralized government, are inexhaustible in their "necessary implications."

It seems that Plymouth church, which purged its precincts of Judge Septimus Hanna, who would have delivered from its platform a lecture on Christian Science, has been entertaining one of those converted priests who go about giving the inside workings of the Catholic church. The Mentor, a Brooklyn Catholic monthly, swings on Beecher's old church thus: "The rector of Plymouth Church and some of the more or less godly men who control that temple of unlimited theology and elastic morality have at last found a creed they cannot swallow. They have concluded that a lecture on Christian Science would desecrate the pulpit of the humanitarian Beecher and the rationalistic Abbott. What a pity the Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis & Co. did not rise to this nice sense of the fitness of things when they invited a shameless priest, who is despised even in Chicago, to occupy that pulpit and revile the old church that even Beecher respected. Well might these paragons of propriety sit at the feet of the lonely Irish women who on learning that the same foul-mouthed traitor was in one of the hotels of Cork gathered in front of the place and, ringing dinner bells and fish horns, drove the unclean visitor from the city he polluted by his presence." The Rev. Dr. Hillis ringing a dinner bell and Gen. Horatio C. King blowing a fish horn to frighten off the Rev. Father Crowley of Chicago would be the sight of a lifetime. The spectacle would be even more amusing than the one they made of themselves shoeing away Judge Hanna.

SIX HISTORIC AMERICANS

WITH PORTRAITS

BY

JOHN E. REMSBURG

George Washington
Thomas Jefferson
Thomas Paine
Benjamin Franklin
Abraham Lincoln
Ulysses S. Grant

The Six Greatest Figures in American History, and Not One of Them Was a Christian. All Were Unbelievers—All Freethinkers

WASHINGTON

Propositions proved:

1. That Washington was not a Christian communicant.
2. That he was not a believer in the Christian religion.

JEFFERSON

Says Benjamin Lossing in his "Lives of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence:"

"In religion he was a Freethinker in morals pure and unspotted."

PAINE

In regard to Paine's Religious views Mr. Remsburg establishes the negative of the following: 1. Was Paine an Atheist? 2. Was he a Christian? 3. Did he recant?

FRANKLIN

"It is much to be lamented that a man of Franklin's general good character and great influence should have been an unbeliever in Christianity, and also have done as much as he did to make others unbelievers."—Dr. Priestley.

LINCOLN

A cloud of witnesses testify to Lincoln's rejection of Christianity.

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Letters of Friends.

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WHEEL!

From R. Kildare, Tennessee.

Editor Truth Seeker: Many Freethinkers derive their education from the capitalist newspapers. Witness the correspondent in your issue of May 18, who comes into print with the amazing statement that Roosevelt has "assumed a neutral position towards both capital and labor." That assertion is ludicrous. Let us examine it.

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Roosevelt is neutral! Is that why he stands before the country condemning as murderers three untried working men, Moyer, Haywood & Pettibone? Observe that the thrice convicted murderer is innocent, because he is a Republican, the untried men are guilty because they are prominent union men. Neutral!

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Neutral!!

Yours for the square thing.

THE MISCHIEVOUS DOCTRINE OF "ANOTHER CHANCE."

From J. W. Stapleton, Missouri.

Mr. Editor: I am going to venture to say that I am unlike sister Elizabeth Evans.

The older I grow the more I am inclined to believe that this life is all there is of life for me. Therefore, I have no hope or desire whatever for another chance. For, as I see it, this hope of another chance (repentance) has caused men to do worlds of crime with the expectation of having an opportunity to repent and go scot-free at the other fellow's expense. If we accept this, the most prominent doctrine of the Christian priests, we may as well accept them all.

If there is another and better life for us to live after death, where is it? Is that question too deep for man to solve? If so, we had better let the Christian Bible decide it for us. Nay, but we have another revelation direct from Nature herself, and every intelligent and thinking person can read it. But nature nowhere reveals the facts of a resurrection of man from the dead, or of a life

after death. Well, then, why should we presume that there is or desire another chance in another and unknown world, since we have discovered that even lives which may be called successful do not satisfy their owners? Does this argument go to prove that man would be any better satisfied in another world, where they were drinking milk and eating honey three times a day, playing a harp with a thousand strings, singing praise to the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world through all eternity without taking a rest, or changing a tune? I don't believe I would like that. No one but sloths and idiots could be satisfied there unless previously struck with a brainstorm. But then, what of satisfaction? Did you ever see an enterprising, energetic, fair-minded individual who was satisfied with his or her present attainments in this life? If you did, what class did they belong to? If everybody had been or was satisfied with their present attainments there would have been a famine every year. If every person had been satisfied with their present mental attainments that would have been a feast for the church—everybody would have gone in and sat down. No revisions of God's divine revelation, no railroads, no telegraph, no way of communicating to the visible world. And now what good could there be in giving this class of people another chance in another world? And then, what of life? We were all forced into this world by environments of which we had no control; the same existing environments, with power, will take us all out of this world without a word of our say so. May I ask what could have been the design, if any, in placing man on this earth? Has he got a mission here to fulfil? If so, what is it? Does life or can life exist without a body? It has never been so found and explained by scientific men. Then, since we have learned that after the demise of the body there can be no life apart from matter, why should we think of a soul being lost in another world?

THIS SOUNDS REASONABLE.

From F. E. Harris, California.

Editor Truth Seeker: I would like to answer Mr. Frederick W. Taylor's letter, "Theism vs. Atheism." He asks: "Does Nature necessitate a God?" I think it does not. If we know anything, we know that we are living beings. Then our senses teach us that there is material outside of ourselves, which we call matter. Our five senses teach us that we ourselves, and the universe, whether large or small, do exist.

But as to a God, that he exists is a pure supposition, with no facts whatever to support it. Mr. Taylor, nor any person on the earth, has ever been able to give, or to have any definite idea of a God; and how can we know anything of which we have no idea? All forms of matter with which we come in contact give us some ideas by which we know objects and persons, and except through our senses, directly or indirectly, we can know nothing. But for the sake of argument, let us suppose there is a God. Then he must be either personal and finite, or he must be impersonal and infinite. If he is personal and finite, he could not control the universe, and if he is impersonal and infinite, then he would be the whole thing, and that would be nature itself, and not a something outside of nature.

Again, suppose there is a God, and he created the universe; then he either made matter out of nothing or out of something. To say God made the universe out of something, does not settle the question of the origin of the universe; and to say God created something out of nothing is absurd.

To my mind it is more reasonable that matter always existed in some form than it is to assume that a God always existed and created something out of nothing. If God made the universe, he must have done so, at some definite time; and such being the case God must have spent an eternity doing nothing and thinking of nothing, as he could have nothing to do and nothing to think about; therefore God at that time was nothing, or in other words did not exist. Again, so far as we know, no God makes animals or plants, or matter in any form to-day, or does anything to either preserve or destroy anything; neither did he yesterday, nor the

day before yesterday, nor last year nor last century nor any number of years ago.

Darwin, in his works on tides, goes as far back into the history of suns and planets as any man has been able to go; and he tells of nothing that indicates supernatural power.

So far as we know, nothing can be created or destroyed, hence all matter that now exists must have always been in some form; the laws of nature control everything to-day as in the past, and more than probably will control all things in the future.

I cannot see any want or necessity for a God.

TO THE BENEVOLENT.

From J. Francis Ruggles, Michigan.

Every old-time reader of the intellectual Truth Seeker has perused with pleasure the brilliantly enlightening contributions of the veteran Rationalist and Liberal worker, Mrs. Elmina Drake Slenker, of Snowville, Pulaski County, Virginia, who for two generations tirelessly kept her pen a-writing, and Samaritan-like expended her lifetime in taking up dime and dollar contributions for the aid of suffering humanity. Possessing only plain Quaker honesty and an unsuspecting nature, she has proven a victim to the duplicity and rapacity of some in whom she trusted, so that now, when the shadows of old age and debility are falling fast around her, she finds herself in dire financial distress. From her modest home she has sacrificed even her literary treasures, carpets and anything that would bring means to procure the bare necessities of corporeal existence. Some Truthseekers responded nobly to the editor's generous appeal, but every reader should regard it both a duty and an honor to alacritously render assistance to this aged benefactor, for none are more worthy of such remembrance.

So, let's all sit down and send her something, if nothing more than a cheer-up letter with stamp for response, as "Aunt Elmina" has always delighted in correspondence.

WHAT HE HAS MISSED.

From G. H. Thomas, Georgia.

Editor Truth Seeker: I am greatly pleased with the reading matter of The Truth Seeker. I feel that I have lost a great deal of useful knowledge by not being a subscriber. I hope to eventually get enough interested to get up a Philosophical Society. A good many here would be Freethinkers if it were not for fear of the Church. Yours, for business.

DEATH OF ABRAHAM GEEREY.

From J. W. G. Merritt, Washington.

Editor of The Truth Seeker: Abraham Geerey died at his home in Blaine, Wash., on May 14th. The funeral was held Wednesday afternoon at two o'clock and the remains were laid to rest in the Blaine cemetery. Mr. Geerey was born in Belfast, Ireland, September 18, 1831, and when three years of age came to America with his parents. They settled in Greene county, Illinois, where Mr. Geerey resided until he came to Blaine in 1890.

In 1862 Mr. Geerey was married to Elizabeth Pinkerton. To this union three daughters were born, all of whom survive their father. In 1874 Mr. Geerey was married again, to the wife who survives him.

I have been informed that he was at one time a member of an orthodox Christian church, but for some cause he changed his belief and since I have known him—from 1890—he has been a consistent and unflinching foe of the church, never missing an opportunity to oppose it whether in public or otherwise.

I had occasion to visit him several times during his last illness and he expressed himself strongly that he wanted no one to say of him that he died a repentant. His mind was contented, with no fear of trouble beyond this life. He was an honest, upright man, beloved of his family and respected by all who knew him.

At the funeral an address was delivered by Mr. G. H. Westcott touching upon his life and character. No church services were rendered.

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Judge Tenney's Glorious Hope.

That We Do Not Understand How Immortality Can Be Is, He Avers, No Evidence Against It.

Our Christian friends, accepting as authoritative their Holy Book, have for centuries been confident that "In the Sweet By-and By we shall meet on that beautiful shore." There is sublimity in this idea, surely! Is there any rational basis for it? Upon this question men of free thought are widely at variance. Some say that death ends all; others that it does not, and still others that they have no clear opinion on the subject. Certain it is that whatever opinion any one of us entertains will not change the fact. To my mind the important question to be solved is this: Is the human body endowed with a function which can properly be called a soul? If it is, I am satisfied that function has always lived and will never die. In nature there is nothing lost. The body is a chemical combination adapted during life for the play of the energizing forces which control it. When it ceases to be so adapted the body dies. Chemical forces gradually dispose of it. The elements of which it was composed return to their appropriate places in nature for readjustment into other forms in the great future.

If there be such a thing as a soul, there seems to me no reason to suppose that it is a chemical product. The action of natural forces upon our physical system—brain, nerves, and the like—are, indeed, necessary for the development and sustenance of the soul, if we have one. It cannot act on earth without them. An appropriate environment is necessary. If there be a soul, it is just as reasonable to suppose that nature will provide for it hereafter a proper environment, as that it has done so in the past or present. As to how this has been or can be done we are as profoundly ignorant as we are of many other things in the conduct of nature. Our actual knowledge or ignorance of natural forces will not retard their action. We are simply a small combination of atoms in universal life. Nature moves on without regard to our desires or opinions. Even by "faith as a grain of mustard seed" we cannot swerve the grand procession.

As to the existence of such a thing as the human soul, many millions of good people are willing to accept the testimonies of the New Testament. They seek no further evidence and strangely discredit any which may be offered, however plausible and convincing to others. It is now generally conceded by professing Christians of intelligence that the earth is countless millions of years old and that the human race has existed upon it for a million years or thereabouts. If the Bible can be relied upon, every human soul during that long period, up to about 1900 years ago, went, at death, directly to that abode of departed spirits where there is "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." In the meantime, the Christians' God came to earth frequently, walked in the garden with Adam, in the cool of the day, talked with him, and with many of the old patriarchs, inspired with celestial wisdom many others, wrote with his finger on tables of stone the ten commandments for the guidance of men, and yet never spoke or inspired a word indicating that the soul of man is immortal or that there was a Heaven to reward the good or a Hell to punish the bad. Strange, is it not, that a God "whose tender mercies are over all his works," and who all along took such great interest in the management of his chosen people, never made known to them, in the slightest degree, the idea of immortal life? Having kept his people in ignorance on this important subject for so vast a period, during which every soul which departed this life was ushered by

the devil into everlasting punishment, not a single soul going to heaven, it was finally decided by the celestial authorities to disclose to mankind the fact so long concealed and that there were places divinely provided where the souls of those who thereafter believed certain strange things could enter an eternal life of happiness, and those who did not believe in them should be "tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Holy Angels and in the presence of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." By certain well known miraculous methods, this opinion as to immortality, with its rewards and punishments, was first divinely communicated to a few people about nineteen hundred years ago and has been enlarging its sphere of influence ever since. By this evidence alone, Christians are satisfied of such immortality, with both of its accompaniments, and want no better proof.

And this, notwithstanding they are cautioned that "few there be that find" the strait gate to such eternal life; that "if any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"; and that "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." So after all, few Christians can get to heaven. Those only who hate their father, mother, wife, and children, brothers and sisters. Even those who get there are not warmly received, unless they have been infamous scoundrels on earth and have finally repented, in which case they are apparently received into Heaven with great joy, and maybe, with a torch light procession!

Such proof of immortality is not satisfactory to men of sense. It works well with the ignorant only, with the Hottentots and other heathen whose conversion to it, however, is said to cost more than ten thousand dollars apiece. For my part, I want no such immortality as that, no such future companions. I would rather that death end all. Our families and friends are dearer to us than all the stupid people in this world or the next, whether Christian or heathen, and dearer than all the deathbed repentance, villains, over whom there is such joyful ado in the celestial realm. But there is another and more densely populated department in the Christian scheme of immortality. The weather is said to be pretty hot there, but I doubt if it is worse than that in our Philippine Islands. Surely the inventive genius of Yankee imps, who, because they loved their families and friends, have flocked there in great numbers, must have introduced asbestos clothing and other modern improvements by this time! If the Christians think they will enjoy that sort of immortality in either of its departments, they certainly deserve it! I prefer a different variety.

People who do any real thinking on this subject, have no revelation to control them. Reason and reflection are their only guide. No two minds reach the same conclusion. Personally, I cannot believe that thought, logic, intelligence and conscience are the product of general forces acting upon the different departments of my body. The ultimate force in nature is generally thought to be electro-magnetic. Are the thoughts which I am here recording the product of electro-magnetism? That seems to me impossible! There is a mind, an individuality within, enabled by such forces to express its thought. No two persons entertain or express the same thoughts

in the same language. There seems a mental individuality peculiar to each, varying far more in conduct, thought and expression than would be the case if blind force alone controlled. This indicates that there is a personal soul presiding over and controlling our thought and action. Though other forces are concurrent and necessary for the preservation of our life, our intelligence and conduct do not seem to me to originate with them. I cannot believe, for instance, that lightning thinks, reasons, talks, or that it has a conscience or a good moral character! Or that a piece of meat, alive or dead, through which electric currents are passing, is thinking about something. It seems to me there is an individual, intelligent power within us which may well be called a soul and that this power, sustained by an appropriate personal environment is what makes the man. When he dies, the soul moves out and by some natural law secures more appropriate quarters elsewhere in the vast universe, guided thereto by the same law of nature which provided that from which the soul has just departed. There is no new matter in the universe. What there is has always existed, though undergoing constant modification. Nor are there any new souls. All are changing conditions and embodiment when nature requires it. Their individuality seems plain to my mind. There is nothing more wonderful about this than there is about the eternal preservation of matter. Both have always been and will always be. That we cannot understand minutely how this can be accomplished is no evidence against it. There are several things which we do not know all about yet!

Aside from these suggestions, there are other things, well known to us, which indicate that we are possessed of individual souls and that these survive the death of the body. I am not a Spiritualist, in the ordinary sense, but there are many well attested phenomena said to be developed through mediums and through others directly, which indicate not only that the souls of men survive the body, but that under favoring conditions they can communicate with the living. On this subject, or upon any other of a mysterious nature, no man can be more skeptical than myself. I am well satisfied that most of the so-called spiritual phenomena are absolute frauds, as much so, but no more, than are the tales of the holy Testaments. I realize how easy it is for men to be deceived by either. But I have experienced personally and had well authenticated by others of my honest acquaintances, phenomena which leave no material doubt in my mind of the survival of our spirits. Nor is there anything more wonderful about this than there is concerning many other strange things well attested, clairvoyancy, telepathy, telegraphing and telephoning without wires and sending pictures thousands of miles by telegraph. That people in general do not know how such things are accomplished is no evidence against them. If they are consistent with and products of the forces of nature, they are genuine, otherwise not. There is nothing supernatural about anything. There are many strange things perfectly natural concerning which we are densely ignorant, but to the knowledge of which we are gradually creeping.

One thing is certain, however. If the soul be immortal, it is not going to enter "a house not made by hands eternal in the heavens," with golden streets and nearly gates, where halos and harps and a great white throne prevail, "where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths have no end," nor into a torrid abode of eternal punishment. Those Christian beauty spots are survivals of ancient ignorance and savagery. If the individual soul be immortal, it existed individually forever, passing from one environment to another at nature's call, improving in knowledge by its experience and educa-

tion in each, and so will continue forever. There is no "haven of eternal rest." If there is, I do not want to go there. If such be the facts, our education and experience in this world and the behavior which these and those of our heredity and environment produce here, will qualify our souls for appropriate conditions in "the sweet by and by."

When in Freethought literature I read from gifted pens many able articles, insisting that there is no future life, and weigh the argument with care, seeking only for the truth, it seems to me that the writers are a little too confident. Because we reject the species of immortality delivered to us by the saints, which every man with good sense is obliged to do, is no reason for denying an eternal continuous existence of the spirits which animate us. On this subject the agnostic position is the best. We do not know. It is a glorious hope. If natural, it is as inevitable as a thousand other things which we cannot fully understand.

DANIEL K. TENNEY.

Madison, Wis.

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By Samuel Laing.

This is a work that goes back as near to the beginning of things as study can arrive, and traces man and his institutions from their origins. It is in two parts, "Evidence From History" and "Evidence From Science." Heretofore the book has been obtainable only at a high price. It has been republished in pamphlet form.

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Adam's Diary. Letters of Friends.

BY MARK TWAIN.

The only fault to be found with Mark Twain's new book, "Extracts from Adam's Diary," is that there is not more of it, both pictures and print. It is Adam's daily record of his life from the time he found the "new creature with the long hair," which was a good deal in the way and which he wished would stay with the other animals, to the time he finally found that he could not be happy without it, and found that it was better to live outside of the garden with her than inside it without her. By that time Abel and Cain are grown to boyhood. Cain, Adam first took to be a new species of bear, and he concludes that if he had stayed a bear it would have improved him. When Cain was young, Adam searched the woods thoroughly to find another animal like it but without success. While he was away on one of these searches the animal with the long hair found another one. "I never saw such luck," says Adam when she showed it to him. "I might have hunted these woods a hundred years; I never should have run across that thing." Adam's diary record on Sunday is very brief. He just "pulled through." To set it apart as a day of rest he thinks superfluous when he already had six rest days every week. But he finally came to know what the week was for: to "give time to rest up from the weariness of Sunday," and it seemed a good idea. Eve, too, bothered him by climbing the apple tree, and he had to "clod her out of it." She said there was no harm in climbing it as there was nobody looking.

The story is very briefly told—too briefly—but every line sparkles with wit. The pictures, one to each page of text, are by F. Strothmann.

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EVE'S DIARY

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The older I grow the more I am inclined to believe that this life is all there is of life for me. Therefore, I have no hope or desire whatever for another chance. For, as I see it, this hope of another chance (repentance) has caused men to do worlds of crime with the expectation of having an opportunity to repent and go scot-free at the other fellow's expense. If we accept this, the most prominent doctrine of the Christian priests, we may as well accept them all.

If there is another and better life for us to live after death, where is it? Is that question too deep for man to solve? If so, we had better let the Christian Bible decide it for us. Nay, but we have another revelation direct from Nature herself, and every intelligent and thinking person can read it. But nature nowhere reveals the facts of a resurrection of man from the dead, or of a life

after death. Well, then, why should we presume that there is or desire another chance in another and unknown world, since we have discovered that even lives which may be called successful do not satisfy their owners? Does this argument go to prove that man would be any better satisfied in another world, where they were drinking milk and eating honey three times a day, playing a harp with a thousand strings, singing praise to the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world through all eternity without taking a rest, or changing a tune? I don't believe I would like that. No one but sloths and idiots could be satisfied there unless previously struck with a brainstorm. But then, what of satisfaction? Did you ever see an enterprising, energetic, fair-minded individual who was satisfied with his or her present attainments in this life? If you did, what class did they belong to? If everybody had been or was satisfied with their present attainments there would have been a famine every year. If every person had been satisfied with their present mental attainments that would have been a feast for the church—everybody would have gone in and sat down. No revisions of God's divine revelation, no railroads, no telegraph, no way of communicating to the visible world. And now what good could there be in giving this class of people another chance in another world? And then, what of life? We were all forced into this world by environments of which we had no control; the same existing environments, with power, will take us all out of this world without a word of our say so. May I ask what could have been the design, if any, in placing man on this earth? Has he got a mission here to fulfil? If so, what is it? Does life or can life exist without a body? It has never been so found and explained by scientific men. Then, since we have learned that after the demise of the body there can be no life apart from matter, why should we think of a soul being lost in another world?

THIS SOUNDS REASONABLE.

From F. E. Harris, California.

Editor Truth Seeker: I would like to answer Mr. Frederick W. Taylor's letter, "Theism vs. Atheism." He asks: "Does Nature necessitate a God?" I think it does not. If we know anything, we know that we are living beings. Then our senses teach us that there is material outside of ourselves, which we call matter. Our five senses teach us that we ourselves, and the universe, whether large or small, do exist.

But as to a God, that he exists is a pure supposition, with no facts whatever to support it. Mr. Taylor, nor any person on the earth, has ever been able to give, or to have any definite idea of a God; and how can we know anything of which we have no idea? All forms of matter with which we come in contact give us some ideas by which we know objects and persons, and except through our senses, directly or indirectly, we can know nothing. But for the sake of argument, let us suppose there is a God. Then he must be either personal and finite, or he must be impersonal and infinite. If he is personal and finite, he could not control the universe, and if he is impersonal and infinite, then he would be the whole thing, and that would be nature itself, and not a something outside of nature.

Again, suppose there is a God, and he created the universe; then he either made matter out of nothing or out of something. To say God made the universe out of something, does not settle the question of the origin of the universe; and to say God created something out of nothing is absurd.

To my mind it is more reasonable that matter always existed in some form than it is to assume that a God always existed and created something out of nothing. If God made the universe, he must have done so, at some definite time; and such being the case God must have spent an eternity doing nothing and thinking of nothing, as he could have nothing to do and nothing to think about; therefore God at that time was nothing, or in other words did not exist. Again, so far as we know, no God makes animals or plants, or matter in any form to-day, or does anything to either preserve or destroy anything; neither did he yesterday, nor the

day before yesterday, nor last year nor last century nor any number of years ago.

Darwin, in his works on tides, goes as far back into the history of suns and planets as any man has been able to go; and he tells of nothing that indicates supernatural power.

So far as we know, nothing can be created or destroyed, hence all matter that now exists must have always been in some form; the laws of nature control everything to-day as in the past, and more than probably will control all things in the future.

I cannot see any want or necessity for a God.

TO THE BENEVOLENT.

From J. Francis Ruggles, Michigan.

Every old-time reader of the intellectual Truth Seeker has perused with pleasure the brilliantly enlightening contributions of the veteran Rationalist and Liberal worker, Mrs. Elmina Drake Slenker, of Snowville, Pulaski County, Virginia, who for two generations tirelessly kept her pen a-writing, and Samaritan-like expended her lifetime in taking up dime and dollar contributions for the aid of suffering humanity. Possessing only plain Quaker honesty and an unsuspecting nature, she has proven a victim to the duplicity and rapacity of some in whom she trusted, so that now, when the shadows of old age and debility are falling fast around her, she finds herself in dire financial distress. From her modest home she has sacrificed even her literary treasures, carpets and anything that would bring means to procure the bare necessities of corporeal existence. Some Truthseekers responded nobly to the editor's generous appeal, but every reader should regard it both a duty and an honor to alacritously render assistance to this aged benefactor, for none are more worthy of such remembrance.

So, let's all sit down and send her something, if nothing more than a cheer-up letter with stamp for response, as "Aunt Elmina" has always delighted in correspondence.

WHAT HE HAS MISSED.

From G. H. Thomas, Georgia.

Editor Truth Seeker: I am greatly pleased with the reading matter of The Truth Seeker. I feel that I have lost a great deal of useful knowledge by not being a subscriber. I hope to eventually get enough interested to get up a Philosophical Society. A good many here would be Freethinkers if it were not for fear of the Church. Yours, for business.

DEATH OF ABRAHAM GEEREY.

From J. W. G. Merritt, Washington.

Editor of The Truth Seeker: Abraham Geerey died at his home in Blaine, Wash., on May 14th. The funeral was held Wednesday afternoon at two o'clock and the remains were laid to rest in the Blaine cemetery. Mr. Geerey was born in Belfast, Ireland, September 18, 1831, and when three years of age came to America with his parents. They settled in Greene county, Illinois, where Mr. Geerey resided until he came to Blaine in 1890.

In 1862 Mr. Geerey was married to Elizabeth Pinkerton. To this union three daughters were born, all of whom survive their father. In 1874 Mr. Geerey was married again, to the wife who survives him.

I have been informed that he was at one time a member of an orthodox Christian church, but for some cause he changed his belief and since I have known him—from 1890—he has been a consistent and unflinching foe of the church, never missing an opportunity to oppose it whether in public or otherwise.

I had occasion to visit him several times during his last illness and he expressed himself strongly that he wanted no one to say of him that he died a repentant. His mind was contented, with no fear of trouble beyond this life. He was an honest, upright man, beloved of his family and respected by all who knew him.

At the funeral an address was delivered by Mr. G. H. Westcott touching upon his life and character. No church services were rendered.

Judge Tenney's Glorious Hope.

That We Do Not Understand How Immortality Can Be Is, He Avers, No Evidence Against It.

Our Christian friends, accepting as authoritative their Holy Book, have for centuries been confident that "In the Sweet By-and-By we shall meet on that beautiful shore." There is sublimity in this idea, surely! Is there any rational basis for it? Upon this question men of free thought are widely at variance. Some say that death ends all; others that it does not, and still others that they have no clear opinion on the subject. Certain it is that whatever opinion any one of us entertains will not change the fact. To my mind the important question to be solved is this: Is the human body endowed with a function which can properly be called a soul? If it is, I am satisfied that function has always lived and will never die. In nature there is nothing lost. The body is a chemical combination adapted during life for the play of the energizing forces which control it. When it ceases to be so adapted the body dies. Chemical forces gradually dispose of it. The elements of which it was composed return to their appropriate places in nature for readjustment into other forms in the great future.

If there be such a thing as a soul, there seems to me no reason to suppose that it is a chemical product. The action of natural forces upon our physical system—brain, nerves, and the like—are, indeed, necessary for the development and sustenance of the soul, if we have one. It cannot act on earth without them. An appropriate environment is necessary. If there be a soul, it is just as reasonable to suppose that nature will provide for it hereafter a proper environment, as that it has done so in the past or present. As to how this has been or can be done we are as profoundly ignorant as we are of many other things in the conduct of nature. Our actual knowledge or ignorance of natural forces will not retard their action. We are simply a small combination of atoms in universal life. Nature moves on without regard to our desires or opinions. Even by "faith as a grain of mustard seed" we cannot swerve the grand procession.

As to the existence of such a thing as the human soul, many millions of good people are willing to accept the testimonies of the New Testament. They seek no further evidence and strangely discredit any which may be offered, however plausible and convincing to others. It is now generally conceded by professing Christians of intelligence that the earth is countless millions of years old and that the human race has existed upon it for a million years or thereabouts. If the Bible can be relied upon, every human soul during that long period, up to about 1900 years ago, went, at death, directly to that abode of departed spirits where there is "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." In the meantime, the Christians' God came to earth frequently, walked in the garden with Adam, in the cool of the day, talked with him, and with many of the old patriarchs, inspired with celestial wisdom many others, wrote with his finger on tables of stone the ten commandments for the guidance of men, and yet never spoke or inspired a word indicating that the soul of man is immortal or that there was a Heaven to reward the good or a Hell to punish the bad. Strange, is it not, that a God "whose tender mercies are over all his works," and who all along took such great interest in the management of his chosen people, never made known to them, in the slightest degree, the idea of immortal life? Having kept his people in ignorance on this important subject for so vast a period, during which every soul which departed this life was ushered by

the devil into everlasting punishment, not a single soul going to heaven, it was finally decided by the celestial authorities to disclose to mankind the fact so long concealed and that there were places divinely provided where the souls of those who thereafter believed certain strange things could enter an eternal life of happiness, and those who did not believe in them should be "tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Holy Angels and in the presence of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." By certain well known miraculous methods, this opinion as to immortality, with its rewards and punishments, was first divinely communicated to a few people about nineteen hundred years ago and has been enlarging its sphere of influence ever since. By this evidence alone, Christians are satisfied of such immortality, with both of its accompaniments, and want no better proof.

And this, notwithstanding they are cautioned that "few there be that find" the strait gate to such eternal life; that "if any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"; and that "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." So after all, few Christians can get to heaven. Those only who hate their father, mother, wife, and children, brothers and sisters. Even those who get there are not warmly received, unless they have been infamous scoundrels on earth and have finally repented, in which case they are apparently received into Heaven with great joy, and maybe, with a torch light procession!

Such proof of immortality is not satisfactory to men of sense. It works well with the ignorant only, with the Hottentots and other heathen whose conversion to it, however, is said to cost more than ten thousand dollars apiece. For my part, I want no such immortality as that, no such future companions. I would rather that death end all. Our families and friends are dearer to us than all the stupid people in this world or the next, whether Christian or heathen, and dearer than all the deathbed repentance villains, over whom there is such joyful ado in the celestial realm. But there is another and more densely populated department in the Christian scheme of immortality. The weather is said to be pretty hot there, but I doubt if it is worse than that in our Philippine Islands. Surely the inventive genius of Yankee imps, who, because they loved their families and friends, have flocked there in great numbers, must have introduced asbestos clothing and other modern improvements by this time! If the Christians think they will enjoy that sort of immortality in either of its departments, they certainly deserve it! I prefer a different variety.

People who do any real thinking on this subject, have no revelation to control them. Reason and reflection are their only guide. No two minds reach the same conclusion. Personally, I cannot believe that thought, logic, intelligence and conscience are the product of general forces acting upon the different departments of my body. The ultimate force in nature is generally thought to be electro-magnetic. Are the thoughts which I am here recording the product of electro-magnetism? That seems to me impossible! There is a mind, an individuality within, enabled by such forces to express its thought. No two persons entertain or express the same thoughts

in the same language. There seems a mental individuality peculiar to each, varying far more in conduct, thought and expression than would be the case if blind force alone controlled. This indicates that there is a personal soul presiding over and controlling our thought and action. Though other forces are concurrent and necessary for the preservation of our life, our intelligence and conduct do not seem to me to originate with them. I cannot believe, for instance, that lightning thinks, reasons, talks, or that it has a conscience or a good moral character! Or that a piece of meat, alive or dead, through which electric currents are passing, is thinking about something. It seems to me there is an individual, intelligent power within us which may well be called a soul and that this power, sustained by an appropriate personal environment is what makes the man. When he dies, the soul moves out and by some natural law secures more appropriate quarters elsewhere in the vast universe, guided thereto by the same law of nature which provided that from which the soul has just departed. There is no new matter in the universe. What there is has always existed, though undergoing constant modification. Nor are there any new souls. All are changing conditions and embodiment when nature requires it. Their individuality seems plain to my mind. There is nothing more wonderful about this than there is about the eternal preservation of matter. Both have always been and will always be. That we cannot understand minutely how this can be accomplished is no evidence against it. There are several things which we do not know all about yet!

Aside from these suggestions, there are other things, well known to us, which indicate that we are possessed of individual souls and that these survive the death of the body. I am not a Spiritualist, in the ordinary sense, but there are many well attested phenomena said to be developed through mediums and through others directly, which indicate not only that the souls of men survive the body, but that under favoring conditions they can communicate with the living. On this subject, or upon any other of a mysterious nature, no man can be more skeptical than myself. I am well satisfied that most of the so-called spiritual phenomena are absolute frauds, as much so, but no more, than are the tales of the holy Testaments. I realize how easy it is for men to be deceived by either. But I have experienced personally and had well authenticated by others of my honest acquaintances, phenomena which leave no material doubt in my mind of the survival of our spirits. Nor is there anything more wonderful about this than there is concerning many other strange things well attested, clairvoyancy, telepathy, telegraphing and telephoning without wires and sending pictures thousands of miles by telegraph. That people in general do not know how such things are accomplished is no evidence against them. If they are consistent with and products of the forces of nature, they are genuine, otherwise not. There is nothing supernatural about anything. There are many strange things perfectly natural concerning which we are densely ignorant, but to the knowledge of which we are gradually creeping.

One thing is certain, however. If the soul be immortal, it is not going to enter "a house not made by hands eternal in the heavens," with golden streets and pearly gates, where halos and harps and a great white throne prevail, "where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths have no end," nor into a torrid abode of eternal punishment. Those Christian beauty spots are survivals of ancient ignorance and savagery. If the individual soul be immortal, it existed individually forever, passing from one environment to another at nature's call, improving in knowledge by its experience and educa-

tion in each, and so will continue forever. There is no "haven of eternal rest." If there is, I do not want to go there. If such be the facts, our education and experience in this world and the behavior which these and those of our heredity and environment produce here, will qualify our souls for appropriate conditions in "the sweet by and by."

When in Freethought literature I read from gifted pens many able articles, insisting that there is no future life, and weigh the argument with care, seeking only for the truth, it seems to me that the writers are a little too confident. Because we reject the species of immortality delivered to us by the saints, which every man with good sense is obliged to do, is no reason for denying an eternal continuous existence of the spirits which animate us. On this subject the agnostic position is the best. We do not know. It is a glorious hope. If natural, it is as inevitable as a thousand other things which we cannot fully understand.

DANIEL K. TENNEY.

Madison, Wis.

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CHILDREN'S CORNER FOR Boys and Girls, YOUNG AND OLD.

Edited by MISS SUSAN H. WIXON, Fall River, Mass.

"Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations
That is known as the Children's Hour."

An Easy Outline of Evolution.

BY DENNIS HIRD.*

CHAPTER XIII.—LIFE AND HOPE.

There is no longer a deep chasm between the inorganic and the organic. And since Professor Loeb has succeeded in fertilizing the eggs of the Sea-urchin by chemistry, the chasm is at least half-bridged over already. Haeckel continues:

"We have seen that these tiny lumps of jelly (protoplasm) which are living animals (Monera) are without any organs or parts, without kernel (nucleus) or covering (cell wall), so that they lie on the border line of the inorganic.

"By developing a nucleus, one part becomes separate from the rest, and the moneron becomes a cell. Every animal and plant at the beginning of its life is such a cell—a simple lump of mucous containing a kernel.

"This kernel arose, probably, by condensation of the innermost central part of the albumen; this made a separation of parts. In the same way a further separation was effected when the first cell membrane was found on its surface, either as a chemical deposit or as a physical condensation of the outermost mass, or as a secretion.

"The elementary organisms are also called form-units or plastids. There are two main groups, the cytods and the cells. "Cytods are like Monera, pieces of protoplasm without a kernel.

"Cells, on the other hand, are pieces of protoplasm with a kernel.

"Each of these two groups is again divided into two, according as they possess or do not possess an external covering (skin, shell, or membrane). So we have four grades of plastids.

"1. Simple cytods.

"2. Encased cytods.

"3. Simple cells.

"4. Encased cells.

"Probably group 1, the simple cytods, naked pieces of protoplasm without kernel, like living Monera, are the only plastids which directly come into existence by spontaneous generation—i. e., arise out of inorganic matter. 2, 3, and 4 arose out of 1, by Natural Selection. We thus obtain a simple and natural connection in the whole series of the development of nature."

We must either accept some such origin of living organisms, or believe in a miracle, and say that Evolution only partly applies to the development of living things.

Since Haeckel wrote this, other discoveries have been made, especially that on the voyage of the Challenger, when peculiar little bodies were found largely diffused over the bottom of the deep sea. These very small bodies are known as Coccoliths. Their size ranges in length from 1-2700 to 1-11000 of an inch.

The man who can form any idea of the minuteness of bodies, eleven thousand of which are required to make an inch, will no longer look for organized animals in boiled water which has been kept in airtight jars.

Many great names could be added to Spencer and Haeckel in support of this common-sense view of the origin of living forms; but, fortunately, science does not

*From a book entitled "An Easy Outline of Evolution," by Dennis Hird, M. A., Principal of Ruskin College, Oxford, England. Price one dollar.

rest on authority; it rests on observed facts and the application of reason to those facts.

We will, however, give two other important presentations of this view. First we turn to that truly great book, The Grammar of Science, by Professor Karl Pearson (second edition, 1900).

On page 357 he says: "There are two elements in Natural Selection—environment, which may be either organic or inorganic, and death, as a process of eliminating those less fitted to this environment."

All sorts of chemical products may have first arisen in the azoic period. "Scientifically we might describe these products as the complex dances of corpuscular groups."

As group met group some would retain their individuality (be stable), others would not. This may be called physical selection, where the environment is more inorganic than organic.

Still it is perfectly true, "As a matter of fact, 'Natural Selection' in its true meaning covers inorganic just as much as organic selection."

(To be continued.)

Children's Beliefs.

Some of the notions that children entertain are mentioned by a writer in the Nineteenth Century magazine. Most of the ideas are discarded as the child grows older. Those about God are often retained because the child is not taught that they are fanciful as he is regarding the others, and his experience does not furnish the proof that they are without foundation. Besides, a church is maintained to perpetuate belief in a deity, while no one is interested in keeping alive the other imaginations of the young mind, and so they pass away as maturity comes on. Of course the interference of gods in the affairs of nature are equally unreal. This is what the writer in the Nineteenth Century magazine says:

Of forty-eight children, twenty believed the sun, moon, and stars to live, sixteen thought flowers could feel, and fifteen that dolls would feel pain if burnt. The sky was found the chief field in which the children exercised their philosophic minds. About three-quarters of them thought the world a plain with the sky like a bowl turned over it, sometimes believing that it was of such thin texture that one could easily break through, though so large that much floor sweeping was necessary in heaven. The sun may enter the ground when it sets, but half the children thought that at night it rolls or flies away, or is blown, or walks, or God pulls it higher up out of sight, taking it up into heaven, according to some, putting it to bed, and even taking off its clothes and putting them on again in the morning, or again, it is believed to lie under the trees at night and the angels mind it. God, of whom children always hear so much, plays a very large part in these conceptions, and is made directly responsible for all cosmic phenomena. Thus thunder to these American children was God groaning or kicking or rolling barrels about, or turning a big handle, or grinding snow, or breaking something, or rattling a big hammer, while the lightning was due to God putting his finger out, or turning the gas on quick, or striking matches, or setting paper on fire. According to Boston children, God is a big, perhaps a blue man, to be seen in the sky, on the clouds, in church, or even in the streets. They declare that God comes to see them sometimes, and they have seen him enter the gate. He makes lamps, babies, dogs, trees, money, etc., and the angels work for him. He looks like a priest or a teacher or papa, and the children like to look at him; a few would themselves like to be God. His house in the sky may be made of stone or brick; birds, children and Santa Claus live with God.

Birds and beasts, their food and their furniture, all talk to children; when the dew is on the grass "the grass is crying," the stars are candles or lamps, perhaps cinders from God's stove, butterflies are flying pansies, icicles are Christmas candy. Children have imaginary play-brothers and sisters and friends, with whom they talk. Sometimes God talks with them. Even the prosiest things are vivified; the tracks of dirty feet on the

floor are flowers; a creaking chair talks; the shoemaker's nails are children whom he is driving to school.

A Martyrdom of English.

A question that has puzzled editors for many years is answered, at least in part, in "A Report on the Examinations in English for Admission to Harvard College," now published by three gentlemen who are instructors in English at Harvard.

Most of the young men who apply to newspapers for employment as reporters are recent graduates of colleges or universities, and desperate editors have long torn their scanty hair and wondered where and how these gentlemanly youths have learned to maltreat the poor old English language so diabolically. Now the secret is out. "Prep." school is the place.

This, at least, is the conclusion that Harper's Weekly draws from reading the awful verbal tangles perpetrated by carefully tutored boys seeking admission at Harvard. Ample official warning is published that "no candidate will be accepted in English whose work is seriously faulty in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or division into paragraphs." Yet the martyrdom of the language goes on. Some of the tortures inflicted upon it are more ingenious than any invented by the Grand Inquisition.

Of course, it is a trifle exacting to expect high standing in English from busy young gentlemen whose energies are chiefly employed in running, jumping, swimming, rowing, field and track games, baseball, and football; yet one wonders how even they can contrive to invent such brainstorm effects as these:

"Imagine how severe a blow feels when your own amiability is abducted in a manner as Jessica was taken."

"I like Shakespeare very well, and have read most of his Waverley Novels."

"Addison passed his early life in the place in which he was born. It was situated a little way from Harvard College on what was then called Tory's Row. He was educated by a private tutor, and, at the age of sixteen, entered Harvard College. He had no rooms at the College, but lived at his own home. The beauty of the country around his place afforded him many topics for his books."

"The 'Autocrat' was full of fresh ideas, and, in the main, little stunts of pleasant nonsense."

"His younger brother was kind of jealous of Godfrey's life."

Her Guess.

During the course of a geography lesson recently, the teacher asked the following question:

"Who can tell me what useful article we get from the whale?"

"Whalebone," promptly replied a boy.

"Right. Now, who knows what we get from the seal?"

"Sealing-wax!" shouted a little girl.—Harper's Magazine.

A Boy Topsy.

Out in Downs a little Swede boy went to school and the teacher asked his name. "Yonny Olsen," he replied. "How old are you?" asked the teacher. "Ay not no how old ay bane." "Well, when were you born?" continued the teacher. "Ay not born at all, ay got stepmutter."—Kansas City Star.

THE SIMPLE TRUTH

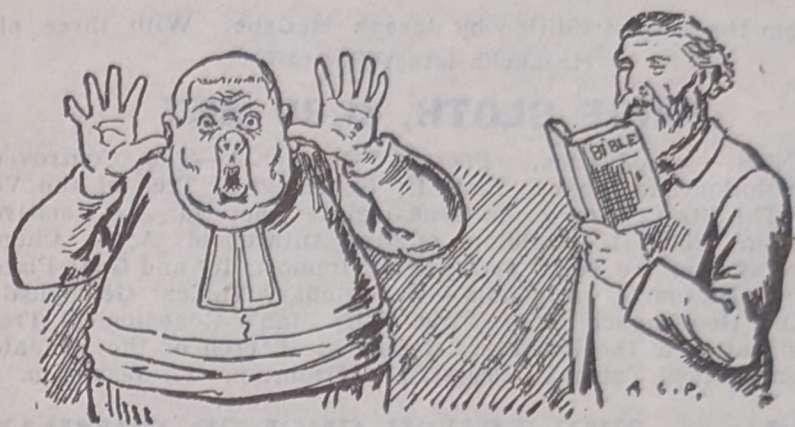
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The position is taken that it is fair neither to the consumptive nor to the country districts to send away to boarding houses persons who have advanced tuberculosis and who have not been carefully trained in so caring for themselves that they will not infect others or who are unwilling to take pains against infecting others. It is urged that if this form of treatment is to be permitted the consumptive should be carefully taught until he has thoroughly learned at least the fact that his dry cough and his sputum contain the living germs of consumption which spread the disease to others, and it is pointed out that a consumptive who is careless in these matters is a source of great danger to whatever household he goes into. The following rules are laid down as those that every doctor, every boarding-house keeper, and every consumptive himself should insist upon:

"The careful and clean consumptive is not dangerous to those with whom he lives and works, the careless one is. The sputum of the consumptive contains living germs which when breathed in may and very often do set up consumption in others. Every consumptive should therefore use the greatest possible precaution against allowing these living, death-dealing germs to escape into the air, and when he spits, when indoors, he should always spit into a spittoon half filled with water, or into a covered bedside cup. The contents of these receptacles should be cleaned out frequently and the cup or spittoon sterilized by thorough boiling. When out of doors the consumptive should spit only into a pocket flask of which there are various cheap varieties on the market, and this he may do without attracting attention by carrying the bottle concealed in a handkerchief. If unwilling to do this, a serviceable and effective substitute will be found in pieces of cheap, thin white cloth, cut about ten by ten inches and carried, a dozen or more, in the pocket. They have the appearance of a handkerchief and when used once should be put in another pocket in which should be placed a small ordinary paper bag for their reception. Women sufferers from consumption can use the handbags now so common, in the same way that the men use their pockets. A handkerchief is better than nothing, but is not as good as the bottle or the cloth, as each time it is taken out of the pocket it may scatter the germs that have been deposited there when previously used. The consumptive should be particular also when coughing, as the small invisible droplets expelled in coughing carry with them the germs of consumption just as does the sputum. The mouth and nose should therefore always be covered when coughing. It is best to dispose of the sputum of the consumptive by burning, and this is another reason for the use of cloths instead of handkerchiefs; the latter if used and put into the wash being apt to convey the germs to the other clothing. Where there are no regular sewers it is not safe to get rid of the sputum of consumptives except by burning."

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The intellect is a consoler, which delights in detaching or putting an interval between a man and his fortune, and so converts the sufferer into a spectator and his pain into poetry. It yields the joys of conversation, of letters, and of science. Hence also the torments of life become tuneful tragedy, solemn and soft with music, and garnished with rich dark pictures. But higher still than the activities of art, the intellect in its purity and the moral sense in its purity are not distinguished from each other, and both ravish us into a region whereunto these passionate clouds of sorrow cannot rise.—Emerson.

My Creed.

- I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
 - I would be pure, for there are those who care;
 - I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
 - I would be brave, for there is much to dare;
 - I would be friend of all—the foe—the friendless;
 - I would be giving and forget the gift;
 - I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
 - I would look up—and laugh—and love—and lift.
- Howard Arnold Walter.

If the Pentateuch is inspired, the civilization of our day is a mistake and a crime. There should be no political liberty. Heresy should be trodden out beneath the bigot's brutal feet. Husbands should divorce their wives at will, and make the mothers of their children houseless and weeping wanderers. Polygamy ought to be practiced; women should become slaves; we should buy the sons and daughters of the heathen and make them bondmen and bondwomen forever. We should sell our own flesh and blood, and have the right to kill our slaves. Men and women should be stoned to death for laboring on the seventh day. "Mediums," such as have familiar spirits, should be burned with fire. Every vestige of mental liberty should be destroyed and reason's holy torch extinguished in the martyr's blood. Is it not far better and wiser to say that the Pentateuch, while containing some good laws, some truths, some wise and useful things, is, after all, deformed and blackened by the savagery of its time? Is it not far better and wiser to take the good and throw the bad away?—R. G. Ingersoll.

Freedom of speech in ancient Rome and freedom of speech and printing now differ not in principle, but only in form. This freedom is the conservatism of liberty, the protector of the small against the great, the indispensable condition of all social improvement; it is the real life of a nation; for what is a nation or a man unless the tongue can utter what the mind conceives and tell it to all countries and to all times? So we see that in modern states, where power is usurped, the suppression of freedom of speech always follows the usurpation, for this freedom is inconsistent with the continuance of any power which is not founded on general consent and maintained by public opinion. In a democratical constitution, where the men who hold the executive power contemplate the accomplishment of some purpose by unconstitutional means, the suppression of freedom of speech and printing is the certain sign that tyranny is approaching. The instrument that is used for this purpose is the citizen himself, who is converted into a soldier, and hired at the cost of his own fellow citizens to deprive them of their liberty.—Long, in "Decline of the Roman Republic."

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Regarding Birthmarks.—"Where did you get that mark on your cheek, John?"

"Oh, that's a birth-mark."

"Why, no, it looks quite fresh."

"Sure, I only got it a few nights ago—tried to get into the wrong berth in a sleeping car."

Not Her Fault, Though.—After Miss Potter's six months' sojourn with a western cousin, a thrifty widower secured her for his bride, and accompanied her to a justice of the peace to be married.

"This is your first marriage?" inquired the justice, as in duty bound.

A high color flamed on Mary Anne's cheek bones, but she gazed unflinchingly at her questioner.

"Yes, sir; it's my first chance," she said, grimly.—Youth's Companion.

Faith Healing.

And yet, the text hath ever been,

"Is any of you sick?

Bring forth the magic benzoline,

And call the elders, quick.

Let each of them the patient grease,

And waft a prayer on high,

Then rise from off his bended knees."

* * * * *

And watch the patient die.

—Agnostic Journal.

Sacrilegious.—"Toodles," a little Washington boy, is four years old, and his mama and papa think he's just about the best boy that ever lived; but the other day he got a bit cross about something or other and an "Oh, the devil!" slipped out before he knew it. Of course, his mother was grieved and hurt, and she told Toodles so. She explained that he mustn't be naughty, and that above all things he must not swear. "But, mama," said Toodles, "it ain't swearing to say that, 'cause there is a 'devil.'" "But, my dear, said Toodles' mama, "you must not make light of sacred things."—Buffalo Commercial.

Slow Travel.—On some of the American railways they attach a passenger car to a freight train and call it "mixed." It isn't in the order of things that such trains should travel very rapidly, and sometimes there is considerable growling among the "traffic."

"Are we most there, conductor?" asked a nervous man for the hundredth time. "Remember my wife is ill, and I am anxious."

"We'll get there on time," replied the conductor, stolidly.

Half an hour later the nervous man approached him again.

"I guess she's dead now," said he, mournfully, "but I'd give you a little something extra if you could manage to catch up with the funeral. Maybe she won't be so altered but what I could recognize her."

The conductor growled at him, and the man subsided.

"Conductor," said he, after an hour's silence, "conductor, if the wind isn't dead ahead, I wish you would put on some steam. I'd like to see where my wife is buried before the tombstone crumbles to pieces! Put yourself in my place for a moment!"

The conductor shook him off, and the man relapsed into profound melancholy.

"I say, conductor," said he, after a long pause, "I've got a note coming due in three months. Can't you fix it so as to rattle along a little?"

"If you come near me again I'll knock you down!" shouted the conductor, savagely.

The nervous man regarded him sadly, and went to his seat. Two hours later the conductor saw him chattering gayly and laughing heartily with a brother victim, and approached him.

"Don't feel so badly about your wife's death?"

"Time heals all wounds," sighed the nervous man.

"And you are not so particular about the note?" sneered the conductor.

"Not now. That's all right. Don't worry. I've been figuring up, and I find that the note has become statute barred since I spoke to you last."—Tit-Bits.

Standard Freethought Books

The Truth Seeker has acquired the last lot of books remaining of the Investigator stock. They are standard works, and should be in every Freethinker's Library. The list is as follows:

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Whose names and attributes and passions
change:
Siva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God, or Lord,
Even with the human dupes who build
his shrines,
Still serving o'er the war-polluted world,
For desolation's watch-word; whether
hosts
Stain his death-blushing chariot-wheels,
as on
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins
raise
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;

Or countless partners of his power divide
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female
helplessness,
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy,
Horribly massacred, ascend to heaven
in honor of his name; or, last and worst,
Earth groans beneath Religion's iron age,
And priests dare babble of a God of
Peace,
Even whilst their hands are red with
guiltless blood,
Murdering the while, uprooting every
germ
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,
Making the earth a slaughter-house!

The volume contains a notice of Shelley by the American publishers, and the Notes to the Poem fill fifty-five pages. Queen Mab is a rare poem, and every Freethinker will find it repays reading and re-reading.

The Diegesis.

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Bishop of Chichester, and until 1818 officiated as curate at Midhurst. Becoming convinced that Christianity is untrue, he preached heretical sermons, and was several times prosecuted for blasphemy, his last sentence being a year in Oakham jail. He was also forced to give security for good behavior for five years. The contents of this book occupy three pages of fine print. Mr. Taylor covered an enormous amount of historical ground, and though his opponents scoffed at him they never could impeach the effectiveness and thoroughness of his work. He takes in all that was known to the scholars of his time, and sets it forth in the plainest and most vigorous English.

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News of the Week

Forty thousand coal miners in the Pittsburgh district are talking of going on strike.

A tornado in Beaumont, Texas, May 30, was accompanied by a record-breaking rain, sixteen inches falling in four hours.

Eighty-cent gas for New York city was knocked out by the courts. The city has sued the gas trust to test the validity of its franchises.

The months of April and May, 1907, averaged colder than the April and May of any other year since records of temperature were kept.

With only one peremptory challenge left as asset of the defense, the Haywood jury of Boise, Idaho, was expected to be sworn in on Monday.

The most distinguished men of the nation, including the President and Vice-President, attended the funeral of Mrs. McKinley at Canton, O., May 29.

Governor Hughes of New York vetoed the equal pay bill for men and women teachers. His reason is that it applies to teachers in this city and not to those in other cities.

Last week had one pleasant day in this vicinity. Snowstorms were reported from different parts of the state. All precedent was broken by a snowstorm in Texas on May 28. In Michigan six to eight inches of snow fell.

Disorders of an agrarian nature exist in nine counties of Ireland, namely, in Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Kerry, Kings, and the western part of Cork, and the agitation is spreading to Queens and Longford.

The recount bill is now in the hands of Mayor McClellan, and he is expected to withhold his signature on the ground that it is unconstitutional. Mayor McClellan professes not to fear that the recount would show that Hearst got the most votes.

The Chinese rebels were defeated on June 1 by the imperial troops, in a battle fought midway between Swatow and Amoy, and 700 men were killed or wounded. The cause of the uprising is the failure of the officers to distribute rice and flour in the famine district.

At Austin, Texas, June 1, the jury returned a verdict of guilty against the Waters-Pierce Oil Company. The penalty is a fine of \$1,600,000 and a withdrawal of permission to do business in Texas. The Waters-Pierce Company is the local name of the Standard Oil Company.

Articles incorporating the Simplified Spelling Board, the principal office to be in New York city, have been filed with the Secretary of State at Albany. The board is formed for the improvement of English orthography and for the publication and circulation of literature relative thereto.

The world's record price, \$11,500, was paid at Allentown, Pa., May 30, by A. B. Lewis, of Fredericksburg, Va., for Stockwell, the king of the herd, at the sale of Jersey cattle at the Linden Grove Farm by T. S. Copper. It was announced that the bull would head the herd on Thomas F. Ryan's Virginia estate.

Dr. Chalmers, the medical officer of Glasgow, in Scotland, has completed an elaborate investigation of the recent high rate of mortality by spotted fever and, as a result, declares emphatically that there is death in kissing. He condemns the prevailing habit of kissing infants, which he says is an unmistakable carrier of disease.

Zion City, built by Dowie, is to go under the hammer. On May 31 Judge Landis, in the Federal Court, entered an order granting authority to John C. Hately, receiver of Zion City, to sell the property immediately. As soon as the contests entered by Mrs. Dowie and her son Gladstone are overcome, the Dowie trust estate will be disposed of to the creditors, most of whom are connected with the Christian Catholic church, established by Dowie.

Edwin W. Watson and his wife Mary, Christian Scientists of Moorestown, N. J., have been committed to jail after a coroner's jury had found them guilty of criminal negligence in permitting their seven-year-old son to die without proper medical attendance. In its verdict the jury also censured two so-called "healers" of the Christian Science faith who had treated the child, Mrs. Ida Straub of Philadelphia and Miss A. Clara Starn of Camden.

The child died of pneumonia and meningitis.

Wheat is so high in Chicago that the bakers will have to choose between making a smaller loaf and adding another cent to the price of bread. The millers explain that the price of wheat has advanced, but this is denied by members of the Board of Trade, who say there has been little advance in the price of real wheat—that the increase has been the result of manipulations and doctored reports, and is all on paper. Grain elevators are full of wheat, with practically no shipments.

Two hundred and seventy persons are known, in God's providence, to have been killed, and the loss of life, it is said, will include many more in the disastrous typhoon in the Caroline Islands recently reported. Further advices have been received, showing that in some instances persons clung to the tops of trees for days before being rescued. The property loss is high. The typhoon passed over the group on March 28 and hundreds of persons were killed by the waves. The typhoon extended as far west as Guam.

Japanese Consul Matsukbara at San Francisco declares that the recent attacks on the Japanese restaurants are an exhibition of race prejudice, and he intimates that the Japanese government has made strong representations on the subject of these attacks at his request and on his advice through diplomatic channels at Washington. It is considered as almost certain that the Japanese government will ask for indemnity to repay the losses local Japanese have suffered as the result of violence. In such a case the state of California, primarily, and the city of San Francisco, later, would be responsible for the indemnity if granted.

Three men who went from here to Roumania about six months ago to organize a defence league for the persecuted Jews in that country have been seized by the authorities, beaten with the butts of guns, and maltreated in various ways. One of these men, Herman Mendelsohn, is now in a hospital in Berlin in a serious condition. A reporter on the Jewish Daily Forward, named Voishau, was arrested and compelled to join the Roumanian army. A third, Calman Mendell, was arrested and maltreated. These men took with them \$4,000, which was raised in this country shortly after the massacres of Roumanian Jews following the peasant uprisings, for the purpose of organizing a defence league in Roumania, so that the Jews can defend themselves when the attacks against them take place in the future. The cable advices indicated that the three New Yorkers were accused of being anarchists and of trying to incite riots.

The dispatches indicate that Guatemala, Central America, is trying to provoke a fight with Mexico. The cause of the quarrel is thus stated: General Barillas, a former president of Guatemala, was assassinated in the City of Mexico. The murder was instigated by General Jose Maria Lima, confidential officer of President Cabrera of Guatemala, who sent a man to Mexico to commit the deed. Acting in accordance with international law and usage, President Diaz of Mexico made a demand on the president of Guatemala for the surrender of Lima, to be tried for the crime in the country where it was committed. This demand was refused on the ground that, under the treaty between the two countries, Guatemala was not compelled to surrender the criminal. Relations between the nations have become strained in consequence of the unjust and untenable position taken by President Cabrera, and it is declared to be the purpose of President Diaz to publish the proceedings to the world and leave the matter to the judgment of mankind.

The original order, giving instructions for the extermination of the Macdonalds of Glencoe in February, 1692, known in history as "The Massacre of Glencoe," was sold by auction in London, May 28, for \$7,000. The history of the order and its execution is as follows: The English government issued a proclamation offering a pardon to all the Highland clans of Scotland which would swear allegiance to William and Mary before December 31, 1691. All did so except the Macdonalds of Glencoe, whose chief, MacIain, was delayed in giving in his submission until January 6, when he took the oath in Edinburgh. His enemies suppressed the certificate of his action, and one of them, Sir John Dalrymple, induced the king to sign an order reading, "As for MacIain of Glencoe, and that tribe, if they can be well distinguished from the other Highlanders, it will be proper, for the vindication of public justice, to extirpate that set of thieves." This was directed to the

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commander of the forces in Scotland, and its execution was committed to 120 soldiers, most of them Campbells, and so enemies of the Macdonalds. Macdonalds, men and women, to the number of eighty-eight, were killed, about 150 making their escape. The huts of the clan were burned and their flocks and herds were driven away.

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