

CARNAL TRUTHSEEKER

A Freethought and Agnostic Newspaper.

WE 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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GOD AND NATURE.

Are There Any Power for Good in This Universe Outside the Human Body?

BY MARILLA M. RICKER.

The realm of the mysterious is the kingdom of heaven. God abdicates the universe as fast as man conquers it. Earth was once the home of the deity, but Jupiter quit Olympus when man climbed up to the top to get a picture of him. Men will be religious so long as the human mind can be bound with the fetters of fear. The kingdom of God is now in the skies.

The religious drift is indicated in the attitude of the human mind towards theological problems. Ignorance still believes, but intelligence doubts. The word which interprets the present religious position better than any other is Agnosticism.

Ask a man today, Is there a God? and he says, "I do not know." Ask him is there a heaven or a hell, and he answers, "I do not know." Ask him, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and he confesses, "I don't know." There you have it, no one knows. What is the use of spending one's life in trying to live by what we know nothing about? Is there a higher duty than that? I believe there is. It is this: Live by what you do know. Live for those who are on earth. Live for man and man's happiness here.

So much is said about the necessity of religion that it is pertinent to inquire when and where religion is necessary. By religion is not meant the practice of the virtues—for such practice is always and everywhere desirable—but the performance of those acts which relate to God. Let us begin with the moment when we rise in the morning and follow each hour of the day until the time comes to retire at night, and see what religion has to do with human living.

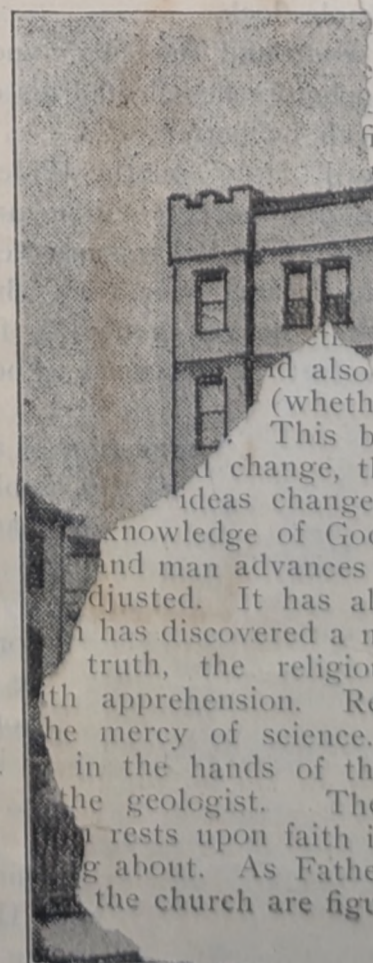
There is not an hour, nay, not a minute of time in a man's life when he needs to be religious in the sense in which this term is used by Christians. Not a single religious act is a human obligation, and the performance of religious service is in no way essential to right living. Religion is a compromise with immorality. It is hard to be moral; it is easy to be religious. It does not require much character to go to mass, to go to worship, but it requires a great deal to be true, to be honest, to be upright. Religion is a substitute for good behavior. Human happiness is the result of right living, right relations generally. Most people do not think or live right and consequently despair of ever being happy on earth and so become religious, hoping to get hereafter what they have missed here. The priest who deals in religion tells men that they who worship God are better than those who live upright lives; better than those who are just to their fellow beings; he tells men that it is a greater virtue to be religious than to be moral; that to believe the creed of the church is better than to pay one hundred cents on the dollar; he tells men that they who are religious even if they are immoral will be saved, but they

who are irreligious, even though they are moral, will be damned.

Religion is unnecessary for honest, upright, moral, good and true men and women. Worship of God is not essential in our work for humanity. Christians are constantly making use of the expression, "God is good." I think they are bound to prove their statement or else confess that they are wrong. There must be some misunderstanding about God being good; the person who has all the good things—health and money enough to make him independent, brains enough to think for himself, strength enough to do good work—can truthfully say that all is well with him; but what about the man who is not well and who is dependent upon others for the supply of his wants, who has misfortune for a daily companion and gets kicks and blows instead of smiles and favors? He cannot truthfully say that God is good to him. If God is good to one and not to another, surely he is not all good!

The question arises, What are divine acts, how are we to determine in what things the hand of God is revealed? Is God visible in the sunshine that makes the earth radiant in light and loveliness, and also in the storm that makes earth desolate in darkness and gloom? Is adversity the equal gift of God with prosperity? Are the bright eyes of health and the hollow cheek of disease equal blessings of God? I am so constituted that I cannot call black white without feeling that I am a liar. Evil is not good, no matter who says it is. If God sends whatever we get in this life, he sends a great many things that we cannot call good; to say that evil is good is a lie.

There is this fact before us: human life is not all good or all bad; it does not bear all blessings or all curses. We do not have all fair weather nor all foul weather. Nature is not always in the same mood. If all that comes to us through life comes from God, then God is not all good. If all that comes to us comes from God, then vice comes from God, so do crime and disease, poverty and war. It shows that God is not all good, or that there is no God who cares. It seems to me, in view of the fact that so much is said about God, and so much confidently said, that one is justified in asking what God is. I want to know all I can, and if God is matter of knowledge, I am anxious to possess all the information concerning him that can be had. I do not care to have a person tell me that he believes in God, and that millions more just like him believe in God. Belief proves nothing. One fact is better evidence than all the faith of human kind. What I want is to have God's existence demonstrated. If he could show himself to Moses, why not to me? If he could wrestle with Jacob, why can he not shake hands with me? If he could talk with Abraham, he could say, "How do you do?" to me. Anyway he could say, "Howdy?" If he could write the law for the Israelites he might send me his auto-



graph. I do not declare that there is no God. In this magnificent universe of which man is so infinitesimal a part, I do not pretend to know what is on any other planet—in all the surrounding space which is alive with shining stars. I do not say that other beings nobler than man, more beautiful in structure, better equipped mentally, with tenderer feelings, grander aspirations, and higher attainments, may not live somewhere in this great house of the universe. All we have knowledge of is who lives on this little globe of sand and water that we inhabit. Certainly from what we have seen, from what we have heard, from what we have come in contact with, we are not able to say we know that God exists.

Now there are certain persons whose trade it is to preach about God, to inculcate faith in his providence, and to ask favors of him as though God were not only able but willing to bestow them. What I want to know of these persons is, upon what ground they dare make the assertion that there is such a God. I would like to see this individual. Can God be seen? I would like to have this point settled by the priests and parsons who profess to have dealings with him. Can God speak? I would like to have that point settled. Can God be felt? and that one too. What is God, anyway? That is the question we want answered. When ministers talk about God, what do they mean? Do they know? If they do not know, let them say so like honest men. If they do know, let them show their hand. As I have said, I would like to see God, or at least a part of him. If I cannot see all three of him at once, I would be satisfied to see any one of him. If the Father is busy the Holy Ghost will answer, and if he has an engagement his son will be better than nothing. What God is seems to depend upon what men believe about him. He is one thing in Arabia, another in India, still another in Judea, and yet something else in Rome and Geneva.

Is God a fact or a fancy?

There is no ignorance so deep as religious ignorance. The invention of gods, ghosts, devils, angels, and such like creatures is to cover the tracks of deception. Today man challenges God to prove his existence, or his priests and parsons to do so. When I am asked to believe in God, I want to know what such a belief implies. I do not want to go it blind. I have never been in love with faith. Faith to me is not a virtue. There is too much stupidity in it. Faith knows nothing. To believe requires no mental exertion. I am willing to accept what is apparent or what has a respectable probability. The universe appears to be getting on without divine assistance. I cannot see where God comes in. Certainly no man, in the teeth of facts, would dare say that God governs the human world. The array of sorrow, suffering, misery, vice, and crime the earth over is sufficient to overthrow the idea of a divine providence in human affairs. All the world below man is a prey to his appetites, and if it be asserted that God presides over the destinies of the brutes it is in such a way as to make them the easy victims of their lord and master, Man.

It seems easy to believe in God until you undertake to define the object of your faith; then, if you are inclined to think for yourself, your faith turns to doubt. I can get no idea of God from Nature. The stars tell of stars, the flowers of flowers, man of man, but nothing tells of God. It pays the priests and parsons to talk about a heavenly father who cares for his earthly children, but an honest man would prefer to get money in a more honorable business. Gentlemen of the pulpit, did you ever see anything that convinced you that there is a power in the universe outside of the human body that cared a snap for men; that showed any more love for a child than for a crocodile? Tell the truth, please, and let us see how far apart we are on this question. I have no objection to being taken care of by a heavenly father, but I prefer not to put my trust in such a being or power, and then, when I need help the most and count on it, find that I have been deceived.

Religion as worship of God or as a divine service is entirely superfluous in human society. No such thing is needed by man. Priests and parsons are superfluous members of the community. No such officers are required in human governments. All ecclesiastical property is superfluous in the nation. No such property is essential to human society. Everything connect-

ed with religion in any way is superfluous. Every dollar used for a religious purpose is wasted. The most foolish thing that a man can do is to worship God. His duty ends in being a man. No priest is needed to help us in being good men and women. The old idea of religion is rejected by the intelligent.

The notion that there is a person, a being, a thing, in the universe that requires to be worshiped by man is an invention of superstition. Ignorance opens every church. Intelligence will close them. People are learning to stay at home on Sunday or to enjoy themselves in work or play on this day. We have, now, intellectual independence; when we have moral independence not a knee will bend in worship. The most absurd thing a person can do is to pray to God for some blessing. Prayers have been addressed to an unseen and unknown God from the earliest dawn of history.

Prayer in theory is based on the supposition of God's personality; prayer in practice assumes that God is omnipotent. It supposes that he can be in all places at all times. People are praying at all hours of the day and night, and in all quarters of the globe. To hear them all, God must be at such places at such times. To do this, he must cease to be a personal being; he must cease to be God. He will then have no intelligence, no volition, for these depend upon a personal organization. Prayer, therefore, logically annihilates the being to whom it is addressed.

Mark Twain says he does not know of any foreign product that enters this country untaxed except answers to prayer. I want to ask Mark if he ever knew of an answer to prayer; if so did it come in taxable shape?

A prayer for the Pacific coast sufferers suggested by Bishop Greer of New York:

"O Father of mercy and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need, look down from heaven we humbly beseech thee; behold, visit and relieve thy servants to whom such great and grievous loss and suffering have come through the earthquake and the fire. In thy wisdom thou hast seen fit to visit them with trouble and to bring distress upon them. Remember them, O Lord, in mercy, and endow their souls with patience under this affliction. Though they be perplexed and troubled on every side, save them from despair and suffer not their faith and trust in thee to fail. In this hour of darkness when thou hast made the earth to tremble and the mountains thereof to shake, be thou, O God, their refuge and their strength and their present help in trouble. And forasmuch as thou alone canst bring light out of darkness and good out of evil, let the light of thy loving countenance shine upon them through the cloud; let the angel of thy presence be with them in their sorrow to comfort and support them, giving strength to the weak, courage to the faint, and consolation to the dying. We ask it in the name of him who in all our affliction is afflicted with us, thy son, our savior, Jesus Christ. Amen."

Could anything be more idiotic than that conglomeration of words, otherwise that prayer? If so, then have I read Webster's Unabridged Dictionary in vain.

Some Eastern potentate not long ago visited New York City. Sunday morning he was driven at his request to the Zoological Garden and prayed there to a crocodile. There was much criticism, and the papers all over the country expressed great contempt concerning a man who was a high official and could so debase himself as to pray to a crocodile. I would rather pray to and worship a crocodile than worship and pray to a God that would send an earthquake to destroy the homes and murder the men, women, and children on this earth.

There is too much time wasted in going to church and too much money wasted in carrying on religious services. The next century will let the houses of God decay and improve the homes of men; it will stop throwing away money in the service of worship and use it in educating the children of the nation. It will make Sunday a live day instead of a dead day, as it is now; it will throw off the incubus of religion and rejoice in doing good to others.

Religion is the inherited fear of the world. It began with man being afraid of his own shadow. The religious man is a coward. His God is simply the object of his dread. Worship is the expression of man's fear. Ask a man why he worships God, and if he is honest and intelli-

gent, he will tell him of what he is afraid of. "God." Ask him why he is afraid and he does not know. There is nothing more unknown. There is nothing more than religion. We know to be injurious. We know that worship was an effort to get rid of bad and evil influences, the sense in being religious. But we can know nothing about nothing.

Religion is a product of darkness. It came out of the shadow. Man was frightened, and he frightened himself by telling him how scared he was, and the result of this scare is seen in the religion of the world. Religion dies as soon as science is born. Man's fear flies when the sun of knowledge is born. Persons who are unafraid, those who are brave, who have knowledge, who are not religious.

It is not essential for the head to bow to the knees. There are some things which are enemies to human life, but we are not to worship; we are to evade them. If man is afraid of his God, better destroy him. Where there is no God there is no religion.

"The mission of Freethought is to enlighten and civilize the world. Without Freethought progress is impossible. Liberty alone can bring the higher humanity possible and establish peace and justice. Liberty is the only hope of the world; without it all is lost; liberty, the word of progress, the salvation of the world."

The great Ingersoll said: "Science is the redeemer. It will put honesty and mental veracity above all other virtues."

The religion of usefulness. Liberty in all its forms. It will put above thoughtless faith. Liberty for all, philosophers, thinkers and scientists, theologians, and saints, and crime, and greater else, it will make the world a better place.

The It

The "Continental" was recently invaded by the shops, must be closed further abroad. It went into effect which is a success. classes of Italy, commercial concerns must grant their less than twenty attempt is made transportation service of amusement as it is the industry of absolute amusement of

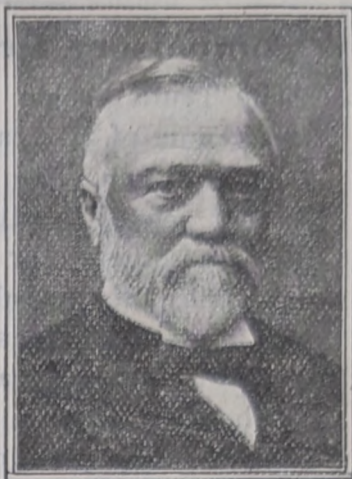
A day of constituted in continuous must not be restaurants, rooms, and loading and other than flower by private macists; information to public amusement if there be offered industries of public are added all persons which operate in open ruption by bad weather, given to conduct Sunday hours of 7 a. m. and noon to insurance, emigration, employment, and loan offices, and as well as barber shops, it will exceptions are rather more numerous occupations covered by the Weekly.

Appreciation.—"Some people," Goodman, "can never be made of religion."

"That's right," replied M. "they don't know all."—Philadelphia B.

CARNEGIE ON CONWAY.

The Ironmaster
Pays the Tribute
of a Friend to the
Freethinker and
Humanitarian.



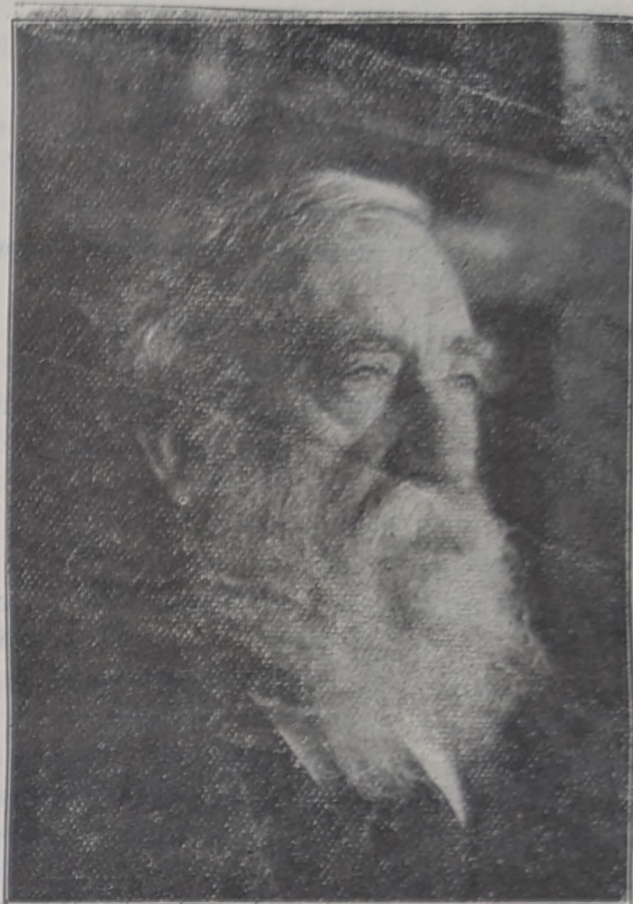
BY ANDREW CARNEGIE.

This article was written by Andrew Carnegie at the request of the Faculty of Dickinson College, Pennsylvania, of which Dr. Conway was an alumnus. Mr. Carnegie a few years since contributed the greater part of the cost of a new building at Dickinson with the request that the structure should be known as Conway Hall. His tribute is published in the New York Times Saturday Review.

The request of the Faculty of Dickinson College to say a few words in memory of my deeply lamented friend, Moncure D. Conway, cannot be resisted. We met first when he was in charge of a congregation near London, Bedford Park I think it was called. A day spent there by my mother and myself with Mr. and Mrs. Conway opened a friendship which ripened with the years. The more we knew of the man, and later the more we knew of his history, the greater our admiration grew. Taking his youth and surroundings, the strict tenets of theology in which he was nurtured, and the social system he was born to, it may be doubted if any man has passed through more varied phases of intellectual development than our friend, and certainly no man that we have read of or have known, seems to have pursued the star-eyed Goddess of Truth more zealously or bowed to her revelations more conscientiously from stage to stage of his life than our lamented friend and mentor. Only two or three men of all whom I have known have followed Herbert Spencer's motto so strictly: "The highest truth a man sees, that he will fearlessly proclaim, knowing thereby that he will do his part best in the world."

I have often pictured Mr. Conway to myself saying to the Angel of Truth, "Lead on and I will follow." The closing paragraph from his autobiography shows the final step which led him to leave as a precious legacy his feelings upon the killing of man by man like wild beasts in battle:

"Implore peace, O my reader, from whom I now part. Implore peace not of deified thunder-



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MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY.

clouds but of every man, woman, child thou shalt meet. Do not merely offer the prayer, 'Give peace in our time,' but do thy part to answer it! Then, at least, though the world be at strife, there shall be peace in thee."

It was only last summer that he came to us at Skibo Castle, in the Highlands of Scotland. All was new to him, what was best in the feudal system still remaining. The relations between the owners of the estate and their people sank deep into his heart. Everything seemed to please him—the piper marching around the castle in the morning, by whom he was awakened, the guests helping themselves at breakfast, the gillies, foresters, stables, hennery, dog kennels, gardens, garage, lawns, golf links, the salt water swimming pool, which he patronized, the falls of Shin, with the salmon leaping over; the moors and the heather—everything pertaining to life in the Highlands seemed to charm him more and more as each succeeding phase was revealed.

It chanced that the servants' ball took place when he was with us. I was prevented from attending. Mrs. Carnegie said to him laughingly that he would have to accompany her, an invitation to which he gladly responded. The tall, venerable, whitehaired, graceful, reverend old gentleman, taking my place, danced with the

housekeeper, Mrs. Carnegie dancing with the butler in the same set. He went through all the intricacies of the Highland reel with becoming grace and evident enjoyment. The man of seventy-five years seemed like a young gallant. At a bound he had returned to the days of his youth.

Among our guests he soon took front rank as a living historian, the variety and accuracy of whose knowledge, and, more than all, of personal contact with so many of the great men who have passed away, soon secured him silent listeners. We were all greatly entertained. Not only the best known men of our own race, but his interviews with the leading men of the Far East, and not only our institutions and religion, but the religions of distant lands were illustrated; in short, he became the mentor among us. Just before he left, walking around the castle for the last time, he stopped and said to me: "This visit I consider the apotheosis of my career." This struck me forcibly, for solemnly it was said, but little did I dream that we were so soon to have the realization of this prophecy, and that when we reached New York his ashes were so soon to follow, and that Mrs. Carnegie and myself were to be called upon to attend the solemn and inspiring service conducted by the one living best fitted for the office, his dear friend, Dr. Collyer.

He has passed, but he has left behind him a precious legacy to all who were so fortunate as to be able to call him friend. They are better men and women because Moncure Conway has lived and entered into their lives. Let us follow his example. The rest is silence. A. C.

Thinking About God.

There was a time when theology was the chief study of man, and at that time science was neglected. The more men knew about God the less they knew about anything else.

Today, when the civilization of the race and the condition of society is better than it ever was before since the beginning of the Christian era, theology suffers neglect.

Who affirms this? The theologians themselves. They have shuddered at the fact. Their religious publications print editorials of pious alarm over the lack of young men who seek to enter the ministry. They forget they have told us that God "calls" men to preach, and instead they are planning how to increase the number of ministerial students.

In the meantime Infidelity is increasing. Who affirms that? The preachers themselves. Only a little while ago I heard a Methodist minister emphatically assert that "Infidelity is the damning sin of the age."

They are alarmed over the spread of Infidelity, over the forgetting of God, and yet—every Christian today feels that his liberty is more secure, that his rights are better protected, in other words, that conditions are better today than they were a century ago when thoughts of God monopolized the brain!

Gradually mankind are learning that the idea of a Deity has wrought havoc enough. The more intelligent people are the less they think of God.

Had the thought of God been a stranger to the mind and to the human imagination, John Calvin would not have burned Servetus for having a different opinion about this God. There would have been no persecutions, the religious wars would not have come to deluge the fields of Europe in blood, had these warring denominations been composed of men who had no idea of God, a being about whom they differed in opinion. Had there been no thought of God, no friend of man would have perished at the stake, no priest would have tortured any human being.

These persecutors were sincere; they thought they were in the right, just as the Christians of today feel that they are sincere themselves, but think of the crimes they committed because of this frightful delusion; they, too, thought they "were doing God's will."

Forget God and the world is remembered. Take from thoughtless Faith its scepter of authority, and reason takes the throne. Purge the heart of useless reverence for things unknowable, and, answering to the promptings of nature, that heart will expand with love for all human beings and where the weeds of worship grew the flower of good and noble deeds will grow up and thrive.

FRANK



CONWAY HALL, DICKINSON COLLEGE, CARLISLE, PA. (Erected 1905.)

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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.

Are All Moral Principles in the Bible?

Are there ministers who believe in the face of evidence which proves the contrary that all moral instruction is bound up between the lids of the collection of miscellanies called the Bible? One minister thinks so, for we are challenged by him through a Chicago subscriber to "point out to me one beautiful moral principle that has come into the world in the last eighteen hundred years that is not found in the Bible."

The minister has shown some sagacity in stipulating that the moral principle shall have come into the world since the Bible was compiled. He probably knows that the morality of the book is made up in large part of the saws and maxims previously in circulation. It is worth noting, however, that in the bright lexicon of the scriptures the word "moral" does not appear.

Since all morality may be summed up in the two words "Be good," it might be argued that all morality is to be found in a book in which good men are occasionally praised. But there are conceptions of morality today which did not exist eighteen hundred years ago. They are more beautiful than the old ones.

We do not need to look further than the writings of Ingersoll to find them. Ingersoll said that the time to be happy is now, the place to be happy is here, and the way to be happy is to make others so. That moral principle is not enunciated in the Bible.

The thought that the highest aim of man is the good and happiness of the race, and the abolition of suffering here and now, came to the world too late for incorporation in the scriptures.

Meekness and humility were praised by the ancients. Everybody was exhorted to take his instructions from somebody higher up. Ingersoll said: "The intellect has no knees. Meekness is the mask of malice."

Many beautiful moral principles are derived from the doctrine that man's duty is toward man rather than toward God.

"The superior man is the providence of the inferior. He is eyes for the blind, strength for the weak, and a shield for the defenseless. He stands erect by bending above the fallen. He rises by lifting others."

"It is more important to love your wife than to love God."

"Even intelligent self-love embraces within its mighty arms all the human race."

"It takes a great deal of genius and a good deal of self-denial to be very bad or very good."

"Few people understand the amount of energy, industry, and self-denial it requires to be consistently vicious."

"The best thing to do under the circumstances is moral."

"Honor cannot be received as alms; it must be earned."

"They who demand hypocrisy (in a candidate) must be satisfied with mediocrity in office."

"All greatness is merciful."

"Nobility is a question of character; not of birth."

"Hands that help are holier than lips that pray."

"The man who builds a home erects a temple."

"He who loves wife and children is the true worshiper."

"A good deed is the best prayer."

"A loving life is the best religion."

Precepts of kindness to children are practically unknown to the Bible. Ingersoll's writings are filled with them. The same is true regarding the equality of woman.

Of kindness to animals the "inspired" writers said less than Cowper uttered in his refusal to number in his list of friends the man who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.

Beautiful moral principles were projected into the world by Thomas Paine, the man who said: "The world is my country; to do good, my religion."

And:

"A generous parent should say, 'If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace.'"

"Every religion is good that teaches man to be good."

"I believe in the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow creatures happy."

"It is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself."

"I have always strenuously supported the right of every man to his own opinion, however different that opinion might be to mine. He who denies to another this, makes a slave of himself to his present opinion, because he precludes himself the right of changing it."

"Man can have no property in man."

An important moral precept not found in the Bible is "Speak the truth." We do not know its author.

The clergyman who thinks that the Bible monopolizes moral teaching may be supplied with further examples of modern thoughts on conduct if these are not sufficient to convince him of his error. Literature is full of them.

Killed by Religion.

The death of a girl of six years is the outcome of a religious orgie indulged in by the members of a sect called "Devil Chasers," at Nazareth, Pa. The tragedy occurred in the home of one Robert Bachman, who is a brother-in-law of Councilman Henry Smith. The latter was induced to bring his daughter to a meeting of the sect. The little girl cried and Bachman declared her to be possessed of the devil. This aroused all of the fanaticism of the deluded Christians, and the child received such brutal treatment in the process of expelling the demon that she died. Mrs. Bachman, the only one present to preserve her sanity, says that her husband jumped repeatedly upon the child's body. Bachman is in jail, and the father of the little girl seems to be insane. When questioned he said: "It was God's will. Bob knew all about it. Why should a poor sinner like me question the ways of the God of wrath? Bob said there

was a devil devouring the soul of Rena. He killed her at God's command. But it will be all right. Bob's going to be crucified, and then there will be a glorious ending to all of our troubles." A reversion to gospel days, showing that doctrine as well as history repeats itself.

Compulsory Religious Instruction.

The Truth Seeker of April 18 mentioned the case of one of its readers in River Edge, N. J., whose children were compelled by the principal of their school to attend religious exercises for fifteen minutes every morning. The parents' request that they should be allowed to remain in their class room was denied. On the Monday after the spring vacation the children appeared at school at the usual hour, when the compulsion was repeated. After that they did not go to school until 9.15, when the religious exercises were over. This subjected the father to the criticisms of the Board. He informed the members that the children would be punctual when his wishes regarding the Bible reading were respected. The president of the board saw no reason for refusing, but the board voted to lay the matter on the table, pending consultation with the county superintendent.

Free Thoughts.

Help only those who cannot help themselves. The new motto reads: There is no place like a hotel.

The work of the devil has never been done by himself.

How many counts and princes does it take to make a man?

The wealthy seem to have adopted marriage as an experiment.

The mission of Free Religion is to free the world from religion.

The thumbscrew and the rack were specimens of "applied Christianity."

One great play like "The Man of the Hour" revives faith in the stage.

Is it not time for the Roman Catholic church to canonize Judas Iscariot?

When a person says he will sleep on it, he might just as well say he won't do it.

The woman who wants to be an angel does not care to be a mother, as a rule. It is nicer to be an angel.

The God who used to get angry with little boys who played marbles on Sunday is no longer on the streets.

If knowledge were made a requisite for membership in the church, one priest would be able to attend to the whole flock.

If God had gone around the earth and seen other tribes of men before he selected his chosen people, we should all be better off.

Who put the word "Holy" on the Bible? The person who did so did more to curse mankind than all the superstitions of Paganism have done.

The woman who dreams over what she will do when she gets to heaven generally forgets the darning and mending which need to be done on earth.

If we were to follow the suggestion of a popular preacher that in studying the Bible we should read the good and skip the bad, we should do a tremendous lot of skipping.

A biography of some ancient is a story written around a name. The better the story the better we think of the name. But we are really in love with the writer of the story and not with his subject, because he is the real one in the game.

L. K. W.

The man who served as presiding officer of the New York Liberal Club when Horace Greeley was president died in this city on April 29. He was W. L. Ormsby, who celebrated his

seventy-third birthday anniversary on the 8th of last December. Mr. Ormsby was for many years employed as a reporter on the Sun, the Herald, the Times, and the World, and for fourteen years held a responsible position with the Continental Bank Note Company. In 1885 he was appointed official stenographer in the City Magistrate's Court, which place he held at his death. He was the first passenger on the Overland Mail coach California from St. Louis to San Francisco as the representative of the Herald. He presided over the meetings of the Liberal Club when that body met in Science Hall, 141 Eighth street, in the later '70s. As a speaker he had a ready wit that was equal to lifting the club from the gloom shed around by its religious members, who foresaw a dismal future for the Freethinker. He had been the father of three sons, all stenographers of the New York Supreme Court, and is survived by a widow, a daughter, and two sons.

Adherents of a religion who have to accept its dogmas on faith, or not at all, can be skeptical enough about demonstrable facts. In The Truth Seeker of April 18 was published the opinion of Chester Gillette's spiritual adviser that the deceased is in glory, while the girl he killed, if she died unrepentant, is now undergoing the torments of hell, which are to be everlasting. A Christian friend of one of our Ohio readers declines to accept as authentic the quotation from the said spiritual adviser (who is the Rev. Henry A. McIlravy), and as much as charges that the whole thing was invented in the office of an Infidel paper. Hence he dismisses the matter, giving our reader as generous a length of time as six months in which to show that any other newspaper than this one has printed the minister's words. Six minutes would have been enough if the discussion had taken place in a library where files of newspapers are kept, for of the thousands of newspapers in this country we suppose there are more that made reference to the subject, and reproduced McIlravy's statement of his belief, than there are that did not. One New York journal printed it nearly every day for a week or more, inviting its readers to say whether they agreed with him or not, and received letters from orthodox ministers virtually affirming that McIlravy's statement was sound theology, as of course it is; for if people may "sin" and then go to heaven without repenting, of what use are repentance and the rest of the conditions of salvation?

The future of Catholicism in America was the theme of the principal speakers at the celebration just held in New York. Elsewhere, to all appearances, the outlook is gloomy. The church that was once mistress of the Christian world is no longer backed by a first-class power. It has Austria, but Austria is advancing backward. It has lost France; it will lose Italy, and its supremacy in Spain is threatened. Having reduced to ignorance, poverty, and exile the people of Europe who remain faithful, it follows them to America to again place itself astride their necks. With the attention of the people distracted by all sorts of inconsequential political and sociological issues, and with a self-seeking and complaisant administration, the church sees her chance and will take it. The conquest of America is her ambition. Are we going to fritter away our energies on fads and delusions and let her achieve it?

"Thumbscrew and Rack," by George E. Macdonald, which had a sale of several thousand, has been temporarily out of print. We have just issued a new edition. Price 10 cents.

Our First Duty.

Appreciating the value of presenting both sides of a question, The Truth Seeker welcomes an article by Mr. Isador Ladoff on Voltaire and Paine. We do not agree with the contention of Mr. Ladoff and some of our other correspondents that discussing economic questions is the first duty of man, and that economics should have precedence over all other matters, including Freethought.

We admit there is room and need for bettering the industrial condition. The difference between our Socialistic friends and ourselves is that they believe Socialism and nothing else will effect such betterment, while we are undecided on that point.

Were it as certain that Socialism, or any system of dogmatic economics, is what the world needs as it is that Freethought is the highway to mental and physical well-being, we should become an adherent of that system at once.

It is commonly assumed that the world is growing better and becoming a more comfortable place to live in, and as we view history the improvement has gone on parallel with the removal of the restrictions of religious creeds on the minds of men and with the exercise of men's liberty to think for themselves. Investigation and research, always opposed by the church, have brought knowledge, which, being classified, becomes science, and to science we owe an incalculable debt.

The economists we have always had with us, the politicians have accompanied them, and the preachers have been the contemporaries of both. These have made the noise, but is all that either have proposed, propounded, and accomplished comparable, in its contribution to the comfort, happiness, and general welfare of the people, with that of the quietly working man of science in his laboratory? And have all of them together done as much for that peace between men which is essential to progress as has resulted from the discovery and promulgation by Freethinkers of the principle that people of diverse views may live and worship and utter their views in the same community and be under no compulsion to persecute one another?

Voltaire is charged with creating the "fallacious superstition of negative Freethought," which has "proved not only sterile but harmful." From other than a religious or clerical point of view, the Freethought created by Voltaire is "harmful" only to the extent that it produces the skeptical frame of mind which prevents all of the people from being fooled all of the time, either by the propounders of false political principles or by the vendors of economic fallacies. It has rendered enough persons immune from delusion to preserve the mental equilibrium of the human world.

As to the "sterility" of Voltaire's labors, history is a witness. Voltaire found in existence "a religion claiming supernatural authority, and employing to enforce the claim the power and resources of government. It was the most ancient and powerful of all alliances, that of the medicine-man and the chief, with modern means and appliances to assist both. It was religion with the Bastille and the rack at its command. It was religion owning two acres of every five in France (usually the best two), and able to expel from the other three the noblest Frenchman who called in question its tenets. It was religion smoothing the upward path to a servile mediocrity, and making it impracticable to honest merit. It was religion which could put an ugly tall pot upon the head of a clown, a crooked stick in his hand, cover him all over with tawdry raiment, endow him with an imposing title and a prince's revenue [i. e., make a pope of

him], and then set him down, squat like a toad, upon the intellect of France. It was religion keeping an ear always open to receive from women secrets not told to parent or husband. It was religion the mania of the weak, the cloak of the false, the weapon of the cruel. It was religion making virtue contemptible by resting its claim on grounds untenable and ridiculous. It was religion wielding the whole mass of ignorance, indolence, and cowardice, and placing it solid and entire in the only path by which the human race could advance. It was the worst thing that ever was in the world. It was l'Infame!"

In this moderate language Parton describes the religion which Voltaire attacked and at whose behest men were persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, and put to death. As Ingersoll said, "Catholicism, wrapped in robes red with the innocent blood of millions, holding in her frantic clutch crowns and sceptres, honors and gold, the keys of heaven and hell, trampling beneath her feet the liberties of nations, in the proud moment of almost universal dominion, felt within her heartless breast the deadly dagger of Voltaire."

The creation of a Freethought which caused the downfall of that kind of religion in France and prevented it from recovering its former eminence of infamy is not what we should denominate a sterile cult.

The Socialists have no reason to complain if it is true, as the church holds, that Voltaire's labors produced the Revolution, the Commune, and the rest of it, and so gave the Socialists a strength in France which they do not possess in countries unleavened by Voltaire's principles.

Mr. Ladoff makes the astonishing assertion that "Voltaire and his school did not seem even to suspect that there is in the trend of their movement anything beyond church-smashing," and so on. Can Mr. Ladoff imagine Voltaire to be so stupid as not to have looked beyond the obstacle he was smashing and seeing a race free from superstition and prepared to work out their destiny untrammelled by the church which, in the words we have reproduced from Parton, placed the whole mass of ignorance, indolence, and cowardice, solid and entire, in the only path by which the human race could advance? LaFayette admitted that Voltaire's philosophy made him a republican. J. J. Rousseau—one of the patron saints of Socialism—attributes to Voltaire's writings in great part "the awakening of his late-maturing intelligence." Voltaire's country has become a republic and remained largely Voltairian, and also, as remarked, to a considerable extent Socialistic. The anti-Voltairians are aristocrats and Catholics.

Of Catherine of Russia, named as a Voltairian by Mr. Ladoff, it may be said that she endeavored to carry out the reforms recommended by her mentor. She simplified the Russian code of laws, created the Russian Academy of Arts and Sciences, founded libraries and schools, and extended the principle of religious toleration. These virtues she owed to Voltaire. Feudalism and serfdom were not introduced by Catherine, but by Peter surnamed the Great.

We find nothing in Voltaire's teachings indicating Socialism, but they imply a denial of the divine right of kings and hence republicanism, and we believe that what our correspondent says of Paine was true of him, that "the institutional church was his enemy because it was the enemy of the people's freedom." If we look at the France of Voltaire's time and at the France of today, and if we may connect him with the improvement that has taken place, then his life and philosophy have been among

(Concluded on page 296.)

THE GREAT EVANGELIST.

Williams Jennings Bryan Courting the Churches to Further His Political Aims.

BY JOHN PECK.

William Jennings Bryan has been doing the agreeable for the church and serving God in Rochester. And if God and the church are not tickled, the fault cannot be laid at the door of Mr. Bryan. He is greatly interested in the cause of religion. I do not think that he would pay much attention to religious matters if there were to be no other aspirants for the presidency, but he is in the same predicament that the Irishman was in when he saw the bear, and prayed, "O Lord, if you can't help me, don't help the bear."

He spoke, or preached, before the Y. M. C. A., under the auspices of the ministers. As reported, he divided his discourse into two general heads. First, how to get the people into the church. Second, how to make Christians of them after they get them.

If he had discussed some plan for making good citizens I could have respected him, but to make Christians is to go backward, and he knows it. For he says that "all the great gamblers in Wall street are members of the church," and he ought to know that nearly all the inmates of our jails and prisons are Christians. The Italian black-handers and blood-letters are nearly all Christians.

But Mr. Bryan's ambition to be President is so great that it leads him into the commission of all manner of hypocritical acts. He would crawl on his belly and eat dirt to secure votes. He would bow down to a Mormon or a Moslem as soon as a minister if it served his purpose. But he is playing the game with transparent cards, and it does not require a very shrewd man to understand how he is playing the game. He will outrage common sense, trample reason under foot, and hold up the old Jew book above all scientific works, if it will only enable him to cut a few notches on his presidential tally stick. I may lack charity, but, judging from the course he pursues, I am inclined to think that he would play to heathens the same as to Christians if it would forward his political scheme.

Mr. Bryan must be credited with some degree of intelligence, and when he expresses the desire to make all men Christians, we must infer that he is willing to lead the people back to the condition of those in the Dark Ages if it would enable him to reach the White House, and that he is playing the part of a hypocrite to attain that object.

He cannot be so ignorant of history as not to know that the most devout Christians have been the most despotic, bigoted, intolerant, and cruel that ever disgraced the footstool.

Mr. Bryan said: "It requires more faith to believe the Darwinian theory than to believe in a creator behind the creation." The Darwinian theory may pass away in vapor, but what about Mr. Bryan's theory? The "creator" is God, and God is a spirit, and a spirit has no more power than a shadow. Think of a "shadow" lifting a millstone. Think of a spirit bringing the rock of Gibraltar out of nothing. Mr. Bryan may see all of this clearly, but how a spirit can effect material things is beyond my mental reach.

According to the reporter, "the meeting was opened with prayer." And all the time Mr. Bryan sat with bowed head looking as solemn as an owl, when he knew that the prayer had no more effect than whistling Yankee Doodle to a mile-stone. If he knew that this silly ceremony availed nothing, which he probably did, he was acting the part of a hypocrite, and would be equally sincere if he should be made President. We have had quite enough of that kind of waxy material in the White House.

Mr. Bryan said: "Some young people have been led to believe that there is a conflict between science and religion, but if there is a God, he is a God of science as well as of religion." If he believes in the God of the Bible, he believes that the earth was created before the sun. But the earth is a part of the sun and could no more exist before the sun than the hand could be born before and independent of the body.

Mr. Bryan puts a creator behind the creation. He has been put through the schools, and doubt-

less taught that matter cannot be annihilated—that it is eternal. If eternal, it never was created. According to Mr. Bryan's God of science, a spirit created all matter out of nothing—an impossibility. The creator must be greater than the thing created. If the lesser required a creator, much more would the greater thing require a creator. Will Mr. Bryan explain what power created the creator?

The truth is, Mr. Bryan was playing to a class of men who were "pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw," and he was doing the tickling act for votes. And it is evident that he was willing to sacrifice both science and sense to personal ambition.

"One thing is important to know, if we link ourselves with the monkey, whether we are coming from the monkey or going toward him."

Pope hit it squarely when he said that with the talent of an angel, a man may be a fool. A hundred years hence Darwin will be remembered along with Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton, while Mr. Bryan will be remembered along with other great trick monkeys.

It is evident that Mr. Bryan is a tool of the church and cannot be trusted to preside over the destiny of a free people. A man who draws his idea of science from the Bible, and squares reason by religion, and puts superstition above science, will always be unsafe.

If he could prevent it, he would not allow anything to pass through the mails which, in his judgment, dishonored God, or treats the scriptures lightly. He would sign a bill prohibiting what he considered blasphemy. The mails could not be carried on Sunday. In short, if he can be whisked about by the preachers now, he would fall an easy prey to their craftiness when President, and puritanical measures would be the order of the day. The rights of men would be made to bend to the interests of the church.

Such are his ideas of democracy, according to his teaching. The right of the church would override the rights of the people. That is the kind of democracy that he believes in. God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he could not let the people go. Then he turned all the waters of Egypt into blood, including the greater River Nile, because he did not let the people go. Then the magicians turned them all into blood again. What a bloody country that must have been. That is the kind of science Mr. Bryan believes in.

Mr. Bryan claims to be a Democrat, but his ideas of democracy would compare with the teachings of Jefferson about as a turkey buzzard would compare with the bird of paradise.

Naples, N. Y.

VOLTAIRE OR PAINE?

The Work of the Great Frenchman Declared to Be Harmful Because Not Economic.

BY ISADOR LADOFF.

Voltaire, the celebrated French anticlerical writer, devoted his wit to the task of destroying religious superstition. He little suspected that he at the same time created a new, not less fallacious, superstition of negative Freethought. His mistake consisted in taking a means for an end, leaving out of consideration the fundamental aim and purpose of any forward movement, namely its utilitarian aspect, its beneficial effect on the actual life and strife of the broad masses of the people. Voltaire and his school did not seem even to suspect that there is in the trend of their movement anything beyond church-smashing, denunciation of priestcraft, and superficial propaganda of shallow skepticism. No wonder, therefore, that Voltairianism proved not only sterile, but even harmful, as far as the fate of the people is concerned. Catharine II. of Russia, this monster of sexual depravity and notorious founder of the infamous institute of serfdom in her domain, was an ardent follower of Voltaire. And history knows a number of other Voltairians, in less exalted positions, who were rabid reactionaries and enemies of the people. Indeed nothing else could be expected from a purely intellectual movement, a movement without any ethical or civic aspirations, born and reared among a few corrosive minds de-

veloped in the soul-killing atmosphere of feudal France.

Thomas Paine was the first modern leader of positive Freethought, recognizing the vital connection between the latter and civic righteousness. Thomas Paine considered religious mysticism, as crystallized in the institutional church, a species of artificially inculcated and cunningly maintained mild form of popular insanity inimical to popular well-being. He combated it as such with all the weapons of reason and knowledge at his command. He fought the institutional church as a great power for evil, as the servile handmaid of all reactionary elements of society, of feudal nobility, of slaveholders and serf-owners, of kingcraft, and priestcraft. Realizing that the institutional church poisoned the very source of ethics, that it perverted morals, Thomas Paine, however, knew that the prestige of the church in the eyes of the uncritical masses of the people is due to the fancied connection between religious mysticism and ethics. He therefore devoted his great mind to the task of demonstrating that the rules of conduct deeply ingrained in human nature are based on reason and knowledge. Thomas Paine was a Freethinker not from mere skepticism. Freethought was to him not a mere attitude of mind, but a philosophy of life and action. He was the first constructive Freethinker, the first Freethinker who was a great citizen, a revolutionist and radical reformer, whose noble heart was overflowing with love for the broad masses of the people. The great motive of his life and activity was not negation for the sake of negation, but the intense desire to improve the conditions of life of the people. To Thomas Paine the Freethought movement was an organic part of the political movement of his time. The institutional church was his enemy because it was the enemy of the people's freedom. The church and its adherents blacken Paine's memory as a man and ignore him as a citizen. In this attitude the church is faithful to its historical traditions.

However, it was always regretful to the writer of these lines to notice that most European and especially American Freethinkers remain Voltairians, mere doctrinary negators in the name of a naive materialism a la Buechner and Molleschott. It was always a disappointment to us to see that most pronounced Freethinkers fail to realize the organic connection between Thomas Paine the Freethinker and Thomas Paine the political revolutionist; between Freethought in general and civic ideals and aspirations.

It is our firm conviction that this divorce between Freethought and civic ideals and aspirations is the principal cause of the weakness and insignificance of the Freethought movement at a time when religious skepticism is spreading rapidly, and the number of unchurched people is counted by millions. Voltairism has outlived its utility. People nowadays care very little about abstract beliefs or unbeliefs, especially since belief or unbelief does not seem to affect conduct. In the eyes of an intelligent man, working for a living, John D. Rockefeller, the only saint, and Andrew Carnegie, the Voltairian, are both exploiters of human toil, social parasites. We plead here for Paine's conception of Freethought and against Voltairianism. If Thomas Paine were alive today we would find him leading the greatest movement of modern times, the proletarian movement. Let us be true to Paine, the Revolutionist in politics, as well as to Paine the Freethinker. One is unthinkable without the other.

An Ecclesiastical Boomerang.

A peculiar situation has developed in Quebec. The Roman Catholic Archbishop has undertaken to strictly enforce the regulation of his church against mixed marriages. But love laughs at church regulations as well as at locks and legal enactments, and the people of Quebec, being somewhat old-fashioned, still retain some traces of the once popular custom of marrying for love. The good Archbishop therefore finds himself in this difficult predicament. He cannot relax in the matter of the regulations without appearing to beat a retreat. If he does not relax, he must be content to look on while his people follow their Protestant sweethearts to Protestant churches to be married. It is a pity, perhaps, that the laws of nature cannot always be made to conform themselves to the laws which men make, but Nature is very headstrong sometimes.—Woodstock Sentinel-Review.

THE CHRIST.

A Critical Review and Analysis of the Evidence of His Existence.

BY JOHN E. REMSBURG.

CHAPTER VII. (Continued.)

The Resurrection of Christ.

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Was he readily recognized by his friends? Matthew, Luke and John: He was not.

Matthew says that when his disciples met him in Galilee, after having gone there for the express purpose of meeting him, "some doubted" (xxviii, 17). Luke says that two of his friends journeyed with him from Jerusalem to Emmaus, conversing with him on the way, and notwithstanding they had been informed of his resurrection, they did not recognize him until after they had reached the village. John says that when Mary Magdalene met him she "knew not that it was Jesus, . . . supposing him to be the gardener" (xx, 14, 15); and when he met his disciples at the Lake of Tiberius they "knew not that it was Jesus" (xxi, 4).

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Did his appearances indicate a corporeal, or merely a spiritual existence?

The Evangelists declare that he was not only seen by his disciples and others, but that he conversed with them. Matthew says the two Marys held him by the feet, Luke says he invited the disciples to handle him, and John says that Thomas examined his wounds; while both Luke and John state that he partook of nourishment.

On the other hand, Luke says that while he sat at meat with Cleopas and his companion at Emmaus "He vanished out of their sight" (xxiv, 31). John says that while the disciples were assembled in a room in Jerusalem, "when the doors were shut," Jesus came "and stood in the midst" (xx, 19). Eight days later the appearance was repeated: "Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst" (26). Mark says that after he appeared to Mary Magdalene "he appeared in another form" to two of his disciples (xvi, 12).

While the first named appearances can be reconciled with so-called "spiritual manifestations," the latter cannot be reconciled with a corporeal existence.

In the preceding chapter we have shown that the alleged crucifixion of Jesus is unworthy of belief. If he was not crucified the story of his resurrection is, of course, a fiction. But conceding, for the sake of argument, that he was crucified; does this make his resurrection probable, or even possible? The crucifixion of a man is a possible occurrence; but the corporeal resurrection of a man who has suffered death is impossible. These reputed appearances of Jesus, if they have a historical foundation, were evidently mere subjective impressions or apparitions. Although he is declared to have remained on earth forty days, he made, at the most, but two or three brief visits to his disciples, appearing and disappearing like a phantom. Instead of abiding with them, teaching them the doctrines of his religion—of which they professed to be ignorant—and preparing them for their coming ministry he is represented as keeping in seclusion, or roaming aimlessly along the country highways, like some demented creature. Referring to his appearance to his disciples, Jerome says: "The apostles supposed him to be a spirit, or according to the Gospel which the Nazarenes receive [the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew] an incorporeal demon."

The possibility, and even prevalency, of apparitions similar to those related of Jesus are recognized by every student of psychology. Sir Benjamin Brodie, in his "Psychological Inquiries" (p. 78), says: "There are abundant proofs that impressions may be made in the brain by other causes simulating those which are made on it by external objects through the medium of the organs of sense, thus producing false perceptions, which may, in the first instance, and before we have had time to reflect on the subject, be mistaken for realities."

The appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene was not believed even by the disciples. If the disciples believed that Mary was deluded, is it

unreasonable to believe that they were deluded also? Illusions are contagious and may affect many minds as well as one. Dr. Carpenter, one of the highest English authorities on mental science, says: "If not only a single individual, but several persons should be 'possessed' by one and the same idea or feeling, the same misinterpretation may be made by all of them; and in such a case the concurrence of their testimony does not add the least strength to it" (Principles of Mental Physiology, p. 208). In confirmation of this is cited the following from a work on "The Philosophy of Apparitions," by Dr. Hibbert, F.R.S.E.: "A whole ship's company was thrown into the utmost consternation by the apparition of a cook who had died a few days before. He was distinctly seen walking ahead of the ship, with a peculiar gait by which he was distinguished when alive, through having one of his legs shorter than the other. On steering the ship towards the object, it was found to be a piece of floating wreck."

These supposed appearances of Jesus were, at the most, only apparitions, and "Apparitions," to quote Dr. Hibbert again, "are nothing more than morbid symptoms, which are indicative of an intense excitement of the renovated feelings of the mind" (Philosophy of Apparitions, p. 375).

Lord Amberley advances a psychological explanation of the reputed appearances of Jesus from which I quote the following: "Whatever other qualities Jesus may have possessed or lacked, there can be no question that he had one—that of inspiring in others a strong attachment to himself. He had in his brief career surrounded himself with devoted disciples; and he was taken from their midst in the full bloom of his powers by a violent and early death. Now there are some who have been taught by the bitter experience of their lives how difficult, nay, how impossible it is to realize in imagination the fact that a beloved companion is in truth gone from them forever. . . . We fondly conceive that in some way the dead must still exist; and if so, can one, who was so tender before, listen to our cry of pain and refuse to come? Can one, who soothed us in the lesser troubles of our lives, look on while we are suffering the greatest agony of all and fail to comfort? It cannot be. Imagination declines to picture the long future that lies before us. We cannot understand that we shall never again listen to the tones of the familiar voice; never feel the touch of the gentle hand; never be encouraged by the warm embrace that tells us we are loved, or find a refuge from miserable thoughts and the vexations of the world in the affectionate and ever-open heart. All this is too hard for us. We long for a resurrection; we should believe in it if we could; we do believe in it in sleep, when our feelings are free to roam at pleasure, unrestrained by the chilling presence of the material world. In dreams the old life is repeated again and again. Sometimes the lost one is beside us as of old and we are quite untroubled by the thought of parting. Sometimes there is a strange and confusing consciousness that the great calamity has happened, or has been thought to happen, but that now we are again together, and that a new life has succeeded upon death. . . . Granting only a strong emotion and a lively phantasy, we may comprehend at once how, in many lands, to many mourners, the images of their dreams may also become the visions of their waking hours" (Analysis of Religious Belief, pp. 275, 276).

Renan says: "For the historian, the life of Jesus finishes with his last sigh. But such was the impression he had left in the heart of his disciples, and of a few devoted women, that during some weeks more it was as if he were living and consoling them. Had his body been taken away, or did enthusiasm, always credulous, create afterwards the group of narratives by which it was sought to establish faith in the resurrection? In the absence of opposing documents this can never be ascertained. Let us say, however, that the strong imagination of Mary Magdalene played an important part in the circumstance. Divine power of love! Sacred moments in which the passion of one possessed gave to the world a resuscitated God" (Life of Jesus, p. 296).

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If Jesus appeared in a material body, was he naked, or clothed?

This is not a vital, but it is a pertinent question. It is stated that he appeared to Mary Magdalene immediately after the resurrection. Did he appear to her naked, or was he clothed? As she mistook him for the gardener, and as the gardener undoubtedly went clad, it may be presumed that Jesus was clad also. If so, where did he procure his clothes? His own garments were divided among the soldiers, and his grave clothes were left in the sepulchre. If it be assumed that he was taken from the tomb by his friends, as some critics believe, the difficulty vanishes.

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What is said of the saints who arose on the day of the crucifixion?

Matthew: They "came out of the graves after the resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (xxvii, 53).

Before Matthew's wholesale resurrection of the saints the resurrection of Jesus pales into insignificance. In the opinion of many supernaturalists Matthew has mixed too large a dose of the miraculous for even Christian credulity to swallow, and they would gladly omit this portion of it. Regarding this story Dr. Farrar says: "An earthquake shook the earth and split the rocks, and as it rolled away from their places the great stones which closed and covered the cavern sepulchres of the Jews, so it seemed to the imaginations of many to have disimprisoned the spirits of the dead, and to have filled the air with ghostly visitants, who after Christ had risen appeared to linger in the Holy City" (Life of Christ, vol. ii, p. 419). Dean Milman dismisses it in much the same way. Referring to the earthquake, he says: "The same convulsion would displace the stones which covered the ancient tombs and lay open many of the innumerable rock-hewn sepulchres which perforated the hills on every side of the city, and expose the dead to public view. To the awe-struck and depressed minds of the followers of Jesus, no doubt, were confined these visionary appearances of the spirits of their deceased brethren" (History of Christianity, vol. i, p. 336).

If the minds of the disciples were so greatly affected that they imagined they beheld the resurrected bodies of strangers whom they had never met and of whom they had probably never heard—for they were nearly a hundred miles from the graves of their own kindred—is it strange that they should imagine they saw the resurrected Master with whom they had daily associated for months and perhaps years? To characterize these resurrected saints as "ghostly visitants" and "visionary appearances," and the resurrected Christ as a real being, is a distinction without a scintilla of evidence to support it. Both appearances, if they be historical, belong to the same class of mental phenomena; and are, indeed, the offspring of the same minds.

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When did the resurrection take place?

All: In the night.

Who witnessed it?

All: No one.

The author of "Supernatural Religion" says: "The remarkable fact is, therefore, absolutely undeniable, that there was not, and that it is not even pretended that there was, a single eye-witness to the actual Resurrection. The empty grave, coupled with the supposed subsequent appearances of Jesus, is the only evidence of the Resurrection" (p. 1004).

How About It?

Do you believe in serpent worship? that when Moses in the wilderness made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole, if a man had been bitten and beheld the serpent, he lived? (Serpent worship still survives in some countries of the world.)

That whosoever believeth in the Son of Man, when he (Jesus) was lifted up as the serpent was lifted up by Moses, "should not perish, but have eternal life?"

That the shedding of the blood of bulls and goats and of human beings will appease the wrath of an angry god?

That after this god had become tired of the offerings of the blood of bulls and goats and human beings the only satisfaction he could have was the sacrifice of his son "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all?"

Do you believe in Cannibalism? that by

eating the flesh and drinking the blood of beasts and human beings the eater partakes of the vices, or virtues, or strength, or weakness, or bravery, of the thing or person eaten?

That "except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you?"

Do you not know that the "Christian rite of the eucharist, wherein men eat the flesh and drink the blood, or pretend they do, of a great and good person and thus partake of his nature, is A Surviving Variant of Cannibalism?"

W. H. RINEHART.

The House Problem.

In a certain community there were to be found houses of wide diversity of structure and material. Some were strong and beautiful and rested upon firm foundations, so that they might stand through the fierce winds and pouring rains; others were composed of building elements so unsuitable and poorly matched that Boreas whistled through them in the winter time and chilled the very hearts of all who sat inside. Still other houses stood in swampy ground, unfit for habitations to be placed upon. As these inferior buildings were often seen to be in danger of collapse, they were supported by stout wooden props.

Now, it happened that in this quarter of the world, a number of persons commanded great respect because they had declared that, for the matter of a thousand years or so, they had possessed rules for the best management of villages, including the construction and the maintenance of homes; and although these persons appeared to be none too familiar with the principles of architecture, it was yet customary to pay them a fee for blessing a house before the tenant signed the lease—this perhaps being considered equivalent to having a rabbit's foot about the place or the hanging of a horseshoe over the front door.

The house-blessers were not wont to be particular about the sort of habitation upon which they used their charm; a house, said they, was a holy sort of an affair no matter of what materials it happened to be made or in what locality it stood. Even though you found the gravest deficiencies in a dwelling after you once had it on your hands, yet, said the house-blessers, after an honorable man had once engaged a house, he would retain it for the balance of his life. This extraordinary contention they sought to demonstrate by pointing out, in their venerable book, certain passages telling about the rules of landlords nineteen hundred years ago. "How shall we have stable and beautiful houses," inquired they, "if you do not stop contentedly in miserable ones? Or if you find you must get out, at least do not scandalize us by moving into any other house. It would be evident to anyone that you, who were unwise enough to make a mistake in dwellings, should hereafter be satisfied to be without a shelter for your heads."

One peculiarity about this village surprised the stranger who passed through it more than all the other things he saw, viz.: that not only poor dwellings, as we have said before, but even those well built and standing on good ground, were propped as carefully as any of the houses in the swamps. Some few of the villagers contended that those houses which could not stand without artificial aid should be allowed to fall, and that the supports might very well be taken away from buildings where they were not necessary, so that it might be determined which were really fittest to remain; but (there being certain economic interests involved in the preserving of even flimsy shacks), such thinkers were not popular in the community. It was commonly reported that their object was the destruction of all residences alike; the offensive epithet of free-dwellers was applied to them, and some of the house-blessers said that persons having theories of this sort should be hung.

Undeniable it is that among the free-dwellers, as well as among other members of the community, were those by no means of a temperament to live in any house contentedly. No sooner might they be settled in the most desirable residence in town, with furniture set cozily about the rooms and roses all in bloom outside the door, than such nomads insisted on setting off alone to look for quarters somewhere else. A tent

or gipsy wagon was, beyond a doubt, the proper home for them.

Still more deplorable, there were those who wanted charming dwelling places, but refused to pay for them; and these, one thinks, deserved but little pity if at last they found themselves without a roof at all above their heads in winter time.

On the other hand, it also is unquestionably true that a certain portion of the community which was compelled to remain much of the time indoors, suffered from a severe affection of the eye, so that these victims were quite unable to see sundry rents and patched spots in the ancient book from which its caretakers derived authority. Whether or not this had anything to do with the indiscriminate fondness of the house-blessers for dwellings good and bad, one cannot positively say; it may be that they really thought all houses were divine.

L. D. HARDING.

The Temples of the West.

The temples of the West look down upon the azure seas;
No sick and weary famine town looks sadly up to these.
No gilded dome reflects the sun on eyes with sunlight blind,
Or sinks from sight, when day is done, while death steals up behind.

The temples of the Westland gleam as gleam the Eastern spires,
But wear the colors of a dream, the sunset's tender fires.
The gilt upon their shining towers is like the rainbow's glow;
It changes with the changing hours, while sunsets come and go.

And never in the Orient such pillars rise as these;
Such beauties never there are blent in wall and roof and frieze—
For never by the ancient shore where gilt pagodas rise
Upon emblazoned temples pour such lights of paradise.

The temples of the Westland lift their pillars to the sky
While ships of vapor slowly drift in stately splendor by.
The temples of the Westland rise from out the Westland soil,
Reared not by skill of weeping eyes or hopeless hands of toil.

O temples of the East, your gods much tribute have required—
The birth and life and death of clods, to rear you many-spired.
The temples of the West were made by neither toil nor pelf—
The god who dwells within their shade has builded them himself.

Ring out, you bells of temples East; you call me less than these
That spread their sweet communion feast beneath the Westward trees.

Ring forth upon the sultry air when dying day is dim;
I hear another call to prayer—the forest's mighty hymn.

I stand before an open door, a temple in the West.
I hear the music on the shore of waves that sink to rest.
Above me mount the Westland firs; their incense rises pure.

O gilded Eastward sepulchres, my soul you cannot lure.
—"The Lumberman Poet."

"Moncure Daniel Conway: Freethinker and Humanitarian," by Edwin C. Walker, published by The Truth Seeker for the author, familiarizes the reader with the principal events in the life of one of the most honored and useful citizens of America. All of the many works of Conway must be consulted for the information the pamphlet contains. It is good and improving literature. Price 15 cents.

A history of the Catholic Church in New York, by one of the higher clergy, appeared serially in the Evening World. One instalment contained a mention of the "infamous Maria Monk." A young man with the paper in his hand came to this office on the same day looking for the book. We had just printed a new edition of Maria Monk and could supply the demand. Price 50 cents.

The Crapsey-Mangasarian Debate on the question: "Did Jesus really exist?" may be had at this office for 25 cents per copy. Dr. Crapsey is the Episcopal minister of Rochester, N. Y., who was deposed for heresy. Mr. Mangasarian is the permanent speaker for the Independent Religious Society of Chicago. He answered the question in the negative.

Technical Criticism.—A clergyman in Scotland desired his congregation never to call one another liars but when any one said a thing that was not true, they ought to whistle. One day he preached a sermon on the parable of the loaves and the fishes, and being at a loss how to explain it, said: "Those loaves were not like those of nowadays, but were as big as the hills of Scotland." Hardly had he pronounced the words when he heard a loud whistle. "What's that?" said he, "who is it that calls me a liar?" "'Tis I, sir, Billy McDonald, the baker." "Well, Billy, what objections have ye to what I told ye?" "None, Master John, only I wanted to know what kind of ovens they had to bake those loaves in."

Our First Duty.

(Concluded from page 293.)

most fruitful ever lived and preached by man. Why should not Mr. Ladoff treat Voltaire as we all like to treat the great men of the past, and say that if he were alive today he would be a Socialist?

We gather from the argument of our contributor that he considers Paine's opposition to the church as only incidental or a side issue to his political or economic system. Now, if he will take notice, Paine, unlike Voltaire, had comparatively little to say about the institutional church. He attacked the Bible and exposed the falsity of the Christian preaching founded upon it. Voltaire ridiculed everything that was essentially ecclesiastical. Paine was not so much a church-smasher as a Biblical critic. In his political writings he defended the rights of men against kings, but said little if anything about a state church. We, however, honor Paine both as a political revolutionist and as a Freethinker. We publish both his "Rights of Man" and his "Age of Reason." Do those who emphasize his political work publish or circulate either? Really, does it not look as if Mr. Ladoff were using the "Rights of Man" as a club with which to whack Freethinkers because they are Freethinkers and not Socialists?

We have published a communication from a reader who asserts that when the livelihood of all men is assured there will be an end of men preaching a doctrine in which they do not believe. How so? Another tells us that when Socialism is established no man will eat bread except in the sweat of his own face. Presumably there will be Christians under Socialism who will be willing to pay ministers to "preach the unsearchable riches of Christ," and if men then, as now, find preaching an easier way of making a living than manual labor, why will they not, as now, choose the pulpit as their vocation? We concede that if every man's living were assured to him none would be compelled to preach contrary to his convictions—but would he do anything else?

We have to recognize the small showing and slight noise made by Freethought as compared with the Socialistic movement, but we would like to know when in the history of the world a truth was to be judged by the numbers following it. The Socialist movement is insignificant in comparison with the church movement. Can the Socialists of New York rival the parade accompanying the Roman Catholic centenary in this city? The same police who chased the Socialists out of Union Square proudly ride herd on the Catholic procession. Does this argue that Socialism is shallower than Catholicism, or is it that Catholicism is a more successful deluder of mankind? We account for the "insignificance" of the Freethought movement by reference to the proneness of mankind to go chasing off after political leaders and economic will-o'-the-wisps when they ought to be organizing for the protection of their rights against the chief enemy of liberty, which is the church. Let them follow the example of Paine, and having speculated about governments, devote their ripened intellect to a consideration of the more fundamental problem of extirpating superstition and establishing the rule of reason.

There are levelheaded Socialists who see that economists like our Mr. Ladoff, who ignore the necessary precedence of Freethought, are now preparing to hand over the race, bound hand and foot by a system of collectivism, to the church; and the ministers are organizing to receive the gift.

The first edition of the "Short History of the Inquisition" proved so acceptable that we have issued a second one. Price \$2.

Minor Editorial Note and Comment.

Some of the new religious or semi-religious cults take the Roman Catholic view of marriage, which is that union of the sexes is not compatible with the higher life. Count Tolstoy has already classified marriage as "a sin and not a duty." Christian Scientists accept the teaching of Jesus that "the perfect spiritual life which lies above and beyond the necessity for marriage is most to be desired." A Theosophical writer has said that "increased practice of celibacy is the only means for any real advancement of the race." Many of the New Thought, Advanced Thought, New Psychology, and Higher Ideals people, of whom the number is increasing, favor asceticism; certain of them would abolish the marriage contract, and others would allow nature to take its course. Mr. Sidney Flower, a rather languid lily, thinks that "sex-energy ought to be expressed in some way that shall advance spiritual growth," because "it is not to our highest good that we should continue to live on the physical plane when we know how to reach the spiritual." But Mrs. Elizabeth Towne, editor of the *Nautilus*, having good red blood in her veins, takes a robust view. Mrs. Towne says: "Looking backward over history; looking around at the homes and lives of my contemporaries and intimates; reviewing my individual experiences and spying carefully within at the ideas, emotions, instincts, and intuitions aroused by stimuli both outward and soul-ward; I conclude that the real monogamic marriage is the soul-convicted ideal and the constant quest of every human being, enlightened or uncivilized, Christian or barbarian, 'good' or 'bad,' Methodist, Atheist or Mormon. The Life Urge, the Sex Urge, is stronger than right or wrong or law. It is the basic truth of creation. President Roosevelt needn't worry about race suicide." The devotees of the "spiritual" life who have lauded asceticism and professed celibacy are not shining examples of moral health. As Casson says, there have been nunneries that might have hung out red lights without misleading anybody as to their character. Sustentation, defense, and reproduction of life are the first three laws of nature, and to preach the suspension of any one of them is to advocate race suicide or annihilation of the species. For some mysterious reason every freak religion must assume control of the vital physical functions to exercise, to restrict, or to pervert.

Two bodies of religionists are making preparations to board the Socialist ship, whether for the purpose of scuttling it or to sail with the present crew remains to be seen. They are, first, the Ministers' Socialist Conference, of which the Rev. John D. Long is secretary, the two hundred clerical members of which have just issued a declaration of principles. These ministers believe that "Socialism is the economic expression of the Christian life." The second body of religious economists is called the Christian Socialist Fellowship, which will have a national convention in this city on May 28 and two days thereafter. Business meetings are to be held in a chapel, but there will be a "collectivist" banquet in a secular restaurant. The following subjects will be discussed by the preachers, who include John Spargo and Edwin Markham: "The Social Messages of the Prophets," "The Socialism of Jesus," "Apostolic Socialism," "Social Ideals in the Corinthian Church," "Socialism in the Ancient and Medieval Church," "The Kingdom of God

Realized Through Socialism," and "Socialism the Economic Expression of the Christian Life." We suggest as a motto for Socialists who are not Christians the following scripture: "Unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united."

The French physician, Dr. Romme, has reached an interesting conclusion regarding sex determination in children. He says that a boy is born when the father is the weaker of the parents and a girl when the mother is the weaker. He contends that it is a law of nature that the child resembles the weaker parent. He points out that in all countries 105 or 106 girls are born to 100 boys. This proportion is mathematically regular except only after a great war. Dr. Romme contends that this proves his law, as the best and strongest men are sent to fight and get killed while the weakest remain at home and survive. Again, when an old man marries a young woman their progeny are most often boys and vice versa. Dr. Romme asserts there are practically no instances where the strength of both parents is equal. Worry, a passing illness or mental depression, is enough to turn the scale and cause the temporary weakness of one or the other. He cites the case of the Kaiser, who had five sons in succession, and the Czar, who had four daughters. The meaning of Dr. Romme probably is that the sex of the children will be that of the member of the conjugal union most exhausted by labor, duties, or other causes, which does not look reasonable, but may be a fact nevertheless.

At the Carnegie Hall meeting of the celebrants of the Catholic centenary in New York, Justice Morgan J. O'Brien said that "nothing could so signally mark the great strides which we have made in religious toleration than the attitude of our Protestant fellow citizens, who not only are pleased with our meeting and the occasion of it, but many of them have gone further and in public utterances have emphasized the change and growing spirit of the times in favor of religious toleration and the fact that differences in religion no longer make enemies of mankind." Justice O'Brien should have remarked also that the boasted toleration is all on the part of non-Catholics. Without repudiating the utterances of Pope Pius IX, speaking with the infallibility attached to his office, no Catholic can admit the right of any religion but his to exist or the lawfulness of its recognition as a religion by the state. The condition praised by the justice is one that would be quickly ended if his church governed.

Ferdinand Pinney Earle, who is living at his country home at Monroe, Orange county, N. Y., does not believe that justice has been done him in the exploiting of his ideas of matrimony, and in the effort to put himself straight with the public announces he will lecture on "My Ideas of Matrimony." Mr. Earle is a social revolutionist. He and his wife were recently divorced, and neither had a word to say in disparagement of the other, which breach of established divorce etiquette has involved Mr. Earle in a scandal and aroused the indignation of his fellow townsmen. It was of course the duty of the couple, out of respect for the conventions, to accuse each other of improper conduct, naming times, places and persons, and to charge intoxication and cruelty on both sides. No wonder Mr. Earle desires to make himself understood and will go to the expense of hiring a hall in order to do so.

In his demand for four new battleships President Roosevelt has the support of Mrs. Eddy, who, while "praying daily that there be no more war, no more barbarous slaughtering of our fellow-beings," yet finds it in her heart to say:

"It is unquestionable, however, that at this hour the armament of navies is necessary, for the purpose of preventing war and preserving peace among nations." If Christian Science were true, and if the people were persuaded of it, warships and slaughterings would be recognized as errors of mortal mind to be corrected by holding the right thought. That is contrary to the theory of President Roosevelt, but it is what Mrs. Eddy teaches. Why does not the old lady steadfastly endeavor to convert Mr. Roosevelt to the truth as it is in "science" instead of herself going over to his hostile views?

Mrs. Evans, wife of the admiral, has spoken of the Japanese in words that will not be quoted by the solicitors of missionary funds for their conversion to Christianity. Mrs. Evans says: "Both the admiral and myself and, indeed, all our children, have the most intense admiration for the Japanese. We believe that Japan is one of the best friends that this country has in the world. I lived in Tokio for many months, and taken as a whole, I think the Japanese social life the most admirable in the world. It may seem unpatriotic, but I think that we are crude, humdrum, and sordid in comparison. They are polished, genuinely faithful and sincere." But sending missionaries to Japan will not be wholly a waste of money. Coming in contact with the social life there may improve their manners and morals.

For all the ills which Catholicism sees in our society, Congressman Bourke Cockran blames Freethought. At least that is what he told a Carnegie Hall audience the other night. Freethinking is responsible, he declared, for the divorce system, for our modern Agnostic school system, and in the end for Socialism, which latter is the product of relaxed marriage ties and godless schools. Oh, well, let it go at that. Freethought is patient and longsuffering. It will not turn on its traducers violently so long as it is not accused of being responsible for Bourke Cockran and the Roman Catholic church.

A little girl hurrying to St. Stephen's Roman Catholic church, where she was to have a part in the exercises, and who wore her confirmation clothes, was run over by a street car and instantly killed. Is such an event reconcilable with the supposition that a deity all-powerful to protect his children is taking notice of what the Catholics profess to be doing for his honor and glory?

A report is in circulation that the Kaiser intends to remove from the grounds of Achilleion Villa, in the island of Corfu, the statue of Heine, erected there by the late Empress Elizabeth of Austria, who formerly owned the property. With or without the monument, Heine will be remembered at Corfu and other civilized places longer than the Kaiser can hope to be.

Evidently in pursuance of a concerted plan, and as an appeal to American patriotism, Catholic houses and churches have displayed nothing but American flags during their celebration. There are Americans who are fooled by the trick into the belief that our institutions are agreeable to the church, and that Catholics put the flag above the cross.

In view of "the spread of Socialism and anarchism" Councilman Merrill of East Orange, N. J., stood up and defended a blue law that suppressed the sale on Sunday of anything except newspapers, milk and ice, and then voted for its passage. If Socialism and anarchism antagonize that sort of legislation they ought to spread faster.

The Hackensack Liberal Club will on May 6 listen to a lecture by James F. Morton, Jr., and sing "America" in honor of his grandfather, the Rev. S. F. Smith, D.D., who wrote it.

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Letters of Friends.

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THE STURGIS "JUNE MEETING."

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

The president of the Harmonial Society of Sturgis, Michigan, informs me that the arrangements for the fifty-first June meeting are complete and that in obedience to the resolution unanimously adopted by the United Liberals (Rationalists, Spiritualists and all lovers of justice and freedom of speech in Sturgis, as well indeed as those church members who loved liberty better than superstition) this two days' meeting will be held in the Free Church of Sturgis, on the 20th and 21st of June. Prominent speakers are engaged and everything provided for which could render such a meeting enjoyable.

Many of the readers of The Truth Seeker may not be aware that "heterodox" meetings could not be held half a century ago in this town owing to the orthodox bigotry of those who held the keys of halls, churches, and so forth. And I may here relate that the close communion Baptists, having no church of their own, proposed to the Materialists, Spiritualists, and Liberals that if they would provide half the expense of building a house, and the Baptists the other half, the property should be fairly shared between the two. The Liberals agreed and the house was accordingly built and furnished. But the Baptists held the keys and used it for their own meetings and shut out the honest Liberals.

One of them, however, who had contributed \$300 to that building fund, threatened law proceedings for the recovery of his money and at last compromised it by accepting \$100 in full of all debts, dues, and demands. I have been informed that that amount was all that had been returned of the entire amount contributed by the Liberals.

The honest people of the then village of Sturgis became indignant and even some church members donated generously to the building of a Free Church in Sturgis, whose platform and pulpit should be gratuitous to all who had anything to say (on the subjects of religion, moral obligations, or science) and knew how to say it. Great was the excitement in the town. Great lines of wagons approached the village, the teamsters cracking their whips and shouting for liberty, and on the arrival of the wagon loads of brick and stone the merchants left their stores, the lawyers their offices, and the mechanics their shops and in the true spirit of equality and fraternity helped to unload and pile the material for "The Free Church of Sturgis."

At the dedication of the house a resolution was unanimously adopted that "it is the sense of this meeting that this event should be commemorated by an annual meeting in the month of June, year after year, until time shall be no more."

The Harmonial Society of Sturgis (an incorporated body) has been loyal to that suggestion for fifty years and the fifty-first "June Meeting" is to be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 20th and 21st, 1908, in the Free Church, to which all human beings are invited.

The speakers who are engaged for the annual meeting are Dr. J. M. Peebles, who delivered the dedicatory oration 51 years ago; Will J. Erwood of Battle Creek, Mrs. D. A. Morrill of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The officers of the Harmonial Society of Sturgis, Michigan, are: Thos. Collan, president; Mrs. Agnes McGowen, secre-

tary; Mrs. M. Gardner, treasurer; besides the Executive Committee consisting of officers and members and a Soliciting Committee of three.

THOS. HARDING.

212 Grove St., Sturgis, Mich.

A SOLEMN INQUIRY.

From L. D. Crine, New York.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

Ida Gatling Pentecost, widow of the late Hugh O. Pentecost (who said so many practical things and whom we all at one time or another greatly admired for his brilliant intellect and now do not know where his last resting-place is) has this to say in the April number of a publication from Chicago:

"Companion yourself night and day with your plus-entropy."

If Mr. Pentecost were still living, he could perhaps make us understand what that means. I have given it some thought, but cannot find a single place to hook on. It may have reference to par and above par. If we can assume our "entropy" to mean our oneness, unity, completeness or wholeness, then we can represent the ego in association with the corpus, and all the good and bad things the combination stands for, by the arithmetical numeral 1, or say 100 per cent. If the entropy is 1 or 100 per cent, then the "plus-entropy" must mean plus 1 or plus 100 per cent; or better, 1 plus, or 100 per cent plus. That is say 1 1-10 or 110 per cent. So any person who companions himself with plus-entropy (whether plus-entropy be substance or spiritual essence or some kind of invisible extract from the cosmos), he is one and a little or much more than one; that is, he is more than himself, or is just a little overflowing with good feelings. Do you suppose the meaning is something like that? We always will miss Mr. Pentecost to help us over hard places.

SIN AGAINST GOD.

From Irwin H. Ecker, Wisconsin.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

Sin against God—were there such a being to be considered—would undoubtedly consist of doing, saying, or thinking something that effected evil, ill, or wrong to such being. But as one can not whittle a diamond with a basswood claspknife, so even after applying the prime requisite in the recipe for cooking Spanish rabbit and having captured your God, it would be as impossible for a poor finite mortal to work an ill or evil to the Infinite as to make two hills stand side by side without a valley between them. The impossible was never accomplished by any one, either man or God, and never will be; hence man never did, never can, nor never will be able to sin against God, white neckties and high-cut Prince Alberts to the contrary, notwithstanding. Christian, be honest with yourself now! Do you not see, by the very nature of the case, that this is a fact?

Through ignorance or inadvertence, or mayhap pure cussedness, one may do his neighbor or society a wrong. Freethinkers, but flesh and blood, like their Christian neighbors, are not immune, haven't been vaccinated, and are liable to slop over into a perfect imitation of their betters, and do a wrong to their worsers—who are very numerous. At such times, there is nothing to the credit of the Freethinker—"Jesus paid it all" for the Christian only, and so there is nothing for it but for the naughty Freethinker to quit his meanness, make a thorough and complete restitution, and to the utmost of his ability remedy the wrong. There is no way for Freethinkers to unload the responsibility of their evil doing upon an innocent scapegoat; they must "liquidate" their own indebtedness, and do; and in sorrow it is admitted, too many liquidate in a way they ought not, and evade the excise laws in so doing. The proper time for repentance, where one is headstrong and bound to repent any way, is just before the commission of some despicable act, not after; and if it is

strong enough to bear up an egg, strong enough to restrain him completely, so that he does not do it at all, then he owes no apologies, and is really the best neighbor that one has got. However, one may violate the laws of his own being, and sin against himself, and the Freethinker is instructed that here also the rule applies, and if he would avoid the consequences, the aches, pains, sorrows, he must abstain—or pay for his foolishness himself.

A LITTLE CONTROVERSY.

From Joel McCallister, Idaho.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

Here in Idaho we are progressing in civilization right up-to-date. We have the blessed Sunday law passed by our last legislature. They have prosecuted for selling an apple, and the next, I expect, will be for a loaf of bread. It is a religious measure, a feeler to test what amount of Christian tyranny they can force upon the people. Christians can undergo saloons to run six days, but can't stand it the seventh. What does it amount to, to close them Sundays, toward suppressing drunkenness? They control enough votes to close the last one under the American flag if they would do it, hence they are responsible for them. My neighbor and minister called me down for hauling a load of wood on Sunday. He had been peddling milk in the village of Peck on Sunday, so I handed it back with interest to him. Then I told him he ought to read some of my books and examine the other side of the religious question, but he replied he did not care to. That is the response I get when I try to induce Christians to learn humanity. Some say they would not want my Infidel literature in their house. I have one serious indictment against religion and that is, its devotees try to keep everybody just as ignorant as possible.

I received "A Short History of the Inquisition." I would be only too glad to have Christians read my book day and night until it is worn out.

In The Truth Seeker of Feb. 8 is a letter from Minister Landenberger. I beg liberty to reply in part. He seems to think that Bible assailants do not understand it. If the way is so plain the fool need not err therein, why do theologians not understand it alike? Why has the Catholic Bible got six books more in it than the Protestant Bible? You can't agree on what day is the Sabbath nor what mode of baptism is correct, and you can't agree to lie in the same graveyard after you are dead. He says T. B. Wakeman's reference in The Truth Seeker of Jan. 21 justifying the murdering of people by Christians as quoted by Christ is a distorting of said Testament from its true meaning.

Brother Landenberger, with all kindness, we will take issue with you without the perverting of language and assert that Christ or his word or the word of God teaches the murder of every one that did not accept his doctrine. Leaving it a question as to what his doctrine was, Paul, chief of the Apostles, says if any come preaching any other doctrine except this, let him be accursed. John the Baptist, referring to the coming of Christ, says his fan will be in his hand and he will separate the wheat from the tares, and burn the tares with unquenchable fire. This I would construe to mean burn sinners and save saints. Again he said, "Those mine enemies that would not that I shall reign over them bring hither and slay them before me." I think in the third chapter of Acts you can read in referring to the coming of Christ, that all that do not receive him shall be destroyed from the earth. Would Mr. Landenberger repeat again that we humanitarians are perverters of truth and tyrants at heart when we say if this language means anything it means just what it says? If Christ will dig people out of their graves and burn them in hell with brimstone for

fuel where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, he is not any too human to order people destroyed who refused to believe the falsehoods that he is reported to have taught. Christ taught that he and his father were one; that he was before Moses. Then he was a party to giving the law in the Old Testament that compelled the cutting off the child's hand that was raised in anger against the parent. When they commanded a man that if any one enticed him to worship any other god except Jehovah, let it be his mother or the wife of his bosom, he must stone them to death, does that mean what it says or does it mean to throw paper balls at them at long range when there is a side wind? There is not a crime incident to human ignorance and depravity that is not taught or sanctioned in holy writ. On top of all the evidence that has been offered upon this question of Christ's existence, I have Werner's Encyclopedia Britannica, which in vol. xiii, after using almost one page trying to boost Jesus into existence, closes by saying that there is not a Jew or Greek historian that records a word about him; that the reference that Josephus records of him no sane critic believes true and that the gospel is the best evidence of him. It further reads that there is no record of his birth on the 25th of December previous to the middle of the fourth century.

RELIGIOUS MIXOLOGISTS.

From A. B. Wells, Virginia.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir: We are now, as you see by inclosed clippings, afflicted with the Chapman-Alexander aggregation of Evangelists. They seem to have "got" the newspapers, judging from the space they give them (don't know who pays the bill). I remember having read in The Truth Seeker something in regard to these men before, and I have no sympathy whatever with this work. If you are not too busy shall be glad to hear any remarks you may be pleased to make concerning them. Is not that suicide revelry story a good one for a starter? and there are others. I may send more if you wish.

[The Chapman-Alexander combination are now in this city, but are not getting the same space in the newspapers that they command in Norfolk. The evangelists are "up against" the Catholic centenary, and besides it requires a considerable sensation to stir New York. We are surprised at none of the yarns spun by Chapman. They are fictions told for effect, like the parables. If they separate the hearer from his money the object in telling them has been achieved. Like other sensations, the revival is forgotten until it comes again.—Ed. T. S.]

THEY TOOK HIM IN.

From Robert Probst, California.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir: We are having quite a time in our little town, just at present, as some of the good people want to organize a temperance society, and stop the terrible habit of drinking whiskey, but I am afraid it is going to be a failure, as most of the boys swear they will not put up with Dago Red. That life pledge seems to be a sticker with most of them, and I can hardly blame the boys either, as I think it is only a sly way some of the women have found to lead them to the Lord.

We have a good Sunday school here, where all are welcome. My children go once in a while when there is no ball game playing, or fishing is not good; in fact, nearly all of our Christians here are only good for a short distance.

I used to like Christians, but at last they soured on my stomach. I had one to beat me out of \$40 board, and it did not seem to bother his conscience a bit. At the same time I do not think you could hire him to eat meat on Good Friday. And another one that used to lay in bed of nights and read the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and get down on his knees and pray almost loud enough to cave in the canals on Mars, borrowed \$15 from me and then

skipped the country. I think God is with him, for I am sure the Devil would be more careful in choosing his company. And still another Christian believer came to my house last July with a face on him so long that were I his barber I should charge him by the yard for shaving, and begged my wife and me to board his two children; yes, he would pay right along. He went away to work. We had quite a time to locate him, and we had to appeal to the district attorney before he took the children away; and nearly every time we heard from him he was drunk. When here he cautioned us to send his children to Sunday school. He owes me \$63 and is acting just as I would if I wanted to beat a man in a business transaction. Now, honestly, if such is the kingdom of heaven I shall beg permission to go the other way.

I am willing to admit that if all reports are true heaven may have the best climate, but hell has it skinned for society.

Mac, please send me the "Short History of the Inquisition," and the other books herein named, and renew my subscription to The Truth Seeker, for which I inclose \$6.50. My best wishes to you and George and L. K. W.

THE BREEDER OF GRAFT.

From W. S. Dean, New York State.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

We are sometimes reminded by others that this is an age of graft, and some who make the assertion will quote passages from the Bible to uphold them, losing sight of the plain fact that the precedent they quote from is the breeder of the greatest grafting system of civilization. And we see some contributors to The Truth Seeker urging its Editor to devote more space to the doctrine of Socialism, and those leaders of social economics at the same time will not or dare not say or write the truth about the greatest cause for the insane economical systems of our present day. It is a noted fact there are leaders in all parties who appeal to their reason in their daily affairs, but when they come to the greatest blight against reason they take the same stand as the large majority of Congress did in restoring the slavish motto on the coin of the nation, "In God (fear) we trust." One only need turn to the history of old-time Solomon's days to see the degrading slavery that woman was compelled to submit to, and for the most part is free from at the present day. But the same old capitalist system for wealth and glory is still in full swing, and while there are many who are trying to make more just conditions for wage workers, they fear to point to the holy precedent that is the cause not only of the wage slave but the greatest slavery of the human mind.

A MATTER OF INTEREST.

From G. Swan, Pennsylvania.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

I have just finished reading "A Short History of the Inquisition," and I read it with amazement. If someone had told me that human beings could be so cruel I could not believe it—it was so horrible I had to stop reading at times. I am now convinced that I should look more closely into this matter of religion, so as to find out how it came about that the people have been dupes for so many hundred years. By chance I came into possession of a number of your weekly paper dated June 15, 1907, and notice an article, "Liberty in Bad Company." It had reference to the dedication of a Roman Catholic cathedral in St. Paul, Minn. President Roosevelt congratulates the archbishop personally and those who are to worship in it, starting out in this manner: "In this fortunate country of ours Liberty and Religion are natural allies and go forward hand in hand." I say if the President had his way we would all go back to the Dark Ages, but thanks to Paine and Washington, who opened a

way to freedom and happiness. For the inclosed amount send me books named.

SOVEREIGN STATES.

From C. J. Ferguson, Wisconsin.

"In construing the federal Constitution it must be kept fixedly in mind that it is merely a grant of power, by the sovereign states composing the Union, to a central authority."—Weber's Weekly Circular.

Friend Mac: I would like to see your opinion of this tract. It seems to me Weber is off in his statement that the federal Constitution is a grant of power by "sovereign states." As I understand it, all power given to either the national government or the states is delegated by the people, who are the only sovereigns. I thought the Civil war effectually disposed of the idea of "sovereign states."

[Whatever the theory may be, the states remain sovereign in the exercise of powers not delegated to the general government by the Constitution or assumed by the President and Congress regardless of the Constitution. The states are sovereign in several vital particulars, such as marriage, divorce, and punishment for crime. We like the idea of all affairs being controlled as near their source as possible, beginning with the individual and recourse being had to the federal government only as a last resort. It is a difficult subject—one upon which it is hard to be wholly logical.—Ed. T. S.]

THE CHOICE MADE.

From Mrs. E. Abernethy, Texas.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

For two weeks we have had two protracted meetings in progress. Cumberland and Methodist. The Cumberlands have Mr. Hendrix of Nashville, Tenn., to lead the services. One day he said he believed every word in the Bible. Now how any kind parent can believe a god, with the attributes as we understand them, could make a hell, and a devil, for no other reason than to torture two-thirds of his children eternally, is more than I can understand. We are forced to either take the Bible, a fiendish God, with the eternal hell and the devil as king, or do away with both. I take the latter.

From William Bondies, Oklahoma.—E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir: I hand you herewith payment for one year's subscription. It is not probable that I shall ever cease to be a subscriber. I appreciate your efforts in combating superstition.

WILLIAM GIBBS, FREETHINKER.

The late William Gibbs, of whom mention was made in the Transcript of recent date, is worthy of more than a passing notice.

Being nearly 90 years of age, exceedingly deaf, and nearly blind, it was difficult to converse with him, but it was easy to see that he was a man of superior abilities. In the time of the civil war, he had charge of a large force of men in the Springfield Armory, and made guns for the government. He was intensely patriotic, and was often heard to say he wished he could do more for "Uncle Sam." He had the love and good will of the men under his direction in a marked degree, some coming yearly on "Independence day" to make him a visit.

He was the possessor of a large library, of which he seems to have the complete mastery. His was indeed a great mind, enriched with a vast amount of information on almost every department of literary, social and scientific knowledge. Not only was he a fine machinist, but he had constructed some of the best houses in one of our great cities.

Having lived and traveled in eighteen different states of the Union, his opportunities for seeing and learning were far greater than fall to the lot of most people. He had high ideals of life and duty, was scrupulously honest in all his dealings with his fellow-men. Would that his perfect truth and high standard of morality were universal.—Boston Transcript.

[A reader of The Truth Seeker and a friend of the late Mr. Gibbs informs us that the fine library is likely to be destroyed unless someone buys it of the heirs, which can be done for a trifling part of its value.—Ed. T. S.]

FRANCE AND THE POPE.—2.

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This is a reply to the legal arguments coming under the author's notice after No. 1 was written, and deals with the utterances of the Roman Catholic gentlemen, the Hon. Morgan J. O'Brien, Edgar J. Gans, Esq., Paul Bakewell, Esq., Professor Dwight, and Paul Fuller, Esq., also the speeches made by Judges O'Brien, Daly, and Fitzgerald, and by the Hon. J. Delany and John C. Agar, Esq., at the Roman Catholic mass meeting in New York City, January 27, 1907; also the Pope's Encyclical letter of January 6, 1907.

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God's Protest and The Protest of Israel

The continued demand for the poem "GOD'S PROTEST," by Edmund De-freyne, of which thousands of copies were distributed, has made necessary a reprint of that striking document. It is issued now as a "broadside," the size of a page of The Truth Seeker, and is backed with that other piece of sterling merit by Capt. W. E. P. French, "THE PROTEST OF ISRAEL," which when published in The Truth Seeker caused an early exhaustion of the number in The two poems are now to be had for fifteen cents per dozen.

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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."

The Lilac.

The scent of lilac in the air
Hath made him drag his steps and
pause;
Whence comes this scent within the
Square.
Where endless dusty traffic roars?
A push-cart stands beside the curb,
With fragrant blossoms laden high;
Speak low, nor stare, lest we disturb
His sudden reverie!

He sees us not, nor heeds the din
Of clanging car and scuffling throng;
His eyes see fairer sights within,
And memory hears the robin's song
As once it trilled against the day,
And shook his slumber in a room
Where drifted with the breath of May
The lilac's sweet perfume.

The heart of boyhood in him stirs;
The wonder of the morning skies,
Of sunset gold behind the firs,
Is kindled in his dreaming eyes;
How far off is this sordid place,
As turning from our sight away
He crushes to his hungry face
A purple lilac spray.
—Walter Pritchard Eaton.

Queer Name for Nova Scotians.

Those who dwell in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia are called bluenoses. The name has stuck to them since time out of mind, but how they came to get it is a matter of conjecture. One thing is certain—they don't like it.

Nova Scotians pride themselves on their English ancestry, and some will offer the suggestion that the name is a token that the blue blood shows. When the French were driven out of Acadia the fertile lands they vacated were taken up by English colonists, chiefly from Massachusetts.

The spirit of revolt was strong then in Boston and elsewhere in New England. Those who were loyal to the king and taxes found it a good opportunity to move, and from these loyalists Acadia was largely repopled.

It may be that the blue blood shows and that the name is a badge of honor, but most Nova Scotians don't believe it, for they feel that it is a term of reproach.

"Why bluenose?" was the question put to one young woman whose home isn't far from Nova Scotia.

"Why, after the bluenose potatoes, of course," she said, "and I think it's mean to name people after potatoes."

Now, it's true that next to apples potatoes form the greatest product of the rich Nova Scotian soil. And it's also true that the bluenose is the bright particular star among the varieties of potatoes they raise in Nova Scotia.

But the potatoes were named for the people, not the people for the potatoes. It's a simple question of chronology.

You explain it carefully to the young woman and she says "How silly of me!" but you can see with half an eye that you haven't convinced her.

Here's another guess. Being the third and last, maybe it's the right one. At any rate it's the one generally accepted in that part of the American world known as Down East.

It is cold in Nova Scotia mighty cold, for six months out of every twelve, and the Nova Scotian nose, peeking out from the furs and woolen mufflers, first gets

red and then turns blue as the icy breath of the North nips it.

But however it is, the easiest way to put the Nova Scotia nose out of joint is to dub it bluenose.

How to Use the Tooth Brush.

That most people do not keep their teeth sufficiently clean is the opinion of The Dental Review, as expressed in an article abstracted by The National Druggist (St. Louis, April). This, the writer says, is because modern prepared food does not require much chewing, and the teeth and gums, lacking this functional use, need something to take its place, in order to maintain a normal condition in the mouth. He goes on:

"If the surfaces of the teeth were constantly wiped clean by the friction of food in mastication, and the gums stimulated to normal function by usage, there would be less dental caries, and fewer diseases of the pericemental membrane and gums. But lacking this, there arises the necessity for supplying this friction by the tooth-brush. Of the utility of this process there can be no doubt, provided always that the brush is used judiciously; but, unfortunately, like many another worthy thing, it is frequently abused. Much injury is often done the gum tissue by too vigorous cross brushing—the bristles forcing the thin gum away from the teeth, and leaving the surface exposed at the junction of the enamel and cementum.

"The gums and teeth will stand a great deal of friction, and be benefited by it if it is exerted in the right way, and it should be the duty of the dentist so to instruct his patient that the brush may be used judiciously. Merely to insist on the patient brushing the teeth thoroughly, and emphasize this fact at every sitting, is to take the chance of doing more harm than good by inducing the patient to cross-saw the teeth more and more, with the disastrous results already indicated.

"Nor will it do to tell the patient to 'brush the teeth up and down,' as is so often done. This is as likely to work injury as the cross brushing, by forcing the gums away from the upper teeth on the upward stroke of the brush, and from the lower teeth on the downward stroke. In fact, it is quite an art to brush the teeth properly. The brush should be made to rotate against the surfaces of the teeth, coming in contact with the gums and teeth of the upper jaw only on the downward stroke, and vice versa. There should, of course, be some cross brushing against certain surfaces and positions in the mouth, where the rotary method can not well be employed, but the patient's attention should be especially directed to the danger of injury to the gums by too much cross brushing at the point where the free margin of the gum covers the tooth. This evil is growing rapidly among those who are ultra-particular regarding the care of the teeth, and it requires constant observation and supervision on the part of the dentist to check it. The practice of dentistry is one continuous campaign of supervision and education, and apparently when one evil is corrected another one crops up to take its place. Some individuals today are doing more harm than good with the tooth-brush, but this is no argument against the judicious use of the brush."

Get Rid of Your Quarters.

Those who believe that thirteen is an unlucky number should fight shy of silver quarters. A startling discovery has been made by a writer in the current Harper's Weekly which should give pause to all possessors of quarters. The typical United States quarter, it appears, has thirteen stars, thirteen letters in the

scroll held in the eagle's beak, thirteen marginal feathers on each wing, thirteen lines in the shield, thirteen horizontal bars, thirteen arrow-heads, and thirteen letters in its name. Who would keep a quarter?

Japan and the Cow.

There was a time when milk was regarded in Japan with the same abhorrence as cheese in China. Recent statistics, however, show that time has worked a great change in this respect, and milk and butter are now in great favor in Japan. Whereas twenty-five years ago not more than one or two per cent of the persons visiting a European restaurant, or eating a European meal at a friend's house, would have thought of touching butter, fully forty or fifty per cent now eat it with a relish. They are, however, quite content to do without it.

Dairy farms have increased notably in recent years. Butter, however, is a by-product at these places. It is to milk that they look for their profit. Milk has a curious history in Japan. Thirty or forty years ago it was abhorred. The average Japanese could not induce himself to drink it. But today many a household consumes one or two bottles of milk daily, partly because people have come to like it and partly because the doctors have recommended it as a unique and wholesome beverage. "Milk halls," too, are now quite numerous. Butter will probably take much longer to come widely into vogue, because of its expensiveness. A pound of fresh butter costs at least one yen (49.8 cents, gold) in Tokyo today, an extremely high price for Japan.—Harper's Weekly.

One Family a School.

In school district No. 5, Eugene, Or., one of the oldest in Lane county, there are only five children of school age; and all are of one family.

The chairman of the board is father of the five children and the clerk of the board is the mother. The mother is also the teacher. The teacher has just closed a successful four months term, in which there has been a perfect report made, showing none of the pupils absent or tardy during the entire session. It is understood that the conduct of the pupils was first class.

Other interesting features of the family school district is that the teacher boarded at the home of all her pupils and every day there was a parent visitor at the school.

Why Fat Men Appear Pompous.

The question why fat men walk with a proud carriage and wear a fierce expression was solemnly discussed before the Academy of Sciences recently. Professor Robinson gave a long and technical explanation of these phenomena of adiposity. Repletion of the stomach, he remarked, has the effect of drawing up the diaphragm, shortening the base of the thorax and lengthening the place where the waist should be. The mechanical result is that stout persons are inclined to strut and walk proudly. At the same time a fierce expression is generally imparted when the orbit in which the eyeball moves is encumbered with adipose tissue.—London Daily Mail.

Divided Affection.

Little Gertrude (thoughtfully)—Well, I s'pose I do love Jesus Christ best, but Santy Claus has always been a pretty good friend to me.—Life.

In the darkest hour through which a human being can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain: If there be no God and no future state, yet, even then, it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be brave than to be a coward.—F. W. Robertson.

Arbor Day.

We trees are your brothers. O children of men have a care
That ye war not upon us—we who are pledged unto peace!
Behold, every blow, every ill, that for us ye prepare
Rebounds to your scathe, through the years, to your sorrow's increase!

Your brothers—we stand to the skies, as we stood from the first;
But ye, children of men, ere ye stand, all lowly must creep!
Your servants—ye bring on yourselves the plague of great thirst
When ye strip from the land our con-claves lofty and deep.

We stand to the skies—we, elder and better than ye;
With Heaven have grace, for we speak with the fountains of streams—
The full laden clouds, that would shun you and pass to the sea
But for us, who will ask for the earth and for you, as bessems.

We ask! And the channels of rivers are filled at our prayer.
The laughter of rills, long silent, is heard in the land;
And the tiger of heat, that hath tracked you, is turned to his lair!
What will ye do when no more to the skies we shall stand?

Also, ye mortals who envy and menace our state,
Have ye forgotten how once with us solely ye dwelt?
We were your refuge, your shield, from rapine and hate;
Whence, ambushed in us, your rude shapen arrows—ye dealt!

There is none that remembers save some old dreamer of yours
Who fosters a rooftere dear unto him as his hearth!
And the love of that tree in turn for the dreamer endures
While its years and its rings increase 'neath the rough-armored girth.

We sing to that dreamer. * * * The dreamer may sing to the world
(For ye who would slay us, our treasure thereby shall not find)
Where Daphne is hid, like a flower at evening upfurled,
Or Atys lies sleeping o'erflowed by the sweet scented wind!

Ay, and we trees to the dreamer as sages are known—
As prophets and heroes and minstrels, ingathered of old:
From all of these, swaying in council, some murmur be blown,
That, reaching your ears, your violent hands shall withhold!

And well, O ye children of men, if a day ye decree
When the youngest among you, whose flower and whose hope are at spring,
Shall kneel on the sod, with tender hands planting a tree—
A deed that shall grow with the years and the annual ring!
—Edith M. Thomas.

Where We Got Them.

Celery originated in Germany.
The chestnut came from Italy.
The onion originated in Egypt.
Tobacco is a native of Virginia.
The nettle is a native of Europe.
The citron is a native of Greece.
Oats originated in North Africa.
The poppy originated in the East.
Rye came, originally, from Siberia.
Parsley was first known in Sardinia.
The pear and apple are from Europe.
Spinach came from Arabia.
The sunflower was brought from Peru.
The mulberry-tree originated in Persia.
The gourd is probably an Eastern plant.
Walnuts and peaches came from Persia.
The horse-chestnut is a native of Tibet.
Cucumbers came from the East Indies.
The quince came from Crete.
The radish is a native of China and Japan.
Peas are of Egyptian origin.
Horse-radish is from Southern Europe.
—John Hancock Satchell.

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It seems to be thought of a thousand times more importance to instruct the people how to dress a kid in its mother's milk, in what fashion the priests should cut them open, and how they should sprinkle the blood of bullocks and rams on their right thumbs, their right big toes, on the tips of their ears and all over their garments, than to tell how to construct good carriage roads, or how to build comfortable dwellings.—D. M. Bennett.

I know few Christians so convinced of the splendor of the rooms in their Father's house as to be happier when their friends are called to those mansions than they would be if the Queen had sent for them to live at Court; nor has the Church's most ardent "desire to depart and be with Christ," ever cured it of the singular habit of putting on mourning for every person summoned to such departure. On the contrary, a brave belief in death has been assuredly held by many not ignoble persons; and it is a sign of the last drawn depravity in the Church itself, when it assumes that such a belief is inconsistent with either purity of character or energy of mind.—Ruskin.

Why talk about the "purpose" of the universe, if you exclude the intelligence with which alone purpose can be connected? It may be that there is no adequate scientific reason for believing that troling hand exists. Then why not face the consequences of such convictions? Why not admit that the forces of Evolution, while they work together for the production and preservation of certain species of animals, such as man, and while they can be seen to produce continual changes in the universe, are yet absolutely unconscious of any predestined end, and therefore cannot be said, in any accepted use of words, to have a "purpose"?—Prof. Hyslop.

"The blood-dyed vestments of the Redeemer are not waving in triumph over the ramparts of sin and rebellion," but over the fortresses of faith float the white flags of peace. The trumpets no longer sound for battle, but for parley. The fires of hell have been extinguished, and heaven itself is only a dream. The "eternal verities" have changed to doubts. The torch of inspiration, choked with ashes, has lost its flame. There is no longer in the church "a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind"; no "cloven tongues like as of fire"; no "wonders in the heaven above," and "no signs in the earth beneath." The miracles have faded away, and the sceptre is passing from superstition to science—science, the only possible savior of mankind.—R. G. Ingersoll.

The Judgment of Jesus.
 Since thou hast quickened what thou canst not kill,
 Awakened famine thou canst never still,
 Spoken in madness, prophesied in vain,
 And prophesied what no thing of clay shall gain,
 Thou shalt abide while all things ebb and flow,
 Wake while the weary sleep, wait while they go,
 And, treading paths no human feet have trod,
 Search on still vainly for thy Father, God;
 Thy blessing shall pursue thee as a curse
 To haunt thee, homeless, through the universe.
 No hand shall slay thee, for no hand shall dare
 To strike the Godhead, Death itself must spare!
 With all the woes of earth upon thy head,
 Uplift thy cross, and go! Thy doom is said.
 —Robert Buchanan.

Not for Parsons.

Rebuffed.—"Sir, I am looking for a little succor."
 "Do I look like one?"—Washington Herald.

Limited Faith.—"Isn't Jebbs a believer in the faith cure?"
 "He is."
 "Is it true that he wouldn't have a doctor for his wife the other day when she was ill?"
 "It is quite true."
 "Well, I saw a doctor go into his house just now."
 "Oh, that's all right. He's ill now himself."

Dangerous.—"But you confess, papa," protested the beautiful girl when the father showed indications of a desire to withhold his consent, "that you do not know of a single, solitary thing that is in the least derogatory to his reputation."
 "That's just it," replied the old gentleman. "I don't like the idea of bringing any one into my family who is so infernally sly as all that."—Tit-Bits.

A Queer "Guy."—"I don't understand it," complained the tramp.
 "What don't you understand?" asked the philanthropist.
 "Well, yer see it's dis way, boss. I asked a guy fer a dime ter git a bed, an' he says, 'G'wan, yer grafter—didn't I give youse a dime las' night?'"
 "Well?"
 "Well, what I want ter know is dis: Don't dat guy tink a feller has ter sleep more'n oncet in his life?"—Cleveland Leader.

Identified.—Loeb—Gentleman to see you, sir.
 T. R.—Mollycoddle?
 Loeb—No, sir.
 T. R.—Undesirable citizen?
 Loeb—He doesn't look it.
 T. R.—Conspirator? Poltroon?
 Loeb—Not that I can see.
 T. R.—Deliberate and unqualified liar, etc.?

Loeb—I think not, sir.
 T. R.—Well, why didn't you tell me it was Taft? Show him in.—The Cleveland Leader.

An Unholy Petition.—A very devout Presbyterian clergyman in the middle West had just married a couple and, as was his custom, offered a fervent prayer, invoking the divine blessing upon them. As they seemed to be worthy folk and not overburdened with this world's goods he prayed, among other things, for their material prosperity, and besought the Lord to greatly increase the man's business, laying much stress on this point.

In filling out the blanks it became necessary to ask the man his business, and to the minister's horror he said, "I keep a saloon."—Philadelphia Ledger.

In the Same Boat.—"We got some sad cases," said the attendant at the Lump-ton Lunatic Asylum to the interested visitor, and opened the door of the first cell.

Inside was a man sitting on a three-legged stool, gazing vacantly at the wall.
 "His is an unhappy story," said the attendant. "He was in love with a girl, but she married another man, and he lost his reason from grief."
 They stole out softly, closing the door behind them, and proceeded to the next inmate.

This cell was thickly padded, and the man within was stark, staring mad.
 "Who is this?" inquired the visitor.
 "This?" repeated the attendant. "This is the other man!"—Tatler.

Broke Away.—One day a tall, gaunt woman, with rope colored hair and an expression of great fierceness, strode into the office of a county clerk in West Virginia.

"You air the person that keeps the marriage books, ain't ye?" she demanded.
 "What book do you wish to see, madam?" asked the polite clerk.
 "Kin you find out if Jim Jones was married?"

Search of the records disclosed the name of James Jones, for whose marriage a license had been issued two years before.
 "Married Elizabeth Mott, didn't he?" asked the woman.
 "The license was issued for a marriage with Miss Elizabeth Mott."
 "Well, young man, I'm Elizabeth. I thought I oughter come in an' tell ye that Jim has escaped!"—Harper's Weekly.

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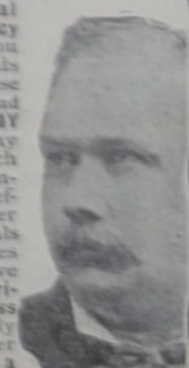
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News of the Week.

A parade of 60,000 Catholics was announced for last Saturday. There were perhaps a third of that number in line.

The legislature of the State of Michoacan, Mexico, sitting at Morelia, has just passed a law prohibiting the sale of liquor by the drink. It can only be sold by the bottle.

The Chicago police have arrested Miss Georgia Bible for stealing diamonds, and she appears to be guilty. There is something in a name. The Bible stole many of its gems.

The Central Federated Union (Labor), approved of woman suffrage in a resolution adopted last Sunday, and in speeches denounced the mobbing of the suffragettes by men in Wall Street and hoodlums in Harlem.

Borough President Joseph Bermel of Queens (Brooklyn and suburbs) was due to appear before the grand jury on April 30 and answer some questions about the affairs of his office. Instead he took ship and sailed for Europe.

The Rev. Dr. Morgan A. Dix, rector of Trinity church in this city for forty-six years, died on April 29, aged eighty. He was a son of that Governor Dix who said if any man attempts to haul down the American flag shoot him on the spot.

Governor Post of Porto Rico is come to Washington to confer with President Roosevelt on the Catholic church property cases. Porto Rico is to celebrate on August 12 the four hundredth anniversary of the landing there of Ponce de Leon and his exploration of the island.

The Socialists of New York celebrated May Day by holding a large meeting in Union Square. There was no disturbance, but that was not the fault of the police, who were present in numbers large enough to account for any breach of the peace that might have taken place.

A million free rides were given by the Municipal Traction Company of Cleveland, O., in celebration of Mayor Tom L. Johnson's success in bringing about the transfer to that company of all the street railway lines in the city on a three cent fare basis. This celebration will be repeated each year on April 27.

With \$180 in his pocket, Francis J. Black, 28 years old and well dressed, committed suicide in Central Park, this city, by taking poison. In a letter he directed that the money be used for the benefit of worthy people. Mr. Black argued that as he came into the world without his consent, he had a right to leave it without being judged.

Ludovico Caminita, editor of La Question Sociale, who has been lecturing in this state since the Paterson, N. J., police suppressed him and the postoffice suppressed his paper, has returned to Paterson. He philosophically observes that if they put him in jail it will provide him with welcome leisure for perfecting his knowledge of the English language.

The cruiser Matsushima of the Japanese training squadron was sunk by the explosion of a projectile, April 30, in harbor at one of the Pescadores Islands, between the west coast of Formosa and the coast of China. It is feared that only about 175 persons out of the more than 400 on board were saved. Captain Yashiro was among those lost, as were most of the officers.

The merchants in the cities of the Pacific coast are rising to the opportunity offered by the visits of the battle fleet, and are relieving the sailors of their money. The seafarers report that they were mercilessly taken in at Santa Barbara, and there were some reprisals. The keeper of a restaurant charged two sailors \$6 for a meal. The sailors with reinforcements came back and wrecked the restaurant.

After twenty years service as a member of the board of trustees of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Auburn, N. Y., Senator Benjamin M. Wilcox was rejected as a candidate for reelection, April 27, at the annual meeting. The opposition to the senator, whose family for two generations has been a pillar of the church, developed since his recent vote in the Senate against the anti-race-track gambling bill.

Winter weather prevailed in several Central Western states on April 30. It snowed in Ohio, Kentucky, and parts of southern Illinois and Indiana, and killing frost is reported from Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Missouri.

Thousands of acres of garden truck, flower beds and other green products were ruined. Strawberry plants are frozen and wilted. Current bushes and fruit trees of all kinds which were covered with buds will bear no fruit this year.

The Rev. Ira D. Williams of Denver was arrested because on a letter which he sent through the mails there was pasted a clipping reading: "God bless our President; what for? Belonging to the murderous Freemasons and making speeches for the bloodthirsty Sons of St. Patrick." This does not look at first sight like a woman case, but the Rev. Mr. Williams declares that the offending words were put upon his letter by a designing female, and that he is not guilty.

Admiral George Dewey celebrated the tenth anniversary of the battle of Manila Bay May 1 with a dinner at the Raleigh Hotel, Washington, in honor of the officers who served under his command in that engagement. All the officers of his fleet now in Washington were present. Covers were laid for nineteen. In the list of guests we do not observe the name of our old friend Purdy, captain of the hold, whose epigram "To hell with breakfast!" ought to live with Farragut's "Damn the torpedoes."

It is reported from Washington that five aliens of anarchistic tendencies of a list of fifty rounded up by Commissioner Bingham of New York have been found wanting by the Department of Commerce and Labor, and an order for their exportation to Italy, their native country, is issued by the department. Commissioner Bingham knows where to put his hands on them. The records of the others are being investigated and their exile will be ordered as fast as their unworthiness is established.

President Roosevelt's last message to Congress was treated with disrespect by the House, which adjourned without listening to the reading of it. Its most striking passage is its description of the bad capitalist, "that particular kind of multi-millionaire who is almost the least enviable, and is certainly one of the least admirable, of all our citizens; a man of whom it has been well said that his face has grown hard and cruel while his body has grown soft; whose son is a fool and his daughter a foreign princess."

Selig Silverstein, the young Russian Jew who was mangled by the premature explosion of the bomb he was preparing to throw at the police in Union Square on March 28, died April 28 in Bellevue Hospital. The causes of death were given by Dr. E. G. Cuddeback as cerebral meningitis and exhaustion. Silverstein consistently had refused to take food, and nourishment in liquid form was forced down his throat through a tube. He lost forty-five pounds in weight between the time he entered the hospital and his death.

News has got out that the pope will not consent to the annulment of the marriage of Madame Anna Gould, who was divorced from Count Boni Castellane. Castellane as a member of the French legislature is one of the mainstays of the church and he does not want Anna separated from him so that his cousin, Prince de Sagan, may marry her money. If Madame Gould makes a second marriage the ceremony must be civil or Protestant. Madame Gould and the Prince were at last reports together at a hotel in Rome.

DEATH OF SOLOMON HILL.

A deferred letter from his children, Murtle Hill and Ruth Kilbury, apprises The Truth Seeker of the death last August of Solomon Hill of Powell, Ohio, an old subscriber. Mr. Hill was born on the 28th of May, 1825, and was therefore 82 years of age. He had been confined to his bed for a long time, but preserved his cheerfulness and his interest in the world. In his last days he affirmed his continued belief in the philosophy of Freethought which had been the comfort of his life. Some years ago The Truth Seeker printed a letter from Mr. Hill, with a picture of the writer propped up on his couch, drawing music from a violin. When neighbors came to offer condolences, he recommended that they read the literature of Freethought and learn that suffering was a thing to be borne with fortitude, that death should be regarded as a friend, and the future without fear.

Lectures and Meetings.

The Sunrise Club.—The eleventh dinner of the season will take place on Monday evening, May 11, at the Cafe Boulevard, Tenth street and Second avenue, at 6.45. Topic for after-dinner discussion, "How I Ran for the Duma." The opening speaker is Prof. Isaac A. Hourwich. Please notify the secretary promptly if you are coming. Edwin C. Walker, 244 West 143d street.

The Hackensack Liberal Club.—The Club will hold a lecture and concert at the Unitarian church, Park street and Central avenue, Hackensack, N. J., Wednesday, May 6, at 8.15 P. M. The address will be given by James F. Morton, Jr., on the subject: "The Liberty the Constitution Guarantees and the Liberty We Have." Platon Brounoff has charge of the music, assisted by Miss Eva McDonald.

The Brooklyn Philosophical Association meets every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock in Long Island Business College, So. Eighth street, between Bedford and Driggs avenues, Brooklyn.

May 10.—"The Relation of Church and State." By Rev. W. S. Chase.

May 17.—"Single Tax versus Socialism." By J. P. Kohler and Eugene Wood.

May 24.—Debate on Socialism. By Algon Lee and William Guthrie.

May 31.—Closing Exercises. Address by President Frederick E. Breithut. Special Music Program.

Liberal Art Society. Mr. Platon Brounoff, director. Meets at Terrace Lyceum, 206 East Broadway, Friday evenings, at 8 o'clock.

May 8.—"Should Socialists Look Upon Religion as a Private or as a Public Affair?" By Leonard Abbott.

May 15.—"What Will Women Accomplish by the Vote at Present and Under Socialism?" By Miss Annie Hicks.

May 22.—"New Currents in Modern Literature." By Dr. H. Solotaroff.

May 29.—"Why I Became a Socialist." By the Rev. Alexander Irvine.

Advanced Thought Lectures. By Henry Frank, Sunday mornings at 11 o'clock, in Lotus Hall, 115 West 79th street, near Columbus avenue.

The Harlem Liberal Alliance meets Friday evenings at 8.30, in Fraternity Hall, at 100 West 116th street.

The Friendship Liberal League of Philadelphia holds meetings every Sunday afternoon at 2.30 and Sunday evenings at 7.30, at 715 North Broad street.

The Washington Secular League holds meetings open to the public Sunday afternoons at 3 o'clock in Pythian Temple, 1012 Ninth street, N. W.

The Boston Freethought Society meets in the Paine Memorial Hall, Appleton street, on Sunday, at 3 P. M. J. P. Bland is resident speaker. The Truth Seeker for sale at the door.

Omaha Philosophical Society meets every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock, Room 3, third floor, Rohrbough Bldg., Nineteenth and Farnam sts., Omaha, Neb.

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