

THE TRUTH SEEKER

A Freethought and Agnostic Newspaper.

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

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

Vol. 35.—No. 22.

PUBLISHED
WEEKLY.

New York, May 30, 1908.

SIXTY-TWO VESBY
STREET.

\$3.00 Per Year.

“CHRISTIAN IDEALS.”

The Basis for Secretary Taft's Praise of Catholic Church Work in the Philippines.

Secretary of War William H. Taft, in his canvass for the presidential nomination, is deferring and catering to the religious element to an extent hardly equaled by any other candidate. He is particularly flattering to the Catholic church, and has used the influence of his office to procure for that church in the Philippines an appropriation by the present Congress of hundreds of thousands of dollars. He indeed urged the payment of a much larger sum than the committee would consent to recommend. In his speeches he has declared that, “Christianity and the spread of it is the only basis of our hope of civilization,” that “we are dependent upon Christianity in any hope we may have for uplifting the people thrust upon us,” and applying these statements to the Philippines, he has paid tribute to the church and its priests for the work which they have done there. “Their ideals are Christian ideals,” he lately told an audience of ministers.

Now it has happened that in the year 1900 a United States Commissioner was appointed to report upon conditions in the Philippine Islands, and of that Commission Mr. Taft was president.

Especial attention was given to the relations of the priesthood to the people, for the Philippines insurrection in progress at the time of the Spanish-American war was in large part a revolt against the “friars” or priests, who, besides being grasping and morally corrupt, were tools of the Spanish aristocracy.

The report of the Commission of which Mr. Taft was President was transmitted to the United States Senate, in response to a resolution, in a message by William McKinley, Feb. 25, 1901. The testimony had been taken in October and November, 1900.

It is said that the document is now out of print, but has been republished in part.* We quote some sample testimony.

Interview With Senor Don Felipe Calderon.

This gentleman testified that he was born in the Philippine Islands and had lived there thirty years, practically all of the time in the city of Manila, where, as he states, “the friar is intimately connected with all the social, political and other life.” He thus testified to their “uplifting influence”:

Q. What class of society were the friars drawn from in Spain?

A. I cannot state of my own knowledge, but quoting the friars themselves and persons who have traveled extensively in Spain, I should say that they come from the lowest orders of society; and this is corroborated by the fact that the majority, if not all of them, when they first come have not the slightest conception of social forms or etiquette, and it might be said they have the hair of a dog on them.

Q. Were there not a good many well-educated friars?

A. The fact is that they are almost totally uncon-

scious of proper social forms. They act indecently and use indecent expressions in the presence of ladies in public to such an extent that I was forced on one occasion to throw out a friar who was not only using indecent language, but acting indecently in the presence of my wife.—Page 134.

Q. Now, as to the morality of the friars, have you had much opportunity to observe as to this?

A. Considerable. From my earliest youth. With respect to their morality in general, it was such a common thing to see children of friars that no one ever paid any attention to it or thought of it, and so depraved had the people become in this regard that the women who were the mistresses of friars really felt great pride in it and had no compunction in speaking of it. So general had this thing become that it may be said that even now the rule is for a friar to have a mistress and children, and he who has not is the rare exception, and if it is desired that I give names I could cite right now 100 children of friars.

Q. In Manila or in the provinces?

A. In Manila and in the provinces. Everywhere.

Q. Are the friars living in the islands still who have had those children?

A. Yes, and I can give their names if necessary, and I can give the names of the children, too. Beginning with myself, my mother is the daughter of a Franciscan friar. I do not dishonor myself by saying this, because my family begins with myself.

Q. It was not a general licentiousness on the part of the friars?

A. It was a general licentiousness, because, as I have said, the exception as to the rule among the friars was not to have a mistress and be the father of children by her. The friar who was not mixed up with a woman in some way or other was like a snow-bird in summer, but it must be confessed that for the past ten years they have improved somewhat in this regard.

Q. How do they compare with the native clergy in this matter?

A. To tell the truth, they almost run together, although it must be said that the latter, the native priests, are not so barefaced about it. They have a certain fear. But in this regard, they were merely following the general rule and the general example.

Q. That would seem to indicate that the immorality of the friars is not the chief ground of the hostility of the people against them, would it not?

A. That is not, by any means, because the moral sense of the whole people here had been absolutely perverted. So frequent were these infractions of the moral laws on the part of the friars that really no one ever cared or took any notice of them; and this acquiescence on the part of the people was imposed upon them; for woe be unto him who should ever murmur anything against the friars, and even the young Filipino women had their senses perverted, because when attending school they had often and often seen the friars come in to speak to their openly avowed daughters, who often were their own playmates.—Pages 139-140.

Q. Now, it seems to me from the examination that I have been able to make, from the friars and others, that the chief ground of hostility against the friars is because they represent the kingdom of Spain, to most of the people in these islands, in all the oppressive measures that that kingdom adopted in the government of the people here.

A. Yes. They were the expression of the most exaggerated despotism, not of the government of Spain, but of their own despotism, which they exercised, using the name of the kingdom of Spain, because their system was to deceive both Spain and the people.—Page 141.

Interview With Jose Roderigues Infante.

This witness, age 36, is a licentiate of law, who has lived all his life in the islands, being

educated at the University of Santo Thomas. With reference to the taking of statistics for the Spanish government by the friars, the following was asked:

Q. So, to swell the taxes, they robbed the cradle and the grave?

A. They replenished the cradle, but diminished the grave. The friars had a system of blackmail, by which they held the rod over all the citizens of a pueblo, about whose habits and closet skeletons they learned through making little girls of from 5 to 6 and 7 years of age, who could barely speak and who were naturally and must have been sinless, come to the confessional and relate to them everything that they knew of the private life in their own homes and in places that they might visit.—Page 146.

Q. What do you know about the morality or immorality of the friars?

A. Too much. I have nothing to add to what Senor Calderon says, save to cite some more names.

Q. Have you known a good many young women and young men who were the reputed daughters and sons of friars?

A. I have known a great many and now have living on my estate six children of a friar.

Q. Were all the friars (priests) licentious?

A. I believe that they all are.

Q. Do you think that was the ground of hostility against the friars?

A. No, sir; Caesarism was. Everything was dependent upon them, and I may say that even the process of eating was under their supervision. Naturally, their immorality had a slight influence in the case, but it became so common that it passed unnoticed.—Pages 146-147.

Q. What have you to say of the morality of the native priests as compared with that of the friars?

A. They are about on an even footing. All the priests now officiating have the same vices and when you take into account that they were purposely kept from following their natural bent to obtain an education by the friars, in order to show the pope that there was a natural want of capacity in the Filipino, it can be seen why they became easy tools of the Spanish priests and great mimics of them in their loose life. This design to keep native priests from gaining a good education began in 1872.—Pages 147-148.

Interview With Senor Nozario Constantino.

Witness was born in the islands, had reached the age of 58, and lived in Manila:

Q. What political functions did the friars discharge before 1896 in the villages in which they were parish priests?

A. The political functions that they exercised were those of ruling the entire country, every authority and everybody having to be subservient to their caprice.

Q. Do you know what were the relations between the heads of the Spanish government, and the heads of the church here?

A. Generally speaking, the governor-general had to keep on the good side of the head of the church here, for he knew full well that if he should do anything which was displeasing to the archbishop that he would last a very short time in the Philippines.

Q. What were the fees actually collected for the marriages and births and burials? Were they oppressive or otherwise?

A. That depended entirely upon the caprice of the parish friar and the ability to pay of the person needing his services. Many times the latter would have to pay four times the official schedule.

Q. What was the morality of the friars?

A. There was no morality whatever, and the story of the immorality would take too long to recount. Great immorality and corruption. (I desire to say here that, speaking thus frankly about the habits of the priests, the witnesses would fear that they might be persecut-

*Immorality and Political Grafting of Roman Catholic Priests in the Philippine Islands. Extracts from Message of the President of the United States. Transmitted to the Senate February, 1901, by William McKinley. Bruce Rogers, Girard, Kan., publisher.

ed by the priests if it should ever get out what they were saying here.)

Judge Taft: I don't expect to publish it. I expect to use it to make a report to the commission.

Q. Have you known of the children of friars being about in Bulacan?

A. Yes, sir. About the year 1840 and the year 1850 every friar curate in the province of Bulacan had his concubine. Dr. Joaquin Gonzales was the son of a curate of Baliuag, and he has three sisters here and another brother, all children of the same friar. We do not look upon that as a discredit to a man. The multitude of friars who came here from 1876 to 1896 and 1898 were all of the same kind, and to name the number of children that they have would take up an immense lot of space.

Q. Did not the people become so accustomed to the relations which the friars had with the women that it really played very little part in their hostility to the friars, assuming that the hostility did exist?

A. That contributed somewhat to the hostility of the people, and they carried things in this regard with a very high hand, for if they should desire the wife or daughter of a man, and the husband and father opposed such advances, they would endeavor to have the man deported by bringing up false charges of being a filibuster or a Mason, and after succeeding in getting rid of the husband, they would, by foul or fair means, accomplish their purposes, and I will cite a case that actually happened to us. It was the case of a first cousin of mine, Dona Sponce, who married a girl from Baliuag and went to live in Agonoy, and there the local friar curate, who was pursuing his wife, got him the position as registrar of the church in order to have him occupied in order that he might continue his advances with his wife. He was fortunate in this undertaking and succeeded in getting the wife away from the husband and afterwards had the husband deported to Puerto Princesa, near Jolo, where he was shot as an insurgent, and the friar continued to live with the widow and she bore him children. The friar's name is Jose Martin, an Augustinian friar.

Q. Is he still in the islands?

A. He was an old man, and he has gone over to Spain. This was in the year 1891, 1892, or perhaps 1893.

Q. I want to ask you whether the hostility against the friars is confined to the educated and the better element among the people?

A. It permeates all classes of society, and principally the lower, for they can do nothing. The upper class, by reason of their education, can stand them off better than the lower classes, and this is the reason that the friars don't want the public to become educated.—Pages 150-151.

Q. What about the morality of the native priests as compared with the friars?

A. There is no comparison at all. Even when the native priest, following in the footsteps of his teacher, commits abuses and immoralities, he does it less openly or shamelessly than the friar. One of the great reasons for the objections to the friar is that the spirit of union and solidarity which holds their religious communities together prevents punishment from being visited upon the unworthy.—Page 152.

Interview With Dr. Maximo Viola.

Dr. Maximo Viola, born in the Philippines and practicing medicine, was educated in Spain, France, Germany, and Austria. At the time of giving his testimony the witness was 43 years of age, and had practiced in Bulacan from 1887 until 1894, when, because of persecution by the friars, he was driven out of Bulacan and practiced in Manila until 1899, when he returned to the province.

Q. What political functions did the friars actually exercise in your parish?

A. They exercised all functions. They were the lieutenants of the civil guard, the captain of the pueblo, the governor of the province. To show this, the friar would always watch the elections, and if any provincial governor or any municipal authority were elected by the people whom he did not desire to hold office, he would for subordinate officers appeal to the provincial governor and for these governors to the governor-general, and state that if these officers who had been elected were permitted to assume their offices that the public order would be endangered, because they were Masons, or any other specious argument would be advanced so as to make the superior authorities set at naught the will of the people and appoint whoever might be thought suitable or friendly to the friar, but often this was not necessary, as the friar would so wield the elections as to get only those to vote who were his blind followers. He performed the duties of lieutenant of the civil guard by demanding of every person who came to him to be either married or to have a child baptized or for a burial, their cedula, which he would retain until such a time as the fees were paid, and then he would report the person whose cedula he had retained to the lieutenant of the civil guard as being without a cedula, and he would be jailed until such time as he could get another cedula.

Q. What was the morality of the parish priests?

A. There was no morality.

Q. What proportion of the friars do you think violated their vows of celibacy?

A. I do not know of a single one of all those I have known in the province of Bulacan who has not violated his vow of celibacy. The very large majority of the mestizas in the interior are sons of friars.

Q. Does a hostility exist among the people against the friars?

A. A great deal. If you were to ask the inhabitants of the Philippines, one by one, that question, they would all say the same—that they hated the friars, because there is scarcely a person living here who has not in one way or another suffered at their hands.

Q. What is the chief ground of that hostility?

A. The despotism and the immorality.

Q. Are the native priests also loose in their relations with women?

A. Many of them, also. From my own personal experience I think all the priests and friars are on the same level. I have never seen one that was pure. I don't deny there may be exceptions, but I have not seen them. The large majority have violated their vows of celibacy and chastity. For this reason I believe that Protestantism will have a very good field here, for one reason alone, and that is that the Protestant ministers marry and that will eradicate all fear of attacks upon the Filipino families on their part.—Pages 155-157.

Interview With Dr. T. H. Pardo De Tavera.

Dr. Pardo was born in Manila and lived there until 16 years of age; spent twenty years in Europe pursuing his studies. He said that he had opportunity to personally know the friars because he was a student of the University of Santo Thomas.

Q. Have you much personal knowledge of the morality or immorality of the friars?

A. I ought to draw a distinction, for in the American sense of the word, "immorality" embraces several departures from the right path, while in the Filipino sense it simply meant sexual departures from morality. Larceny, robbery, etc., were another kind of immorality. The friars had great notoriety as immoral men in the Filipino sense. It was so common that hardly any notice was taken of it. Some of the younger friars said it was merely human weakness.

Q. What was the real ground for the feeling of the people against the friars?

A. I have before said that the friars were the sovereigns of the country. They did everything, so that as the country was dissatisfied with the conditions that prevailed, with the injustice, persecutions and abuses of every kind, they hated the friar because they saw in the friar the responsible head of affairs.—Pages 160-161.

Testimony of Pedro Surano Laktaw.

This native was 47 years of age, had received his degree as teacher of elementary schools in Manila, his degree of superior teacher in Salamanca, Spain, and his degree as instructor of normal schools in Madrid. When asked in regard to his knowledge of the friars, he said: "I think I am in a position to know more about them than any other Filipino, because through my position as teacher I was brought in constant contact with them." This is what he testified regarding their civilizing work:

Q. What do you know as to the morality of the friars?

A. I have already related in my statement a few cases, and I would prefer to answer the question by saying that the details of the immorality of the friars are so base and so indecent that instead of smirching the friars I would smirch myself by relating them. When I was a boy of seven years of age, on the opposite side of the street from my house two ladies lived. They were Filipinos, and I noticed two little children there, and I would ask my mother and the servants why it was that they were prettier than we or anybody in the town, and I was told that the friar would know, and I learned he had as his mistresses two sisters living under one roof, and that these children were the children of either one or both of them; and this was done publicly, for leaving out the question of his avowed celibacy and chastity, he had broken another vow which would not permit any one to marry a deceased wife's sister, and here this man was living with two sisters at the same time.

Q. Do you think all the friars were like that? Were there not some who obeyed their vows and were virtuous and lived pious lives?

A. I have already referred to that in my statement, for I desire to be just under all circumstances. Before replying further to this question, I should like to complete the answer to the last. In the quarters of a town farthest removed from the center, the family life is purer there. There may be a few cases of concubinage, but there are comparatively very few, while in the center of the towns the cases of this kind are very numerous, as are also robbery and other crimes. In a word, it can be truthfully said that the morality of the Filipino people becomes looser and looser as it nears the neighborhood of the convent.—Pages 163-165.

Interview With Ambrosia Flores.

This man had lived in the islands all his life, had been an officer in the Spanish army and later a general in the insurgent army, coming into contact with the friars in the discharge of military and civil duties. If their ideals are Christian ideals, as Mr. Taft says, alas for Christianity!

Q. Do you know whether there are in these islands a great many descendants of the friars?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Is that generally understood?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know the persons, and know who their fathers were?

A. I know several sons of friars, but at this moment remember one. I can furnish a long list of them.

Q. Do you think the immorality was general or not—whether or not with a great many exceptions?

A. Yes, there were exceptions, but they were very rare.

Q. What was the ground of the hostility against the friars?

A. The reasons for this hostility were many. In the first place, the haughty, overbearing, despotic manner of the friars. Then the question of the haciendas, because the conditions of their tenantry were very terrible. Then there was the fact of the fear which be-

set every man, even those who through fear were nearest to the friars, that if his eyes should light upon his wife or his daughter in an envious way that if he did not give them up he was lost.

Q. Was the chief reason for the feeling of the people against the friars such as you have stated; that is, that they represented to the people the oppressive power of the Spanish people?

A. Yes, sir; exactly.

Q. Do you think that if there were no other reason their great immorality would have made them unpopular?

A. That would be sufficient for this reason: That the means which they used to carry out their purposes with respect to women were the most grievous and oppressive. If they had merely desired a woman and courted her, nothing would have been said, but if the woman declined to allow their advances they used every effort in their power to compel her and her relatives to succumb.

An American Journalist Testifies.

H. Phelps Witmarsh, born at Medoc, Canada, but a citizen of the United States, correspondent for the Century, Atlantic Monthly, Outlook and other magazines, had spent thirteen months in the islands and had visited many parts of the islands and conversed with the natives by means of the Spanish language, previously acquired in Cuba. Practically all the time spent by him in the archipelago had been devoted to a study of the people and their condition. His conclusions conflict with those of Mr. Taft.

Q. Did you talk with the people of their sentiments toward the parish priests under the Spanish regime?

A. I did.

Q. What grounds did they give for their hostility?

A. Mainly that the priests held them under, oppressed them, robbed them, and that they used their women and daughters just as they pleased.

Q. Did they specify the methods of oppression?

A. I can not remember distinct instances just now.

Q. Did you hear of instances of deportation through the agency of the priest?

A. Yes; I have heard that nobody was allowed in certain sections to go away from the town without the permit of the friars, and that the friar often sent him away, and they were under the thumb of the friar.

Q. How did the friar rob them?

A. He robbed them in the vicinity of the railroads by forcing the people to sell their rice to him at the prices which the friar made, and not allowing the people to send their own products to the market.

Q. What did you hear as to the morality of the priests?

A. Nothing that was good, with few exceptions.

Brigadier General R. P. Hughes, United States Army.

R. P. Hughes, colonel in the regular army of the United States and general officer of United States volunteers, had been in the islands for over two years and served as provost marshal of Manila for nine months when the city was first occupied, afterwards serving as a military officer in Leyte, Bohol, Cebu, Negros and Panay. In discussing the attitude of the people generally towards the friars, the following conversation between the general and questioner occurred:

Q. Were you able to arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to yourself as to the cause of the feeling against the friars?

A. I have been able to arrive at a conclusion as to some of the causes. Two of them seem to be cardinal points, as I understand the people in the Visayas. One is that they were very apt to corrupt the families of the parishioners; the other was that they were a very money-making lot.

Q. What political power do you understand, from talking with the people, that the friars exercise, if any? I mean actual power?

A. I don't think that they had any, except as they could bring it to bear through their parishioners—but that among these people was very great.

Q. Were the friars loyal to Spain, or otherwise?

A. I think they were loyal to themselves.

Q. And Spain was their instrument?

A. That is it; Spain was the instrument. They worked for themselves.

Q. You have said that they corrupted the families. You refer to their immorality?

A. Yes.

Q. How much evidence have you had as to the immorality of the friars?

A. You have to make wide margins in these things, but it was a very general complaint that they corrupted the daughters of families. It was very general.

Q. Do you know much about the character of the native priests; first, as to their morality?

A. Well, I have had to remove one or two because the congregation said they would not stand it, and to preserve peace I had them moved away.

Q. What was the occasion of their indignation?

A. In some cases women, and in others drunkenness.

Q. On the whole, do you think their tone is any better than that of the friars?

A. To be plain, Judge, there is no morality in them; not a particle. They gamble in their convents; they send for members of their congregation to gamble with them. There is no morality.—Pages 176-177.

Leading Residents of Aringay, Province of La Union.

The head men and leading residents of this town assembled under the local chief who invited their expressions on questions propounded by the commission. These people unani-

mously expressed themselves in a written statement from which the following is taken:

Q. What was the morality of the friars as parish priests, etc.?

A. The morality of the friars generally left much to be desired; it was a cause for scandal among their parishioners—the way in which they broke their vows of chastity and poverty. This free life of the friars was so notorious that nothing was hidden from their parishioners, who had everything before their eyes on all occasions. We shall cite some cases: They compelled all the spinsters to go up to the convent on Sundays and feast days, and there they exhorted them regarding matters which were not advisable, and, not satisfied with this, they advised them to confess frequently, and they relied upon this means to profane the house of God; and, if they did not secure their disordered ends, they sought means, even though it were calumny, to secure the deportation of the fathers of families, and if the women were married their husbands, as happened to a former captain, Don Miguel Revollo, and others. To show how far their astuteness went, there still exist in the convent of this pueblo two secret stairways, the door being in the form of a wardrobe, which, when opened, formed means of escape—one communicating with the vault and leading from the choir of the church to the sacristy, and the other in the sleeping room of the curate, which led to a storehouse which is now used as the office of the local president. This was the idea of a friar to carry out his impure and disordered passions. It can be said that there were two curates of this pueblo who were so cruel and inhuman that even without any reason they verbally ill-treated whoever had the misfortune to have anything to do with them, not to say anything of their servants, sacristans and singers, without respecting the sanctity of the place and of religious functions; wherefore, by reason of our consciences as good Catholics, we cannot but not protest under pain of threatening the demoralization and corruption of our holy religion. They abused all kinds of females without distinction of class or age, and when some of them became with child they gave them medicine to kill the foetus.—Page 200.

Jose Templo.

Jose Templo, a native and resident of the city of Lipa, in the province of Batangas, a landed proprietor and agriculturist, frames for himself and in representation of the said city, answers to questions from which the following translations are taken:

Q. How much personal opportunity had you before 1896 to observe the relations existing between the friars and the people of their parishes in a religious, in a social, and in a political way?

A. As regards the religious relations, the friar-curates, if they had a coadjutor or coadjutors, did hardly anything in their parishes except to confess a few penitents outside of the Lenten season, if they were so disposed; the administering of the other sacraments, a great part of the penitents, and also of the preaching, being performed by the coadjutors. The practical acts of the friars with respect to religion were not responsive to their pious calling of missionaries and teachers of the natives. They ought rather to be called the corrupters of youth. For this reason in the administration of the sacraments they exercised only the penitential, as in these they experienced delights and pleasures through their shameless and incredible solicitations. In Lenten time, which was the period when the country folk came in to confess, the parish friar would give strict orders to the scribes of the church to the end that in the distribution or giving out of the certificates to the penitents among himself and the coadjutors, they should give him the young unmarried country women and servant penitents, whom he obscenely solicited through words and manipulations in the confessional, which they always had cornered and buried in the darkest part of the church. Is a proof of this desired as clear as the light of mid-day? Here are the thousands of solicited females, of which I have some examples in my house, ready to depose if necessary in accordance with what is here denounced.

Q. What do you think is the chief ground for hostility to the friars as parish priests?

A. The abuses, tyrannies, and countless immoralities committed safely, synthesized in the facts recorded and in many others no doubt worse, of which the deponent has no knowledge, as they were committed elsewhere, and must have partaken of another character owing to a diversity of conditions; and I say "safely" because in the Philippines no one could call the friar to account for his acts. And if any governor allowed himself at any time to bridle his friars his rashness cost him dearly, he being discharged from his office.—Pages 202, 209, 210.

Don Jose C. Mijares.

This resident of Bacolod, capital of the island of Negros, has lived in the islands sixty-three years and testifies to acquaintance with so many friars that he is unable to state their number. Said he:

In some parish houses I have seen printed schedules published by Archbishop Sancho de Santa Justa y Rufina. I also had occasion to observe that several curates have charged parish fees at will and without fixed standard, exceeding what was designated in said schedule. I do not know whether this may have been the cause in some cases for reluctance to contract ecclesiastical matrimony, although in my judgment what mostly influenced this reluctance is that some reverend friars had arrogated to themselves rights which in feudal times were called rights of "pernada." (The right asserted by certain feudal lords to enter the marriage bed of a newly-wedded bride before the husband.)

Speaking generally, and with rare exceptions, their morality was detestable, as I have said above.

For many years past the friars have taken posses-

sion of nearly all the curacies in the Philippines formerly occupied by native priests, the latter being relegated to the position of coadjutors and carrying on their shoulders all the weight of the ecclesiastical labors and occupation for the meager remuneration of fifteen pesos per month, which was the most they earned. In the meanwhile their immediate chief, the friar curate, filled in his idle moments with corporal enjoyments and pleasures, and at times saying to the patient subordinate: "Do as I say, and not as I do."—Page 254.

Secretary Taft sat with the Commission, as is evidenced by the fact that some of the witnesses were questioned by him. He heard residents of the islands, learned and reputable men, merchants, lawyers, and physicians, testify that it was the policy of the church to keep the people ignorant, that the natives had been corrupted by the example of priests sent there by the church; that the church and not the government of Spain was the great power in the Philippines; that at the behest of the representatives of the church innocent men could be accused, convicted, and deported when they were brave enough to defend the honor of their own wives and the virtue of their sisters and daughters. He heard Florentino Torres, attorney-general of the islands under the military government of the United States, declare: "It can be asserted without exaggeration that the friars have been and are a fatal hindrance to the advancement, moral and material, of this country, from the very fact that they have devoted themselves to keeping this society in ignorance, as though it lived in the Middle Ages or in the medieval epoch of remote centuries; and lastly, as priests and curates, the majority of them were living examples of immorality, of disorder in the towns, and of disobedience and resistance to the constituted powers and the authorities, encouraged by the immunity guaranteed in the anachronistic ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by the weakness of the governors and officials vitiated with fetichism and hypocrisy, and by the irresistible omnipotence of each monachal corporation, possessing immense wealth." And Mr. Taft knew that "friars," the "ecclesiastical jurisdiction," "fetichism and hypocrisy," were terms used to avoid saying "the Roman Catholic church," which has been the curse of the islands.

This institution, corrupt, profligate, licentious, tyrannical, hypocritical, has just got from Congress, or the American taxpayer, about a half-million-dollar appropriation, and Mr. Taft would have given it more. He will also continue testifying, up to next election time, that the church in the Philippines is the hope of the natives, in whom it has implanted and nourished "Christian ideals." It is well that the people of this country should know that he knows better.

The Filipinos, with the grasp of the church loosened, are now having the experience undergone by all Christendom at about the time of the Reformation. The church established itself in the Philippines some five hundred years ago. Having obtained a footing there its emissaries went to Japan, where it did not obtain a footing. Mr. Taft should be able to see the difference in the results on the people affected. What Mr. Taft attributes to Christianity is in fact due to science, education, and freedom. In countries where these have not been introduced, the people Christianized have remained in the state in which the missionaries found them.

The reigning politicians in national affairs are told by one of their own leading organs, the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, that the present "deficit at the beginning of a Presidential canvass is an awkward thing," although it believes "the signs are for a steady improvement." If we are to believe a still higher authority, however, Chairman Tawney, of the House Appropriations Committee, the signs are for a steady deterioration. At the end of April the treasury showed a deficit of over \$50,000,000, as compared with a surplus of over \$55,000,000 a year before, making a difference of \$105,000,000. By the end of June, when the fiscal year ends, Mr. Tawney predicts that the deficit will reach \$60,000,000 or \$65,000,000, as contrasted with a surplus of \$87,000,000 on June 30, 1907, a difference of \$150,000,000. And as if this were not enough, Mr. Tawney declares there will be an "almost certain deficit of not less than \$50,000,000 at the end of the next fiscal year." This big balance on the wrong side of the ledger is attributed partly to the falling off in revenues, caused by the hard times, and partly to the increased government expenditures. The government expenses for April, 1908, for example, were nearly \$12,000,000 in excess of its expenses for the same month of 1907. Not a few papers regard this increase as extravagance,

Abbe Loisy's "Defi."

Abbe Loisy, of Paris, the most celebrated of the French modernists, has just published, says the Progressive Thinker, a volume of letters to the clergy between 1903 and 1908. In a letter to Abbe Bricourt, the editor of the "Review of the French Clergy," he says:

"I defy you to prove the historical authenticity of the scriptures on which are founded the apologetics of Catholicism as officially exposed by the council of the Vatican. The council speaks of miracles and predictions which Moses, the prophets, and especially Christ, made in abundance and which constitute the surest and clearest proofs of divine revelation. I defy you to show me a single passage of either Testament which contains a definite prediction, incontestably realized.

"I defy you to show me an indubitable miracle sufficiently authenticated to be cited as irrefutable proof of the Jewish or Christian religion. I defy you to prove the formal institution of the church of Christ. I defy you to prove by Christ's authentic teachings the revelation of the fundamental dogmas of traditional Christianity. I defy you to prove the divine institutions of the sacraments."

In another letter to Henri de Bout, laureate of the French Academy and cure of the Sacred Heart, he says:

"The ecclesiastical decrees which have from time to time, sometimes brutally, been heaped upon me, and which have given me a sad reputation in very Catholic circles, cause me no irritation. I am tranquilly pursuing the road which leads to the common end of all mortals, and I console myself for the apparent nonsuccess of my life with the thought that nothing is entirely lost in this world."

Life.

A correspondent a few weeks ago called for a poem he had heard called "Life's a Funny Proposition After All." Mr. W. R. Curtis of Pennsylvania has furnished The Truth Seeker with the following copy:

Did you ever sit and ponder, stop and wonder, stop and think,
Why we're here and what this life is all about?
It's a problem that has driven many brainy men to drink,
It's the weirdest thing we've tried to figure out.
About a thousand different theories all the scientists show;
But they never yet have proved a reason why.
With all we've thought and all we've taught and all we seem to know,
Is—we're born, we live a while, and then we die.

Life's a very funny proposition after all;
Imagination, jealousy, hypocrisy and gall.
Three meals a day, a whole lot to say,
When you haven't got the coin, you are always in the way.
Everybody's fighting as we wend our way along,
Every fellow claims the other fellow's in the wrong.
Hurried and worried, until we're buried and there's no curtain call,
Life's a very funny proposition after all.

When things are going easy and luck is with a man,
Then life to him is sunshine everywhere.
But the fates blow rather breezy and quite upset a plan;
Then he will cry that life's a burden hard to bear.
Though to-day may be a day of smiles, to-morrow's still in doubt,
What brings me joy, may bring you care and woe.
We're born to die, but don't know why, or what it's all about,
And the more we try to learn, the less we know.

Life's a very funny proposition you can bet,
And no one's solved the problem properly as yet.
Young for a day, then old and gray,
Like the rose that buds and blooms then fades and falls away.
Losing health, to gain on wealth, as through this dream we tour;
Everything a guess and nothing absolutely sure.
Battles exciting and fates we're fighting, until the curtain's fall,
Life's a very funny proposition after all.

The Freethinker is placed at this disadvantage in ordinary society, that whereas it would be considered very bad taste upon his part to obtrude his unorthodox opinion, no such consideration hampers those with whom he disagrees. There was a time when it took a brave man to be a Christian. Now it takes a brave man not to be.—Sir A. Conan Doyle: "The Stark Munro Letters."

Mrs. Eddy's declaration in favor of a large navy is explained by one editor on the theory that her followers are at sea.

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Sixty-two Vesey Street, New York, N. Y.
Post Office Box 1610.

SATURDAY,MAY 30, 1908.

Subscription Rates.

Single subscription in advance	\$3.00
Two new subscribers	5.00
One subscription two years in advance	5.00
One subscription and one new subscriber, in one remittance	5.00
To all foreign countries except Mexico, 50 cents per annum extra.	
Subscriptions received for any length of time under a year at the rate of 25 cents per month. Can be begun at any time. Single copies, 7 cents.	

Entered at the Post office, New York, N. Y., as second class mail matter.

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Free Thoughts.

Is it not better to love than to talk so much about it?

How can God have children when he was never married?

A great many persons who can talk like a wise man, act like a fool.

Some persons can make fools of themselves on a very small capital.

It is funny that there is no Mrs. Devil when they are so many little devils.

What you think of yourself is more important than what others think of you.

Let us rejoice that some persons are not as mean as they would like to be.

America will never be free as long as there is a cross erected above her soil.

Faith in God is easy, but it is not so easy to find something on which to build this faith.

One of the hardest men to find is the wise man who thinks any man can be wiser than he.

Believe what you read and coffee will kill you and sawdust will keep you well. Great is faith.

There is Webster English and Hubbard English. "You pay your money and you take your choice."

The church depends more upon turkey suppers and ice cream festivals than upon the ten commandments.

Rationalism is a revolt against Protestant superstition as Protestantism was a revolt against Romish superstition.

We have to live all of our life in order to discover all of the bad, or all of the good, there is in us. We learn something every day.

A great many men make asses of themselves for nothing. We do not see why it is necessary to put a man in a pulpit and pay him a salary for doing it.

The fellow who thinks that others have no higher duty than to go out and pick up dollars for him needs to have a little of the conceit kicked out of him.

Certain persons of a certain kind have been looking for the "coming of Christ" for nigh onto two thousand years. These persons still hand down posterity. No one can prevent fools from being born as long as fools perform the functions of father and mother.

"Say only good of the dead," is one of the most foolish sayings that nonsense has kept alive. Say more good of the living, is what is needed.

The dead have no feelings, the living have, and our appreciation should be spoken into living ears, not over dead ones.

The church is doing less harm than ever before in its history, because it has been shorn of its arms. Put back in its hands the power of old and the same terrible deeds would stain the earth. The alliance of the cross and the sword is the most unholy, infernal union that ever cursed mankind. To break the sword you must burn the cross.

I cannot respect mystery. There is somewhat behind it that needs to be covered. Why make of anything which is natural, a mystery? Do you know that a great many things get more reverence, more respect, than they deserve, just on account of some mysterious veil that enwraps them? Let women wear men's clothes, take from them the charm which dress gives them, and they would be losers. I wonder if they know it!

L. K. W.

Ingersoll's Conservative Statement.

Freethinkers at a distance from libraries where Freethought or scientific books may be found, or who are too busy to consult them, are often placed at a disadvantage through inability to back up their statements with the proper authorities. The religious disputant has his Bible at hand, and does not admit that its truth can be impeached or that any of its statements need verification. He accepts his religion on faith. His attitude is quite different toward scientific facts, which, when quoted by a laymen, he insists must be supported by proof. A great deal of the correspondence conducted by The Truth Seeker office arises out of orthodox incredulity regarding facts. Sometimes an eminent man is quoted by a Freethinker, whereupon a minister or a churchman will deny that the author ever said it, and call for the name of the book and page. Even when the quotation is from the Bible they will sometimes declare the book contains nothing of the kind, and if the person making it is not prepared to point out chapter and verse he stands discredited. Such a dispute generally gets to this office for settlement, and we give the required information if we have it.

Just now an inquiry comes from the Argentine Republic, in South America, where a reader has found a man who denies a statement contained in Colonel Ingersoll's lecture on the "Mistakes of Moses." Ingersoll, in discussing the story of the creation, observes that "Moses came near forgetting about the stars, and gave only five words ["He made the stars also"] to all the hosts of heaven." Then proceeding to remark on the magnitude and distances of the stars, Ingersoll inquired if Moses knew that "some stars are so far away in the infinite abysses that five millions of years are required for their light to reach this globe?" Our South American reader writes: "A very intelligent English friend insists that Ingersoll had no authority for such a statement," and asks us to tell where Ingersoll got it.

The "Mistakes of Moses" was prepared by Ingersoll about thirty years ago. The author has been dead nine years, and we have no way of finding out what works on astronomy he consulted in preparing the lecture. We can, however, cite some accepted astronomical facts which make the statement appear as not only warranted but exceedingly conservative. We have a book entitled "Astronomy" by J. Rambosson, laureate of the institute of France, published by D. Appleton & Co., New York. M. Rambosson, in speaking of the spots in the Milky Way—spots of light composed of innumerable stars—says: "Some of these spots, of these five thousand and more nebulae, which have been catalogued, are certainly equal in

size to the nebula of which we form a part, and the astronomers who have attempted to calculate their distances have arrived at figures which almost inspire a feeling of terror. It has been estimated that light would not traverse the distance between these nebulae and the earth in less than **sixty million years**, while a cannon ball would take 37,000 milliards of years!" (A "milliard" is a thousand millions.) This shows how moderate was Ingersoll's statement.

Stellar distances are almost inconceivable. It takes six and one-half years for light to reach this earth from the nearest of the stars. We should need to live 144,000,000 years to get there on a fast train.

The extremes of the orbit in which the earth moves are 180,000,000 miles apart. In December we are therefore 180,000,000 miles nearer to the stars in the northern part of the sky than we are in June. And yet, despite the diminished distance, we are not able to see that these stars look any larger in December than in June.

If some of the stars which we can distinguish on a clear night were to be suddenly obliterated, our grandchildren would be the first to know of the catastrophe, for the light emitted by them is three-quarters of a century in reaching the earth. "All the stars," say the astronomer Secchi, "might be annihilated today, and nearly all of them would continue to be seen by the inhabitants of the earth, very much as they appear now, for several generations." Light which they emitted when our forefathers were upon earth is just reaching us; that which they emit today may be seen by our descendants, or it may find "this old hulk we tread" to be a "wreck, a slag, a cinder, drifting through the sky without its crew of fools."

If God had "made the stars also" at the time assigned to the creation, the light from some of them would not yet have got here.

The number of the stars is as great a difficulty as their distances in the way of accepting the creation story. It is estimated that there are in the milky way at least twenty million visible suns, independent of those, doubtless far more numerous, which we are unable to discern. And yet the Milky Way occupies but a small corner of the universe. There are five thousand other nebulae, and some of them contain as many suns as the Milky Way.

Another fact. This solar system, the sun and the earth, are making a rapid progress toward certain stars in the group known as the constellation of Hercules. Our speed in that direction is nearly 300,000,000 miles a year, or 800,000 miles a day. If the creator chanced to be visiting some other system, moving in an opposite direction, or away from ours, which aforesaid he frequented, and should spend as much time there as he has bestowed upon us, think of the speed he would have to make to catch up with the earth again.

The astronomers were the first devotees of science to suffer at the hands of the church for their discoveries. And no wonder the church regarded them as dangerous. The idea of a plurality of worlds was alarming, especially if the others were to be viewed as containing inhabitants. A few hundred years ago the Bible was the depository of all science, and there was no knowledge which could not be squared with its teachings by the priests. Astronomy made the first breach between science and religion, and the other sciences followed, until the church was obliged to follow the example of the religious teachers of Greece, who, when the public faith in their oracles had been destroyed by advancing intelligence, "were content to admit that the marvels formerly believed in were allegories under which the wisdom of the ancients had concealed many sacred and mysterious things."

The odd thing about the situation is that after Christians have given up the Bible as infallible in matters of science, they yet dispute the findings of science, as though they still conflicted with the "spiritual" truths of the Bible. But if it is once conceded that God did not make the stars also in the exact manner set forth by Moses, thus discrediting the account, what difference does it make whether the light of a star is five million years or only five seconds in reaching the earth? Nobody who regards the stars as anything more stupendous than brass-headed tacks stuck in the sky will believe that they were created by the ridiculous deity who potted about Eden and discussed domestic affairs with the patriarchs.

A Disgruntled Pope.

The French government, in severing its union with the church of Rome, provided for the creation of mutual aid societies for the relief of aged priests. The societies were to take over the property belonging to certain pension funds amounting to \$4,000,000, and under a later amendment to the law they could also take charge of pious bequests for masses.

This arrangement the pope will not accept, and has written to his French bishops a letter of rejection. The law, he complains, permits the formation of societies open to all who want to join and provides no test for exclusion, that is, it does not bar out priests who have severed their relations with Rome. Moreover, as the pope recites, the Holy See is ignored; the society for handling the pension funds will be controlled by the French government and not by the Vatican at Rome. He cannot deny that ample provision is made for the support of priests in their old age, nor does he charge that the funds will be diverted from their intended use. His grievance is that the church is not recognized and will not have the handling of the money and profit by the "rake off" which it has enjoyed as almoner of funds for charity and masses.

From expressions in the French newspapers it appears that the Catholics of France are more regretful than the government over the pope's obstinacy. The government has fully provided for carrying out the wishes of persons who have made bequests to charity and to so-called pious uses. If the pope will not permit his bishops to organize the aid societies for administering such funds under government supervision, and without first transmitting them to Rome to be handled and "weeded" by the cardinals, then the funds, valued at many millions, will be turned over to the public charities and be administered in the same manner as secular bequests. It is the church and not charity that the pope is interested in. Charitable work is a means of glorifying the church, and not an object in itself. It is only a by-product of the ecclesiastical factory.

The Paris Times, which is friendly to the church, warns his holiness that he is "wearing out the patience of the most docile Catholics." But the pope does not want their patience; he wants their obedience and their money.

Harper's Instructs Us.

Harper's Weekly for May 23 offers what it heads, "A Few Truths for a Seeker" in the following words:

"Our local contemporary The Truth Seeker says: 'In giving both sides of the argument against the use of alcohol, Harper's Weekly points out, as has often been done before, that the dominant races of men, the most civilized countries, are addicted to rum. The Scotch are strongly given to whiskey. So are the English, Germans, Scandinavians, and Russians, each to their favorite stimulant. The Turks, the Arabs, and the Hindus don't drink. Mohammed prescribed alcoholic beverages. Jesus did not. It will be noted that the rum drinkers are Christians. The questions arise whether they drink rum because they are Christians, or are Christians because they drink rum, and whether it

was rum or religion that made them leaders in civilization. As much one as the other, we think.'

"They do not drink rum because they are Christians; neither are they Christians because they drink rum; neither are they Christians because they eat pork. Mohammed prohibited pork, rum, and pictures, and permitted polygamy. Christ's aim was not to reach and regulate the spirit through the body, but to regulate the body through the spirit. The body may be orderly and governed in its appetites and yet contain an unregenerate spirit, but a regenerate spirit is bound to induce a disciplined and orderly body. So 'conversion' that is thoroughgoing will cure the drink habit. Rum never made any people leaders in civilization. Religion is the greatest civilizing force that exists, but defective or corrupted religions retard and limit the civilizations of the peoples they influence. Defective religions are now holding back most of Asia, and most of the Christian countries doubtless suffer more or less from corrupted Christianity. The rum question is important, but not nearly so vital as many people think. The true way to settle it is not to make the rum bad, or even excessively scarce, but to make the man good. That is the Christian way, and the only way that is permanently satisfactory. That was the method pursued by St. Patrick and Father Matthew in driving the snakes out of Ireland, and it cannot be beaten. Legislation, if wise, can do something, however, and should be made to do what it can."

We agree with Harper's that "rum never made any people leaders of civilization," but what we maintain is that the same arguments which are used to prove that Christianity has made people leaders in civilization would show just as conclusively that rum drinking has produced that result. "Conversion," so far as the drink habit is concerned, is not more efficacious than vegetarianism. The Chinese ambassador, Wu Ting-fang, got on the water wagon without a boost from religion. It is not against Christian principles to drink, for none of the holy men mentioned in the sacred book, not even Jesus of Nazareth, was an abstainer, and alcoholic beverages are not therein prohibited. Vegetarianism, which is not a religion, cuts out the booze. There are thousands of persons who abstain from rum because they know it to be unwholesome and its use unscientific. There are as many good people as bad ones who drink. Harper's asserts that "religion is the greatest civilizing force that exists," but from the modifying comments which follow we judge that the religion referred to is a sort that we have never known. The defective part of a religion is its religion. Eliminate the defects and the religion is gone. The way to settle the rum question is not by prohibition nor by piety, but to quit drinking. It is the height of folly for a man to delegate his habits, his morals, or his thinking to church or state.

The Wise Men from the East.

A great deal of stress has been put upon the visit of the wise men of Jerusalem, in search of him that was to be born King of the Jews. These men came from the East. How far they came no one knows. These very wise men recognized a certain star as presaging the event which they came to celebrate. This was a wonderful star. It had no other business than to guide these wise men to the cradle of Jesus. Astronomers have looked in vain for its light. Its brightness has faded from the sky, and the wise men went home to the East, and probably died there.

This star illumined the heavens with a prophecy, according to the words of the wise men. But did they read aright the language of this heavenly body? Did the star tell the truth? Did the star know that a baby in Bethlehem was born to rule the Israelites? Or, did these exceedingly wise men follow a false light?

Is it not time to question the wisdom of these men? They have no standing unless their words are true. We now know that Jesus was never a king of the Jews, and that these men from the East did not know what they were talking about.

These wise men were foolish men, or someone made fools of them; such a thing has happened as men being deceived, as men being gulled. It is evident that a wiser guy led these wise men into trouble.

Which knows most, an angel of the Lord or a wise man from the East? While Jesus slept

the sleep of birth, an angel of the Lord told Joseph that he should save his people (the Jews) from their sins. He said nothing about Jesus being a king or ruling over Israel. He gave to him a greater mission, a sterner task, to save the Israelites from their sins. But the angel was mistaken. Either the work was too great for Jesus, or else the Jews loved their sins better than salvation, for they took Jesus for an impostor instead of a savior.

Angels do not seem to be wiser than men, and men from the East know no more than men from the West.

But bigger fools than the Wise Men from the East are the men anywhere who read these stories about Jesus as in any sense credible.

L. K. W.

Is the Sixty-ninth Regiment of New York a regiment of American militia or of papal guards? At the regiment's armory the other night this military organization held a review with Cardinal Logue in command. We quote the report of the proceedings from the New York Times of May 21:

"The cardinal was really in command of the regiment as a reviewing officer, for the review was held in his honor, and Col. Duffy and his staff trailed behind his scarlet robe as he strode ahead of them down the front of the line.

"The Cardinal seemed to enjoy every minute of the two hours spent in the dress parade and inspection and review. The Sixty-ninth Regiment turned out its full complement of men all spick and span in fresh uniforms, every company well drilled, and every man in regiment sticking close to military regulations in presenting arms to the Cardinal, but kissing the ring of the man of the church without bowing the knee. The galleries were packed with people, and as the cardinal reviewed and inspected the regiment the spectators applauded him.

"At the conclusion of the review the colors were sent to the front and centre, and with the band playing 'Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue,' the Cardinal bowed instead of saluting, and dismissed the military function. Then, at the head of the Colonel's staff, and the officers of the battalions and companies in their plentiful gold lace and jingling side arms, the successor of Saint Patrick strode down the centre of the parade floor, and a thousand soldiers marched behind them.

"In a large reception room the cardinal then received the officers of the regiment. Each put aside the military regulations and bowed the knee before him and kissed his ring. Some of them asked a blessing and received it.

"With the cardinal last night were Mgr. Lavelle, Mgr. Hayes, Mgr. McCreedy, Bishop Browne of Cloyne, Father Quinn, Dr. McMackin, and Supreme Court Justice Fitzgerald as personal lay escort.

"In a large reserved stand at the Armory many women prominent in the Church in New York watched the review. Papal, American, and Irish flags were the decorations."

Is there anything in the military regulations providing for the review of American soldiers by successors of St. Patrick? Does military etiquette in this country give a foreign cardinal precedence over the colonel of a regiment? If there were hostility between the United States and the Catholic church, would the Sixty-ninth regiment rally under the American flag or under the Irish and papal standards?

Frederic May Holland, the Liberal author, died at his home in Concord, Mass., May 18, at the age of 72. Mr. Holland was born in Boston, was graduated from Harvard in 1859, and entered the Unitarian ministry in 1862, but resigned in 1874 and took up literary work. His first work of note was "The Reign of the Stoics," produced in 1879. "Sordello, a Story from Robert Browning," was issued in 1881, followed the next year by his "Stories from Browning." He also wrote "The Rise of Intellectual Liberty from Thales to Copernicus," "Liberty in the Nineteenth Century" and "Frederick Douglass." He wrote several pamphlets, including one on the French revolution and "The Revolutions of 1688 and 1776." He was a contributor to the Boston Investigator and The Truth Seeker, and a thoroughgoing advocate of liberty of thought.

"Protestant proselytism," says the Catholic Universe, "has failed ludicrously in Italy." Catholicism in Italy is preparing to fail tragically.

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"Say only good of the dead," is one of the most foolish sayings that nonsense has kept alive. Say more good of the living, is what is needed.

The dead have no feelings, the living have, and our appreciation should be spoken into living ears, not over dead ones.

The church is doing less harm than ever before in its history, because it has been shorn of its arms. Put back in its hands the power of old and the same terrible deeds would stain the earth. The alliance of the cross and the sword is the most unholy, infernal union that ever cursed mankind. To break the sword you must burn the cross.

I cannot respect mystery. There is somewhat behind it that needs to be covered. Why make of anything which is natural, a mystery? Do you know that a great many things get more reverence, more respect, than they deserve, just on account of some mysterious veil that enwraps them? Let women wear men's clothes, take from them the charm which dress gives them, and they would be losers. I wonder if they know it!

L. K. W.

Ingersoll's Conservative Statement.

Freethinkers at a distance from libraries where Freethought or scientific books may be found, or who are too busy to consult them, are often placed at a disadvantage through inability to back up their statements with the proper authorities. The religious disputant has his Bible at hand, and does not admit that its truth can be impeached or that any of its statements need verification. He accepts his religion on faith. His attitude is quite different toward scientific facts, which, when quoted by a layman, he insists must be supported by proof. A great deal of the correspondence conducted by The Truth Seeker office arises out of orthodox incredulity regarding facts. Sometimes an eminent man is quoted by a Freethinker, whereupon a minister or a churchman will deny that the author ever said it, and call for the name of the book and page. Even when the quotation is from the Bible they will sometimes declare the book contains nothing of the kind, and if the person making it is not prepared to point out chapter and verse he stands discredited. Such a dispute generally gets to this office for settlement, and we give the required information if we have it.

Just now an inquiry comes from the Argentine Republic, in South America, where a reader has found a man who denies a statement contained in Colonel Ingersoll's lecture on the "Mistakes of Moses." Ingersoll, in discussing the story of the creation, observes that "Moses came near forgetting about the stars, and gave only five words ["He made the stars also"] to all the hosts of heaven." Then proceeding to remark on the magnitude and distances of the stars, Ingersoll inquired if Moses knew that "some stars are so far away in the infinite abysses that five millions of years are required for their light to reach this globe?" Our South American reader writes: "A very intelligent English friend insists that Ingersoll had no authority for such a statement," and asks us to tell where Ingersoll got it.

The "Mistakes of Moses" was prepared by Ingersoll about thirty years ago. The author has been dead nine years, and we have no way of finding out what works on astronomy he consulted in preparing the lecture. We can, however, cite some accepted astronomical facts which make the statement appear as not only warranted but exceedingly conservative. We have a book entitled "Astronomy" by J. Rambosson, laureate of the institute of France, published by D. Appleton & Co., New York. M. Rambosson, in speaking of the spots in the Milky Way—spots of light composed of innumerable stars—says: "Some of these spots, of these five thousand and more nebulae, which have been catalogued, are certainly equal in

size to the nebula of which we form a part, and the astronomers who have attempted to calculate their distances have arrived at figures which almost inspire a feeling of terror. It has been estimated that light would not traverse the distance between these nebulae and the earth in less than **sixty million years**, while a cannon ball would take 37,000 milliards of years!" (A "million" is a thousand millions.) This shows how moderate was Ingersoll's statement.

Stellar distances are almost inconceivable. It takes six and one-half years for light to reach this earth from the nearest of the stars. We should need to live 144,000,000 years to get there on a fast train.

The extremes of the orbit in which the earth moves are 180,000,000 miles apart. In December we are therefore 180,000,000 miles nearer to the stars in the northern part of the sky than we are in June. And yet, despite the diminished distance, we are not able to see that these stars look any larger in December than in June.

If some of the stars which we can distinguish on a clear night were to be suddenly obliterated, our grandchildren would be the first to know of the catastrophe, for the light emitted by them is three-quarters of a century in reaching the earth. "All the stars," say the astronomer Secchi, "might be annihilated today, and nearly all of them would continue to be seen by the inhabitants of the earth, very much as they appear now, for several generations." Light which they emitted when our forefathers were upon earth is just reaching us; that which they emit today may be seen by our descendants, or it may find "this old hulk we tread" to be a "wreck, a slag, a cinder, drifting through the sky without its crew of fools."

If God had "made the stars also" at the time assigned to the creation, the light from some of them would not yet have got here.

The number of the stars is as great a difficulty as their distances in the way of accepting the creation story. It is estimated that there are in the milky way at least twenty million visible suns, independent of those, doubtless far more numerous, which we are unable to discern. And yet the Milky Way occupies but a small corner of the universe. There are five thousand other nebulae, and some of them contain as many suns as the Milky Way.

Another fact. This solar system, the sun and the earth, are making a rapid progress toward certain stars in the group known as the constellation of Hercules. Our speed in that direction is nearly 300,000,000 miles a year, or 800,000 miles a day. If the creator chanced to be visiting some other system, moving in an opposite direction, or away from ours, which aforesaid he frequented, and should spend as much time there as he has bestowed upon us, think of the speed he would have to make to catch up with the earth again.

The astronomers were the first devotees of science to suffer at the hands of the church for their discoveries. And no wonder the church regarded them as dangerous. The idea of a plurality of worlds was alarming, especially if the others were to be viewed as containing inhabitants. A few hundred years ago the Bible was the depository of all science, and there was no knowledge which could not be squared with its teachings by the priests. Astronomy made the first breach between science and religion, and the other sciences followed, until the church was obliged to follow the example of the religious teachers of Greece, who, when the public faith in their oracles had been destroyed by advancing intelligence, "were content to admit that the marvels formerly believed in were allegories under which the wisdom of the ancients had concealed many sacred and mysterious things."

The odd thing about the situation is that after Christians have given up the Bible as infallible in matters of science, they yet dispute the findings of science, as though they still conflicted with the "spiritual" truths of the Bible. But if it is once conceded that God did not make the stars also in the exact manner set forth by Moses, thus discrediting the account, what difference does it make whether the light of a star is five million years or only five seconds in reaching the earth? Nobody who regards the stars as anything more stupendous than brass-headed tacks stuck in the sky will believe that they were created by the ridiculous deity who potted about Eden and discussed domestic affairs with the patriarchs.

A Disgruntled Pope.

The French government, in severing its union with the church of Rome, provided for the creation of mutual aid societies for the relief of aged priests. The societies were to take over the property belonging to certain pension funds amounting to \$4,000,000, and under a later amendment to the law they could also take charge of pious bequests for masses.

This arrangement the pope will not accept, and has written to his French bishops a letter of rejection. The law, he complains, permits the formation of societies open to all who want to join and provides no test for exclusion, that is, it does not bar out priests who have severed their relations with Rome. Moreover, as the pope recites, the Holy See is ignored; the society for handling the pension funds will be controlled by the French government and not by the Vatican at Rome. He cannot deny that ample provision is made for the support of priests in their old age, nor does he charge that the funds will be diverted from their intended use. His grievance is that the church is not recognized and will not have the handling of the money and profit by the "rake off" which it has enjoyed as almoner of funds for charity and masses.

From expressions in the French newspapers it appears that the Catholics of France are more regretful than the government over the pope's obstinacy. The government has fully provided for carrying out the wishes of persons who have made bequests to charity and to so-called pious uses. If the pope will not permit his bishops to organize the aid societies for administering such funds under government supervision, and without first transmitting them to Rome to be handled and "weeded" by the cardinals, then the funds, valued at many millions, will be turned over to the public charities and be administered in the same manner as secular bequests. It is the church and not charity that the pope is interested in. Charitable work is a means of glorifying the church, and not an object in itself. It is only a by-product of the ecclesiastical factory.

The Paris Times, which is friendly to the church, warns his holiness that he is "wearing out the patience of the most docile Catholics." But the pope does not want their patience; he wants their obedience and their money.

Harper's Instructs Us.

Harper's Weekly for May 23 offers what it heads, "A Few Truths for a Seeker" in the following words:

"Our local contemporary The Truth Seeker says:

"In giving both sides of the argument against the use of alcohol, Harper's Weekly points out, as has often been done before, that the dominant races of men, the most civilized countries, are addicted to rum. The Scotch are strongly given to whiskey. So are the English, Germans, Scandinavians, and Russians, each to their favorite stimulant. The Turks, the Arabs, and the Hindus don't drink. Mohammed prescribed alcoholic beverages. Jesus did not. It will be noted that the rum drinkers are Christians. The questions arise whether they drink rum because they are Christians, or are Christians because they drink rum, and whether it

was rum or religion that made them leaders in civilization. As much one as the other, we think."

"They do not drink rum because they are Christians; neither are they Christians because they drink rum; neither are they Christians because they eat pork. Mohammed prohibited pork, rum, and pictures, and permitted polygamy. Christ's aim was not to reach and regulate the spirit through the body, but to regulate the body through the spirit. The body may be orderly and governed in its appetites and yet contain an unregenerate spirit, but a regenerate spirit is bound to induce a disciplined and orderly body. So 'conversion' that is thoroughgoing will cure the drink habit. Rum never made any people leaders in civilization. Religion is the greatest civilizing force that exists, but defective or corrupted religions retard and limit the civilizations of the peoples they influence. Defective religions are now holding back most of Asia, and most of the Christian countries doubtless suffer more or less from corrupted Christianity. The rum question is important, but not nearly so vital as many people think. The true way to settle it is not to make the rum bad, or even excessively scarce, but to make the man good. That is the Christian way, and the only way that is permanently satisfactory. That was the method pursued by St. Patrick and Father Matthew in driving the snakes out of Ireland, and it cannot be beaten. Legislation, if wise, can do something, however, and should be made to do what it can."

We agree with Harper's that "rum never made any people leaders of civilization," but what we maintain is that the same arguments which are used to prove that Christianity has made people leaders in civilization would show just as conclusively that rum drinking has produced that result. "Conversion," so far as the drink habit is concerned, is not more efficacious than vegetarianism. The Chinese ambassador, Wu Ting-fang, got on the water wagon without a boost from religion. It is not against Christian principles to drink, for none of the holy men mentioned in the sacred book, not even Jesus of Nazareth, was an abstainer, and alcoholic beverages are not therein prohibited. Vegetarianism, which is not a religion, cuts out the booze. There are thousands of persons who abstain from rum because they know it to be unwholesome and its use unscientific. There are as many good people as bad ones who drink. Harper's asserts that "religion is the greatest civilizing force that exists," but from the modifying comments which follow we judge that the religion referred to is a sort that we have never known. The defective part of a religion is its religion. Eliminate the defects and the religion is gone. The way to settle the rum question is not by prohibition nor by piety, but to quit drinking. It is the height of folly for a man to delegate his habits, his morals, or his thinking to church or state.

The Wise Men from the East.

A great deal of stress has been put upon the visit of the wise men of Jerusalem, in search of him that was to be born King of the Jews. These men came from the East. How far they came no one knows. These very wise men recognized a certain star as presaging the event which they came to celebrate. This was a wonderful star. It had no other business than to guide these wise men to the cradle of Jesus. Astronomers have looked in vain for its light. Its brightness has faded from the sky, and the wise men went home to the East, and probably died there.

This star illumined the heavens with a prophecy, according to the words of the wise men. But did they read aright the language of this heavenly body? Did the star tell the truth? Did the star know that a baby in Bethlehem was born to rule the Israelites? Or, did these exceedingly wise men follow a false light?

Is it not time to question the wisdom of these men? They have no standing unless their words are true. We now know that Jesus was never a king of the Jews, and that these men from the East did not know what they were talking about.

These wise men were foolish men, or someone made fools of them; such a thing has happened as men being deceived, as men being gulled. It is evident that a wiser guy led these wise men into trouble.

Which knows most, an angel of the Lord or a wise man from the East? While Jesus slept

the sleep of birth, an angel of the Lord told Joseph that he should save his people (the Jews) from their sins. He said nothing about Jesus being a king or ruling over Israel. He gave to him a greater mission, a sterner task, to save the Israelites from their sins. But the angel was mistaken. Either the work was too great for Jesus, or else the Jews loved their sins better than salvation, for they took Jesus for an impostor instead of a savior.

Angels do not seem to be wiser than men, and men from the East know no more than men from the West.

But bigger fools than the Wise Men from the East are the men anywhere who read these stories about Jesus as in any sense credible.

L. K. W.

Is the Sixty-ninth Regiment of New York a regiment of American militia or of papal guards? At the regiment's armory the other night this military organization held a review with Cardinal Logue in command. We quote the report of the proceedings from the New York Times of May 21:

"The cardinal was really in command of the regiment as a reviewing officer, for the review was held in his honor, and Col. Duffy and his staff trailed behind his scarlet robe as he strode ahead of them down the front of the line.

"The Cardinal seemed to enjoy every minute of the two hours spent in the dress parade and inspection and review. The Sixty-ninth Regiment turned out its full complement of men all spick and span in fresh uniforms, every company well drilled, and every man in regiment sticking close to military regulations in presenting arms to the Cardinal, but kissing the ring of the man of the church without bowing the knee. The galleries were packed with people, and as the cardinal reviewed and inspected the regiment the spectators applauded him.

"At the conclusion of the review the colors were sent to the front and centre, and with the band playing 'Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue,' the Cardinal bowed instead of saluting, and dismissed the military function. Then, at the head of the Colonel's staff, and the officers of the battalions and companies in their plentiful gold lace and jingling side arms, the successor of Saint Patrick strode down the centre of the parade floor, and a thousand soldiers marched behind them.

"In a large reception room the cardinal then received the officers of the regiment. Each put aside the military regulations and bowed the knee before him and kissed his ring. Some of them asked a blessing and received it.

"With the cardinal last night were Mgr. Lavelle, Mgr. Hayes, Mgr. McCreedy, Bishop Browne of Cloyne, Father Quinn, Dr. McMackin, and Supreme Court Justice Fitzgerald as personal lay escort.

"In a large reserved stand at the Armory many women prominent in the Church in New York watched the review. Papal, American, and Irish flags were the decorations."

Is there anything in the military regulations providing for the review of American soldiers by successors of St. Patrick? Does military etiquette in this country give a foreign cardinal precedence over the colonel of a regiment? If there were hostility between the United States and the Catholic church, would the Sixty-ninth regiment rally under the American flag or under the Irish and papal standards?

Frederic May Holland, the Liberal author, died at his home in Concord, Mass., May 18, at the age of 72. Mr. Holland was born in Boston, was graduated from Harvard in 1859, and entered the Unitarian ministry in 1862, but resigned in 1874 and took up literary work. His first work of note was "The Reign of the Stoics," produced in 1879. "Sordello, a Story from Robert Browning," was issued in 1881, followed the next year by his "Stories from Browning." He also wrote "The Rise of Intellectual Liberty from Thales to Copernicus," "Liberty in the Nineteenth Century" and "Frederick Douglass." He wrote several pamphlets, including one on the French revolution and "The Revolutions of 1688 and 1776." He was a contributor to the Boston Investigator and The Truth Seeker, and a thoroughgoing advocate of liberty of thought.

"Protestant proselytism," says the Catholic Universe, "has failed ludicrously in Italy." Catholicism in Italy is preparing to fail tragically.

HAS THE CHURCH ELEVATED MANKIND ?

The Humanitarian, Moral, and Religious Tests
Applied to Her Pretensions.

BY D. THEOPHILUS.

If the church did not elevate the political nor social status of the people; if it did not improve their physical or mental condition; did it, as has been already asked, make them more humane, more moral, or even more religious than it found them, or than they had been already in prior civilizations? Here again the facts prove even the contrary. They show that at the end of a thousand years of an uninterrupted rule of the church, there was in Christendom less humanity, less morality and religion, particularly amongst the higher clergy and the nobility, than there was at the beginning. They show that the influence of the church as an organization had been throughout decidedly deleterious to the manifestation and growth among mankind of any genuine goodness of heart conceived of as a social virtue, such as love of justice or mutual helpfulness. Indeed, the church had left no room in either its creed or its practice for any social virtue whatever to flourish under its sway. All was swallowed up in cold selfishness with its kindred qualities—intolerance, vindictiveness, licentiousness, and brutality. Not content with being selfish itself, it made it to appear that everybody else was the same. The paramount end, for example, of every man's actions was to save his own soul; and the sole end of God's actions and of the church's was "glory." God never did a single thing that was not prompted by selfishness. If he saved souls, it was to get glory for himself. If he damned souls, the end was the same. And what did he damn people for? For their wickedness? Never. He damned them simply because they did not forward with sufficient ardor the material interest of the church—because they did not purchase divine grace in hard cash from his priests. God's glory, be it observed, was, in the view of the church, always identical with its own glory and self-interest, and so likewise was all individual men's salvation; for no soul could be saved except by the payment of its full ransom price to the priests.

So in the last resort there was but one prime interest, but one paramount end, namely, the aggrandizement of the church—the absolution of the priesthood and the abject subserviency thereto of the world's unprivileged masses. To this all else in the universe was tributary, including God, Christ, sinful mankind, religion, theology, Christianity, morality—all contributed to or rather were simply means for the realization of that grand consummation.

And what does that mean? It means, as I have already pointed out, that in case the church was honest and its policy right, then God is a fiendish being, a vile intriguing politician; and Christ and his apostles and the saints are all a gang of unprincipled knaves, and that both religion and morality are mere cunning devices calculated to cheat the world, to promote and perpetuate the ignorance, the degradation, and the oppression of mankind. Or in case they are not, then the church lied most shamefully; libeled and blasphemed God and Christ, the apostles and the saints most sacrilegiously, and tricked all the world besides; in a word, it made of both religion and morality a vulgar travesty, and all to merely gratify its carnal ambitions and lusts.

All that I have hitherto said of the deeds, of the ways, and of the policy of the church in its public or corporate capacity fully proves the correctness of the last inference, and more, the facts are consistent with no other view. And the same conclusion will be forced upon us in a manner even still more pronounced as the result of the moral, religious and humanitarian tests which the sequel will yet disclose.

Subversion of Morality Conditional to Success.

Out of this all-absorbing selfishness, nothing could come but hollow insincerity, duplicity, craftiness, hypocrisy, intrigue, and the rougher and more aggressive qualities already mentioned—intolerance, vindictiveness, licentiousness, and brutality. Upon the possession and the active

display of these it was that both advancement in the church and success in the world depended. This was the inevitable outcome of the policy which the church uniformly pursued throughout its long career.

That policy, it will be remembered, was twofold. It had two distinct faces, one representing a Dr. Jekyll and the other a Mr. Hyde, and correspondingly two distinct ends, and each utterly subversive of the other. The assertion of the one was the negation of the other. The one was a theoretical and plausible end, utilized merely as a feint, while the other was being actualized in fact. The church's real policy, as we have seen all along, was self-aggrandizement; it was to get for itself all the power and all the riches it could, and the enjoyment of all the pleasures and of all the vanities which the world afforded; while its ostensible and avowed end was all the time the direct opposite. It was to govern the world righteously for God; make people good, virtuous, and pious, and thereby fit them for heaven; and especially to warn, persuade, and convince them that all earthly things and pleasures are vanities and abominations in the sight of God, and above all, to impress upon them the peculiar sanctity of itself and its close intimacy with deity.

To work out both of these policies, a feat which the church successfully accomplished for a period extending over ten centuries—all true morality had to be ignored, suppressed, or subverted, as it was absolutely necessary to practice insincerity and dissimulation habitually. Craftiness, intrigue, hypocrisy and duplicity had become as indispensable to the church's very existence as meat and drink are for the sustentation of the human body. What if these practices are violations of the morality of the decalogue and of the sermon on the mount; what if the God of Isaiah and of Jesus condemn them as immoral and criminal vices? Then manifestly the moral and religious standard and God of those worthies must be superseded, and another standard substituted instead thereof, and also another God—a God that will approve as virtues and deeds of merit what the God of Isaiah and Jesus condemned as vices and crimes. And as a matter of fact just such a standard and such a God were found. The church created both, created them after its own image, and without a doubt, to suit and justify its practices.

Interest of the Church as Criterion of Right.

What then was that standard? Theoretically and ostensibly it was the will of God (not the God of Jesus, but that of the priestly creative abstraction already mentioned); really, it was the material interest of the church, though formally and practically it was simply the arbitrary utterance of its head. Hence, under the ecclesiastical regime, it came to pass that right and wrong ceased to be unalterable verities, and became instead purely contingent phenomena with their respective contents interchangeable at the option or the dictation of a priest. On this the decrees of Nicholas IV. and Boniface VIII. are decisive. Both these prelates declare, for example, standing treaties, promises, vows, oaths, contracts, pledges of good faith, to be all valid or void at their words. And with this accorded substantially the general practice of the church.

In this revised moral and religious code of ecclesiasticism there was but one article of prime import whose content never varied, but one paramount duty that was imperatively binding on all men at all times, and the non-observance of which never escaped unpunished. This was submission or loyalty to the church, manifested in outward conformity with its rites. The one inviolable commandment of the code was—obey; the solitary inviolable virtue it recognized was servility, subserviency, to the priesthood. This constituted the sum and substance of both religion and morality. Provided outward conformity with its formularies was observed, the church gave mankind carte blanche to do whatever else they had a mind to. They might commit against one another, against the decalogue and the sermon on the mount, against the God of Moses and of Jesus, whatever offenses and sins they chose, nay, they might do so not only without incurring the dis-

pleasure of the church, but with its secret connivance, encouragement, and hearty good will; for did not its prosperity always depend on the increase of crimes and the multiplicity of sins? But should they dare, on the contrary, to sin against itself by neglecting, for instance, to purchase divine grace at its hands, woe to them! a punishment certain and terrible befalls them both in this world and the next. This part of the code, however, appertained mainly to the laity.

As to the church itself—the priesthood—its actions were restricted by no limitation whatever, except that of expediency. Theoretically and practically the clergy were irresponsible, were incapable of doing wrong, and that not simply by reason of the sacredness of their office, but mainly by reason of the arbitrary character of the ecclesiastical standard of right. The first consideration (which they also often put forth) lifted them above all human laws, and the second, above the divine laws; for they themselves were both the source and reason of the latter (God's will and theirs being identical).

The ecclesiastical standard of right bluntly lays it down that right is what is advantageous to the church, and wrong the contrary. If robbery and perfidy, accordingly, are a gain to the church, and honesty and fidelity a loss, then robbery and perfidy are virtues, and honesty and fidelity vices; anyhow, they must be so treated when the interest of the church demands it. And (let the reader mark it well) this confusion of moral ideas was freely indulged in by the church throughout its career. We habitually behold wickedness being hallowed and goodness tabooed; piety sneered at and hypocrisy respected, godliness and learning rewarded with obscurity and poverty, and irreligiosity and ignorance with bishoprics and social rank, integrity and conscientiousness, heavily mulcted, and high premiums set on faithlessness and knavery.

In truth there was no species of wickedness, villainy, or crime that the moral code of the church did not permit, nay, encourage its clergy to perpetrate, and under the cover of religion—godliness and righteousness. It made it, for example, right to forswear, right to fabricate false wills, false documents and false miracles; right to break promises, vows, and oaths; right to violate treaties, pledges, and contracts; right to rob, plunder, murder, and burn; right to commit treason and treachery, adultery and rape, assassinations and wholesale massacres of the innocent and defenseless; right even (secretly) to laugh at or disbelieve the most sacred and fundamental dogmas of the faith; right to do any or all of these things, provided the interest of the church demanded it, which being interpreted, practically meant almost always, provided the personal ambitions and lusts of the higher clergy rendered such courses expedient.

Too Devout to Be Useful.

Most of the workmen in the Russian oil fields of Baku are Mohammedans, and strange to say, their piety is a source of constant annoyance to their employers. As we were being shown through the pumping house belonging to a Russian Company, our guide, a sturdy Dutchman from the oil fields of Pennsylvania, suddenly came upon a Tartar workman lying prostrate, his face toward Mecca, on a strip of greasy carpet among the idle machinery. Without giving him time to struggle to his feet, our friend raised him more suddenly than gently with a well applied kick.

"Choist look at dese fellows!" he explained indignantly; "ve haf to vatch dem or dey pray de whole tam time! Vat mit Mohammedan feast days and Russian saints' days ve get no work done at all. Vat ve need is a cargo of good missionaries to convert de whole tam lot."—*Geographic Magazine.*

"A powerful sacerdotal body, grasping at all civil administration, claiming the supreme control of education, stereotyping the lines in which literature and science must move, and limiting the extent to which it shall be lawful for the human mind to prosecute its inquiries." The foregoing is the best short definition of Christianity I ever saw. I found it among some scraps I copied several years ago, and cannot now place the author.—C. W. C.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

It Is Inquired in the Accents of Sincerity: "Have We Another Life?"

BY F. A.

The desire for immortality is practically universal and it seems to be a necessity in order to fairly adjust the irregularities and want of opportunities in this life. Also, the fact that we now live and cannot account for our existence, or cannot conceive of ourselves as dead, suggests the feeling that life will continue independent of the material body somewhere, somehow. This unconquerable hope seems to be an inherent principle within us, as much as love, a desire for knowledge, and I might say, a desire for riches. We may, of course, fail to obtain these things, still if they were not within the range of possibility we should not desire them.

The following words from Alger's "History of the Doctrine of a Future Life" have a searching meaning:

"Unless immortality be true, man appears a dark riddle not made for that of which he is made capable and desirous; everything is begun, nothing ended; the facts of the present scene are unintelligible; the plainest analogies are violated."

We often hear the expression that Jesus Christ abolished death and that he died to bring "life and immortality to light," and these words have great weight and power over many persons, simply because they are ignorant of the real facts in the case.

The Bible gives two distinct and conflicting accounts of the resurrection of Jesus—one with his former body of flesh and bone, and the other is some sort of occult spiritual phenomenon.

We, of course, cannot prove immortality to be a fact or a delusion by the Bible or any other evidence, but we can select from various sources the most plausible arguments bearing upon the subject. With this fact in view, it would seem that a book of worship like the Episcopal "Common Prayer" should do something more than express a general hope for a future life; but in it we find that important service entitled, "The Burial of the Dead," speaks of Jesus as the resurrection and life, quotes freely from Paul, praises God two or three times by the phrase, "Glory to the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost," and then tells us that man has but a short time to live.

The Roman Catholic book of worship, called the "Key of Heaven," is as deficient as the Episcopal, and both of them are characterized by a general failure to give us even circumstantial evidence that we shall survive the death of the body. In fact, all through the various Christian sects, including the liberal with the orthodox, there is a want of some fundamental basis that the soul is immortal. Not long ago I heard an Universalist clergyman say in his funeral discourse: "If the disciples of Jesus had not touched him after the resurrection, they would not have believed in immortality, and this bright hope would have been lost to the world."

Any such view of the matter seems very dark and irrational.

Some persons have believed that death meant a sort of absorption of our souls into some form of universal life or into the Deity. With this view, there can, of course, be no personal individuality that goes with us, no recognition of friends or interest in the things which form a vital part of this life and of us. If death means this, it is practically annihilation and the prospect is not very inviting, though it seems to be often supported by a strong spirit that makes the best of circumstances.

If we deify Jesus, making him half God and half man in our estimation of his nature, then some occult form of resurrection from the dead would, in his case, harmonize with his mixed character, but he would not serve in any way as an emblem for man; and even if we consider him as purely human and as having risen bodily from the dead, the "logical inference would be that henceforth all men three days after death would rise bodily, appear for a season on earth as before, then ascend visibly to the sky."

The most plausible view is to regard Jesus as simply human, and after the crucifixion as appearing spiritually to some of his disciples a few times. According to the accounts, he was not subject to the laws of time or space, so he could not have been in a material body. This view harmonizes with the common description

of spirits materializing themselves and becoming more or less visible to human sight.

The strange superstitions that have taken root among Christians in regard to the nature of Jesus renders him ("The Christ") alien to us as an example. Paul had a strong belief in a future life, but he was too wise to make it depend, as Christians generally do, on the resurrection of Jesus.

Paul's words are: "But if then he (man) has no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen."

Some persons speak of being conscious of an immortal life, and this view was held more or less by Theodore Parker. He was certainly not troubled by doubts in the matter, still it is an abuse of language to so express a hope.

Circumstantial evidence of another life is very important, but something more direct is needed in order to satisfy many minds.

Ernst Haeckel, one of the most able German thinkers, has given a strong array of arguments against immortality, and there is certainly no evidence as powerful to combat his views as Psychical Research.

Mr. Hyslop, in his work, "Science and a Future Life," has done a world of good by its publication. He has shown that we have at least one medium, Mrs. Piper, who can be relied on; one who had the respect of all who knew her, and was regarded as incapable of fraud; still this did not prevent every precaution being used by the Society of Psychical Research when they took her in hand for the purpose of making scientific tests.

In confining myself to Mrs. Piper as a medium, I do not wish it to be understood as claiming that she alone is reliable, though it may possibly be safely said that 98 per cent of the professional mediums are frauds.

There is an immense amount of prejudice against psychical research by Christians, and they practically assume that it is the duty of man to accept the doctrine of immortality as an article of faith.

This has certainly been the attitude of the Christian church, but it is a will-o'-the-wisp method not worth serious thought.

It is true that psychical research tells us little or nothing about the character of another life, but if it can give us any reasonable evidence that we survive earthly death and shall meet the loved ones who have gone before—what a blessing it is.

That it does this is the most logical explanation of the matter.

It is very certain that no principle existing in telepathy can throw any light upon the subject, as all the revelations from Mrs. Piper were facts unknown to her and often to the sitter. Frequently they were events gone through by some relation of the sitter, or member of the family, and subsequent inquiry had to be made to establish their correctness. I am fully aware that in spite of all that can be said in favor of Psychical Phenomena of Spiritualism, the thing will appear too extraordinary to yet find acceptance in the scientific world. A feeling will exist that some unknown mistake or fraud is at the bottom of it.

Science is very conservative and cautious in its attitude to new things, and I think wisely so, but it is also equally eager to get all the truth of every question. John Fiske was a good representative of the scientific spirit, and his views in regard to a future life were purely Agnostic. He, however, left the door open when he said:

"Who can tell but that which we call life is really death, from which what we call death is an awakening?"

This remark brings to mind one of the communications through Mrs. Piper in which a spirit speaks of those in this life appearing to disembodied spirits as if asleep. In Mr. M. J. Savage we have a man of the greatest ability who has the strongest confidence in Psychical Research as an evidence of immortality.

He says: "The world is getting ripe for it; we are on the edge of it, and I believe with my whole soul that it will not be long before immortality will be as much discovered as America was discovered by Columbus."

Yarmouth Port, Mass.

The cross on the spire cannot save a burning church.

Those people, as a rule, who do not find life worth living, do nothing to make it so.

MISSIONARIES IN TAHITI.

A Voyager in the South Pacific Writes of Them to a Truth Seeker Reader.

(Editor of The Truth Seeker: I have just received a letter from a friend who left San Francisco last year on the steamer Mariposa for Tahiti Island. I will copy some of it for you.—F. E. Harris, Redlands, Cal.)

The large mountain valleys of Tahiti are owned in common by the natives. Each family owns a small piece of land along the coast. This complex family property is a fine thing for the native, otherwise he would have sold and been swindled out of his land many years ago. It is said the French government gives more liberty and better protection to the natives, and in fact all of its colonies, than any other government. When the natives of Tahiti have property they get married; otherwise, the man takes the woman and lives with her as long as they can agree; and he does not have to pay a skypilot for any ceremony whatever. One of those fine strapping young bulls (they call the young men bulls here) was living with three young girls. One of the meddling missionaries told him it was "very wrong; you will not go to heaven," etc., "he should choose one of the girls, marry her, and lead a Christian life." The young man told him he had no choice; he loved the three, and they loved him; all were satisfied; he was able to support them, and so he could not see why he should give two of them up.

I have often heard the Socialist soapbox orator say, "The missionaries are the advance agents of the capitalist," and now I have the fact demonstrated. Take this island for an example. Before the natives ever heard or saw a white man they lived an ideal life, we may say, for barbarians. They lived in communism, food of all kinds was plentiful; the climate was comfortable; there was no need for clothes; their lives were simple and happy; their wants were few and easily supplied by a few hours of work. Their food consisted of fish, cocoanuts, bread fruit, bananas, yams, etc., and to obtain these was more of pleasure than work. When it rained, or they went fishing, they rubbed coconut oil over their bodies, and water would run off of them just as it does off of a duck. I will say right here that steel tools are the only beneficial things the natives have obtained from civilization, as far as I can observe.

This will give you an idea of how the natives lived before they saw or heard of these white devils, the missionaries. Of course, the natives had their superstitious ideas of gods, ghosts, devils, etc., and it was on these that the missionaries laid the foundations for their robbery and degradation of the natives, by making more broad and complex the scope of their superstitions. After they had gained their confidence, or in other words, converted them to one of our variety of religions, they began to work from a material basis. They taught the natives to wear cheap calico clothes, to wear shoes and hats, to smoke tobacco and drink bad whiskey, to drink coffee and tea, to eat white flour bread and embalmed beef, to work and pay taxes, etc. To give you an example of the graft and inconsistency of this missionary machine: the missionaries collect money of the natives for the poor white people in France, and in France they collect money to convert the heathens in Tahiti. The natives do not quite sabbify their collection for the poor whites of France, because formerly the missionaries told them that every one that wished to could be rich, have servants, horses and carriages in the white man's country. They also taught them they should read and study the Christian Bible, the Christian Bible only, as the true word of God. All other books were the work of the devil. After the missionary came the business man with his dopes, from coffee and tobacco to opium.

On the arrival of these masked wolves, as I have described, the natives were living a life of peace and plenty. The hand of fellowship was always extended to the stranger, who was invited to eat and given a bed overnight. The white men took advantage of this hospitality and many times have driven away the native man and taken possession of his wife and house. Now most of the natives, men and women, use tobacco and drink orange rum. It is said 80 per cent of the natives have syphilis in their blood. There are several cases of leprosy on the island. But even to this day the natives are very generous and sociable to strangers. While traveling about the island I have often

been invited to come in and rest, when they would give me food and delicious milk of the young cocoa to drink; but they are not so generous to the white settler. They will call around to see the white people, and if they see anything they want they just take it. They will raid his vanilla and cocoanut plantations at right. If accused of stealing, they will say, "Oh, no, I didn't steal; I just took it along."

They do not sabbify the word "steal." The woman is boss in Tahiti; due partly to the scarcity of females. The natives celebrate the firstborn of every girl, whether the mother is married or not. They consider it an honor to have children. They also have great doings when they dedicate one of their new churches. A short time ago they spent \$5,000 at one of them. A gentleman I met was telling me about one of the other islands near here. "There were several missions on this island, so they have to give the natives all kinds of freedom in the churches to hold them. Every one demands the right to speak when he feels like it. One Sunday morning I attended one of these missions. One of their rules was that all should hold up their right hands when any one was praying. That was tiresome, and the natives objected to it. After service was over they told the pilot they wanted the rule abolished. The old pilot tried to bluff them, and told them if they did not like it they could leave the church. The natives threw the pilot out at sea."

I have attended several of the native singings or hymnery as they call it. Once a month they have a large hymn feasting, with a lot of love thrown in. It starts about 3 p. m. and is kept up all night. Their singing is not in harmony, but still it is not monotonous. Some were talking, some laughing, some smoking, including the women, during the performance.

Religious Property Taxed.

The Supreme Court of the state of New Jersey has decided that property owned by camp meeting associations is no longer entitled to the privileges of tax exemptions embraced in their respective charters, granted by the legislature in 1869. This decision was reached in the case of Hanover Township vs. The Camp Meeting Association of the Newark Conference. This will either bankrupt Ocean Grove or else force the association to grant its leaseholds the rights of a borough government.

The assessor of Neptune township, in which Ocean Grove is located, has been instructed by Major Carl Lentz, president of the State Board for the Equalization of Taxes, to begin on May 20 to assess every parcel of real and personal property within the association's limits. The property in question is valued at \$2,000,000 and the taxes upon it will exceed \$30,000.

The question of ownership and to whom to assess the property has to be decided at once. No property in Ocean Grove is held by the lease holders in fee simple. They lease their respective lots for a term of ninety-nine years. Should it be decided that the association is the real owner and has to pay the tax, it will have to give up title to all its holdings and a borough government will probably result, replacing the peculiar one which has been in vogue.

If it should be decided that the individual lease holders are subject to the township, county and state tax, the legality of the tax of \$10 a year for a lot which they now pay to the association will undoubtedly be attacked, as under the constitution of the state it would be double taxation and unconstitutional.

Whichever way the matter terminates, either the association or the landholders will have to pay taxes in the amount of \$30,000. It is estimated that the association has since it was founded escaped paying taxes in the amount of \$500,000.

Asbury Park, N. J., May 22.—It is the leaseholders in Ocean Grove who will have to pay tax on the land in the camp meeting city and not the Ocean Grove Association. A decision to this effect was made today by the Monmouth County Board of Taxation after their counsel had quoted decisions of the courts that the ninety-nine-year leaseholders were for the purposes of taxation absolute owners of their property. The property owners will appeal to the State Board of Taxation. More than \$2,000,000 of property in Ocean Grove is affected by the assessment.

THE CHRIST.

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

BY JOHN E. REMSBURG.

CHAPTER VIII.

Character and Teachings.

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Who was Jesus Christ?

Mark: He was the son of man.

Matthew and Luke: He was the Son of God.

John: He was God himself.

In the Four Gospels are presented three entirely different conceptions of the Christ. In Mark he is represented as the son of human parents—the Messiah—but simply a man. In Matthew and Luke we have the story of the miraculous conception—he is represented as the Son of God. In John he is declared to be God himself. "In the beginning was the Word [Christ], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (i, 1).

According to Mark Christ is a man; according to Matthew and Luke, a demi-god; according to John, a God.

Voltaire thus harmonizes these discordant conceptions: "The son of God is the same as the son of man; the son of man is the same as the son of God. God, the father, is the same as Christ, the son; Christ, the son, is the same as God, the father. This language may appear confused to unbelievers, but Christians will readily understand it."

This is quite as intelligible as the Christian Confession of Faith, Article II of which reads as follows: "The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance: so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very Man."

"The theological Christ is the impossible union of the human and divine—man with the attributes of God, and God with the limitations and weaknesses of man."—Ingersoll.

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Is God a visible Being?

Jacob: "I have seen God face to face" (Genesis xxxii, 30).

John: "No man hath seen God at any time" (i, 18).

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How many Gods are there?

Mark: One.

John: Three.

Mark teaches the doctrine of Unitarianism (Monotheism), or one God. John teaches, not the doctrine of Unitarianism or one God, nor yet the doctrine of Trinitarianism or three Gods in one, but the doctrine of Tritheism or three distinct Gods, separate and independent of each other.

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Is the doctrine of the Trinity taught in the New Testament?

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 John v, 7).

This is the only passage in the New Testament which clearly teaches the doctrine of the Trinity, and this passage is admitted by all Christian scholars to be an interpolation.

When the modern version of the New Testament was first published by Erasmus it was criticised because it contained no text teaching the doctrine of the Trinity. Erasmus promised his critics that if a manuscript could be found containing such a text he would insert it. The manuscript was "found," and the text quoted appeared in a later edition. Concerning this interpolation Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to a friend, which was afterward published by Bishop Horsley, says: "When the adversaries of Erasmus had got the Trinity into his edition, they threw by their manuscript as an old almanac out of date."

Alluding to the doctrine of the Trinity, Thomas Jefferson says: "It is too late in the day for men of sincerity to pretend they believe in the Platonic mysticism that three are one and one is three, and yet, that the one is not three, and the

three not one. . . . But this constitutes the craft, the power, and profits of the priests. Sweep away their gossamer fabrics of fictitious religion, and they would catch no more flies" (Jefferson's Works, vol. iv, p. 205, Randolph's ed.).

Again Jefferson says: "The hocus-pocus phantasm of a God, like another Cerberus, with one body and three heads, had its birth and growth in the blood of thousands and thousands of martyrs" (Ibid, p. 360).

474

Was Christ the only begotten Son of God?

John: He was "the only begotten Son of God" (iii, 18).

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them" (Genesis vi, 4).

475

By what agency and when was the Christ begotten?

Matthew and Luke: By the Holy Ghost at the time of his conception by the Virgin Mary.

According to Justin the Holy Ghost begat the Christ, not at the conception of Jesus, as claimed by these Evangelists, but at his baptism. At his baptism the voice from heaven said: "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee" (Dialogues 88).

The correctness of Justin's statement is corroborated by Hebrews: "Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee" (v, 5). Christ's priesthood began at his baptism.

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Of what gender is the Holy Ghost?

Matthew (Greek Ver.): Masculine gender.

Matthew (Hebrew Ver.): Feminine gender.

The Holy Ghost (Spirit), as was noted in a previous chapter, was with the Greeks of masculine gender, with the Jews of feminine gender. The Gospel According to the Hebrews, which, it is claimed, was the original Gospel of Matthew, represented Jesus as saying, "Just now my mother, the Holy Ghost, laid hold on me."

If the Holy Ghost was the mother of Jesus did he have two mothers? According to our Greek version of Matthew, as well as that of Luke, he had one mother and three reputed fathers—God, the Holy Ghost, and Joseph.

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Christ, it is affirmed, was born of Mary. If so, what relation did she bear to him?

1. If he was born of Mary she was his mother.

2. She "being with child by the Holy Ghost," and Father, Son and Holy Ghost being one, she bore to him the relation of wife.

3. God being the Father of all mankind, and God and Christ being one, she was his daughter.

4. She being the daughter of God, and Christ being the Son of God, she was therefore his sister.

Consequently Mary bore to him the relation of mother, wife, daughter and sister.

In order to escape the ban on baseball in Westchester county, this state, the New Rochelle team, it is said, will go to the Fort Slocum military reservation on David's island in Long Island Sound and play with a team organized there by the soldiers. The newspapers have it that the ball players decided to take refuge on the government property when they learned from the Rev. Thomas P. McLoughlin, a Catholic priest of New Rochelle, that President Roosevelt fully approves of Sunday ball playing and would no doubt sustain the officers of the fort if the sheriff should try to make trouble about the game. The priest McLoughlin says that he was in Washington last fall and had an interview with the President, at which the subject was brought up. "I told the President," says McLoughlin, "that I did not see how there could be any harm in people playing baseball or attending the national game on Sunday after their religious duties had been discharged. The President replied: 'That is the kind of talk I like to hear from a clergyman.'" The priest says that the President told him that after he had attended services in his church in Washington he often went back to the White House and played a game of tennis in the afternoon.

Minor Editorial Note and Comment.

Can a revivalist go into a town and heap contumely on its citizens? Can a man's wife and children be told from the pulpit that the man will die and go to hell and that the widow will marry a pin-headed dude? Can an evangelist say these things and get away with it? In Warrensburg, Ill., the Rev. A. D. Pledger, an assistant of "Billy" Sunday, asked Mr. Charles Batchelder of that city if he wanted to be saved, and Batchelder said he didn't; he was chiefly concerned, these hard times, in making a living. The Rev. Pledger, evangelizing Warrensburg, went back to the pulpit from the floor where he was soliciting and said:

"It is strange what excuses men will offer for not becoming Christians. I was talking to a man—and he is here tonight—who says he is living to make money, that if he can get a dollar from a man in a trade he will do it. He will not trust me, and he will not trust any man. A man who will not trust another I would not trust across the street with a dime. I wouldn't trust him in a room with a dead man for fear he would steal the nickels from his eyes."

The evangelist capped this with the story of a man down in Texas who accumulated a lot of money, but didn't join the church, and when he died he went to hell, while his wife married a pin-headed dude who sat on the front porch and smoked twenty-five-cent cigars at the expense of the man who had made the money. Mr. Batchelder got up and inquired whether he was the man to whom the preacher applied these remarks. Pledger said he was. The next day as the evangelist was about to take a train out of Warrensburg an officer copied him and said he was under arrest for unbecoming conduct and disorderly language. Batchelder had sworn out a complaint, and had been foresighted enough to make the people the complainants so that the state would conduct the prosecution without expense to himself. He didn't want Pledger's money; he only wanted vindication. A jury was impaneled, and in a speech which the local newspaper pronounces a classic, the prosecutor asked the question with which we have opened the paragraph. Would Warrensburg permit one of its citizens to be covered with contumely by a cheap evangelist? Can a citizen with impunity be told he will go to hell and that his widow will marry a pin-headed dude to smoke rich cigars at his expense? The jury, composed of farmers, deliberated for four hours, and then answered in the negative by fining Pledger ten dollars and costs. The evangelist vowed that he would take an appeal, which he is justified in doing, for if he and his chief are debarred by law from talking like blackguards they cannot talk at all. It was a celebrated case in Warrensburg and must become such in the annals of jurisprudence. Not every man can get the people to take up his case, as Mr. Batchelder did, when insulted from the pulpit.

The American Neurological Association listened to an address at Philadelphia, May 21, by Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, whom the association had just elected president. Dr. Mitchell's remarks contained a brief mention of Christian Science, of which he said: "Although Eddyism, in one form or another, is as old as civilization, I am amazed that the disciplined minds of Americans, usually so skeptical, should be taken in such increasing numbers by an elderly woman with a smile." Dr. Mitchell would be spared his amazement if he would pause to consider how many thousands have been taken in by religious fakers of whom Mrs. Eddy only happens to be one of the latest. Her pretensions, for ex-

ample, are small compared with those of the pope of Rome. She does not pretend to be God's personal representative on earth as he does. There is little in her system which may not be extracted from the Bible, a book in the inspiration of which Dr. Mitchell is supposed to believe. Her school is only a revival of the system of "pastoral medicine" practiced in the middle ages by the church, and her "malicious animal magnetism" does not differ essentially from the black art and demoniac possession in which Jesus and Paul were undoubted believers and which they professed to combat. Mrs. Eddy merely emphasizes certain features of the Christian superstition, which are as factual as any of the rest of it.

Does Bishop Burgess of the Long Island Episcopal diocese believe what he says in his late address is true—that the Episcopal church has something which other churches have not, i. e., "descent from the apostles, or what we call apostolic succession"? Apostolic succession means that the apostle Paul put his hands on the head of the first Episcopal bishop, and that bishop on the next one, and so down to the bishops of today, so that there is a line of contact between heads and hands all the way back to St. Paul. The Episcopalians deny that Peter was the first pope, and that there is an unbroken series of popes from him to Pope Pius X. Catholics deny the validity of the succession claimed by the Episcopalians. Either church can give much stronger proof that the other is wrong than that itself is right. Both successions are fictitious and appeared when needed. The claims of an accepted religion are not examined. A successful impostor, like Joseph Smith or John Alexander Dowie or Mrs. Eddy, might trace their lineage to an intrigue conducted by Jesus Christ, and their followers would believe in it as firmly as Bishop Burgess believes in apostolic succession. The subjects of King Menelik, the Christian ruler of Abyssinia, accept his representation that he was begotten of the queen of Sheba by Solomon when she visited that monarch.

George E. Sterry, the New York merchant so well known in church work, who was shot to death a few days ago by his son, George E. Sterry, Jr., had not neglected to rear his children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. The son who killed him left a letter, written before the murder and suicide, in which he said: "It seems to me that God has told me to do what I propose doing. I prayed to God not less than twenty times a day to show me some other way out of this trouble, and I truthfully believe he has shown me the proper way to save my family from disgrace." There is no instance recorded where God, when appealed to in prayer, did not show the person praying that the course already determined upon was the one approved by heaven. God's views and will are always those of his worshiper.

The Daily Star of Chattanooga, Tenn., prints a garbled version of Ingersoll's anti-alcohol speech, adds to it a speech by somebody else, and credits the whole to Ingersoll. The editors who print this piece of dual authorship are contributing to our enlightenment. They illustrate with a concrete example how one writer may obtain credit or discredit for another one's work, and the name of the original author may be lost, as is that of the composer of the "pseudo-Ingersoll" temperance speech. Applying the lesson to the books of the Bible we reach the conclusions of the Higher Critics who find evidence of dual or multiple authorship in those books. Hence the incongruous lot

of compositions attributed to Moses, to David, to Solomon, who may or may not have written any considerable part of them. A dozen years ago this temperance speech, on which his enemies based a charge of plagiarism against Ingersoll, was explained in the secular and religious press. It is still going the rounds. There is another instance. A poem entitled "There Is No Death" makes its appearance frequently with the name of Sir E. Bulwer Lytton attached. Yet it is a decade since the history of that poem was given to the public, and its real author, James L. McCreery, named. By these instances may be judged what certainty we have that ancient writings have come down to us accompanied by the names of their actual authors from an age when error or fraud could not be corrected or exposed.

The funeral of Mrs. Elise Blenker took place at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Weber, 236 Rich avenue, Mt. Vernon, N. Y., on May 16. Mr. E. C. Walker delivering the address. Mrs. Blenker, whose age was about eighty-five years, was the widow of Louis Blenker, German soldier and patriot, born in Worms in 1812, who after the defeat of the revolutionary movement in 1849, of which he had been one of the leaders, took refuge in the United States, and in 1861 became a brigadier-general in the Union army. It is said to have been General Blenker who covered the retreat of the Union army after Bull Run and prevented the Confederate troops from marching on to Washington. He died in 1863. The funeral of Mrs. Blenker, who has of late years resided with her daughter, was attended only by members of the family and intimate friends.

The heretic has a short shrift in Minnesota. The Rev. Robert Hammond Cotton, Episcopalian, of Minneapolis, agrees with Dr. Crapsey on two points—"the virgin birth of Jesus as vulgarly understood, and the resurrection as vulgarly understood." The Rev. Dr. Cotton has a mystical interpretation of both these doctrines which amounts to throwing them overboard altogether, for the doctrines amount to nothing unless they are accepted "as vulgarly understood," that is, in a physical sense. Bishop Edsall writes to the Rev. Cotton that he cannot feel it consistent with his duty to continue the preacher's license in Minnesota after his present term has expired. Thus without trial or jury Mr. Cotton is unfrocked. Who wouldn't be a preacher with the choice of suppressing his ideas or losing the right to earn a living at his trade?

The Socialist platform, adopted at the Chicago national convention, contains a plank on religion. It announces that "the Socialist movement is primarily economic and political and does not concern itself with religious beliefs." It is well enough for an economic and political movement to ignore religious beliefs so long as religious beliefs ignore the movement. But when one-half of the church is fighting the movement and the other half trying to control it, the question whether it will combat the one and ally itself with the other becomes of some interest. Christians are now in the majority in America. Socialism needs a majority to win. If it gets that majority without a change in religious views, the Socialist state will be Christian. Will the last state be better or worse than the first?

The President has signed the bill restoring the motto "In God We Trust" to the coins, and the director of the mint is preparing dies to make new coins bearing the above misstatement of fact. This closes the incident. That the motto is restored is not our fault. When the bill to restore it was before Congress we expressed our opinion of it without re-

serve, and the best results obtained were to get a piece of a Truth Seeker editorial into the Congressional Record.

Edwin C. Walker paid a well deserved tribute to Moncure D. Conway, "Freethinker and Humanitarian," in his address last winter at the Paine-Conway memorial meeting at the Manhattan Liberal Club in New York, which has now been put into a neat paper bound volume. The sketch of Conway is as interesting as were the extraordinary experiences of the man's life. How significant his thought in connection with the slavery problem, that justice was the stone rejected of the builders which must become the chief stone of the corner. And how true it is our own great problems.—The Public, Chicago.

A Sketch and an Appreciation of MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY Freethinker and Humanitarian

By Edwin C. Walker

Few who have been charmed and instructed by the later writings of Dr. Conway are aware of the vast extent of his activities in his more than fifty years of public life. No one is better equipped to tell the story than Mr. Walker, who has made a specialty of collecting all Conway matter, and who is broad-minded enough to treat his subject without apologizing for any of his radicalism. The pamphlet is of 56 pages. It presents the fruitful life of Conway to Freethinkers as their heritage.

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FREETHOUGHT FIRST.

From C. Severance, California.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

The Truth Seeker is food and drink to the mind, and well does it supply the mental pabulum which thinking minds need and must have, for the mind as well as the body has its requirements, and "man cannot live by bread alone." Never was it filled with better brain productions than now, and its influence on those who read and think will extend far into the future, and on human conduct in time to come it will, because of its liberalizing influence, be a power for good and much benefit to generations yet unborn. We know this from the influence of men's thoughts, who are long dead, and yet stir and thrill the minds of the living with the truths they proclaimed. The press is the most powerful factor in existence when men's thoughts and actions are under consideration, for that which enables one man's thoughts to reach so many, and permits the products of every great mind to be the common property of all who will take the trouble to read, does and must produce results beyond estimate. How any mind can be satisfied with the dead and non-progressive ideas of religion is a mystery to one who feeds on Freethought productions, and yet millions are, for that period of development, or the presence of right conditions, has not awakened them. In a letter from an unbelieving friend in L. A., he recently told me of a call he had from one of the prominent preachers in the city, and he expressed surprise at the way he talked in confidence and candor; and yet reports of his sermons can be characterized as nothing but arrant nonsense. I have mailed him a well marked Truth Seeker and hope it will stimulate the growth of ideas he expresses in private; but while one must live and provide for his family few preachers will give up a good salary and throw themselves on the mercy of a cold world, where dollars are hard to get by one who, having been educated for the ministry and knowing but little apart from it, is handicapped in earning a livelihood. So hypocrites will continue from necessity to pound the pulpit and expound what they do not believe. Our friend Marilla Ricker is to be complimented on recent productions of her pen, and I know of no woman now writing for the press who can express herself more clearly and forcibly. And while compliments are in order it is well to bestow one on the editorial "Our First Duty." "It is good stuff," as my friend Armstrong says, and is full of indisputable facts. While a convert to Socialism, I have never lost sight of the fact that Freethinkers—men who have fought religion and priestcraft in days of danger and despotism—have made possible the dissemination of socialistic ideas, and Freethought still occupies the first and foremost position in the world's progress. While a vestige of religion remains men will be mental slaves, and mental slaves were never radical thinkers or reformers; and when we get close to the radical Socialist we find he has about as much use for religion, as a rule, as you and I. A man cannot work very hard or successfully for this world when his mind is more interested and occupied in another; and when one is religious enough to believe the god he worships is directing the affairs of mankind, he is very timid about demanding changes for fear such demands will reflect on god's will and purpose. So it

is very true that "our first duty" is "the removal of the restrictions of religious creeds on the minds of men," for until that is accomplished those thus afflicted will remain puppets in the hands of the priesthood, those damnable enemies of liberty in every form, and shape. So on with your work and may the Truth Seeker never falter in its labor for mental emancipation.

THE REV. DIXON.

From Parker Wineman, Chicago.

Dear Macdonald:

I read in the last Truth Seeker your inquiry as to who started the "lie" about R. G. Ingersoll at one time publishing a book so obscene it was excluded from the mails.

There is none but a wilful "liar" that would utter such a "villainous" falsehood against R. G. Ingersoll, "as pure as the lilies of the field."

This fool Dixon claims to be authority upon all species of the sin microbe, and the cure all when administered under his formula. He has been forcing himself upon Chicago people for some time. No more vain bug flies. His public utterances are paid for as "advertisements," which are admitted into the columns of a Chicago paper accompanied with Dixon's beautiful face, purposely, no doubt, to give the ladies time and opportunity to scrutinize his angelic features.

Dixon has attempted to work on the credulity of our judges of the courts, our aldermen, our merchants, our capitalists, and the respectable class. Special invitations have been sent them to set aside a time when he will tell them the straight and narrow road to follow. The consummate cheek of such a freak of nature "primed and primped," standing before an audience, to be inspected, and judged by his utterance and "features," hypocrisy in every word and look, is enough to give a sensible man the lock-jaw.

Among all men of any and every calling, in my opinion, a liar is most "detestable" and Dixon knows down deep in his "dishonest" heart that he lies whenever he undertakes the defamation of Ingersoll's character. No honest, upright man, be he Christian or pagan, will defame the character of R. G. Ingersoll. Those who do are short on brain and honor.

"HONEST DOUBT."

From George Allen White, Massachusetts.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

Considerable is heard in these days about "honest doubt." It seems to be generally believed by Christian people that there are two kinds of dissentients against their religion—those whose doubts are honest, and those whose doubts are dishonest.

Now, no such thing as dishonest doubt does or can exist. We might as well talk of dishonest sincerity or broad narrowness. All doubt is doubt, all equally worthy; and by the mere fact it actually is doubt, and not hypocrisy or something else, it must of necessity be honest. If it is not honest, it is not doubt, whatever it is. Sometimes a scrutiny of the causes leading up to the mental processes compelling doubt may conceivably reveal the skeptic as unconsciously swayed by unworthy considerations, and indicate that the stability of his doubtings may well be questioned. But whatever the nature of the preliminary questionings, the moment they lead up to and become crystallized into doubt, that moment all allegations of dishonesty are outlawed.

Of course, it is possible for one to pretend to doubt things, although in reality feeling no questioning spirit whatever. I may be convinced of the genuineness of the Bible as an inspired work, and yet may continually call in question its pu-

tatively divine inspiration. The Christian may in truth have no faith in the dogmas which he assumes to reverence, but may live an entire lifetime in a state of flagrant dishonesty. When conditions like these exist, there is no doubt. There is only pretense. The quasi-unbeliever has no doubt of inspiration. He simply pretends to have. The quasi-Christian does not doubt the fallibility of his religion—does not doubt Agnosticism or Atheism. He merely pretends to do so.

It may be said here that probably the membership of Christian churches contains ninety-nine hypocrites to every one who may be found in the Freethought ranks. Why should a man desire to make his fellows imagine him a Freethinker or a doubter unless he really is one at heart? The incentive is all the other way. To obtain a little cheap notoriety, we may be told. But the cases must be extremely rare in which for such small results one is willing to endure the lifelong frowns, the ostracisms, the persecutions, that even yet await the iconoclast in most communities, and that tend to detract from his happiness. On the other hand, it is well known that the Christian church is honeycombed with parasites whose allegiance is conferred only with an eye to the loaves and fishes. All belief is honest, even as all doubt is honest; for whatever is dishonest cannot have reached the stage of belief and must be stamped as mere make-believe.

Whether skepticism be real or pretended, however, it is the duty of religious disputants to defend their doctrines against attack. If a statement is true, what difference does it make in large perspective what the motives may have been? The revelations of Copernicus ought to have been accepted on their merits as irrefragable facts, and cannot be rejected as spurious just because the man may have announced them in spite against a religious mother-in-law. Theological questions like the Fall of Man, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and Transubstantiation are to be decided according to the evidence relating pointedly and solely to those questions, and are not at all to be confused by bilious cogitations whether those venturing to challenge these absurdities can by any possibility be honest.

It is natural that he who discovers his position to be untenable should cast about for something which can be said ad hominem—an argument used only as a last resort, if at all, by even approximately respectable contestants. Unable to impugn the facts submitted by skeptical adversaries, unable to argue intelligibly, the religionist seeks to impugn the men themselves. This may be eminently Christian, but is not exactly ideal.

To believe the average impugner of doubt, only that incipient bread-and-butter questioning which keeps self-interestedly close to the moorings of Orthodoxy is entitled to the designation "honest"; the next stage in the advance toward liberalism is regarded as evidence of dishonest thought; a step beyond this perhaps shows the doubter to be "prejudiced" or "bitter"; while when the anathematized camp of Atheism itself is reached, honesty ceases altogether, and the truth seeker becomes, instead of the honorable and fearless investigator that reason might indicate, simply a "low scoffer" at sacred things. In other words, the more nearly honest a man is, the more dishonest he appears to Orthodox eyesight. The attitude of cowardly questioning and selfish hesitation which characterizes the ordinary liberal Christian who hates to abandon his hope of supreme enjoyment in a future life and consequently perhaps the social features of his enjoyment in this, is not one of "honest doubt," but rather one of contemptible, egoistic and inexcusable narrow-mindedness. The sooner Christians, taking their cue from the cant of the cad-clergy, stop calling this depraved class the only "honest"

kind of doubters, the better it will be for them.

A MISTAKEN EVANGELIST.

From Frank Swancara, Kansas.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

Our local (Garden City) paper contains the following with reference to one of a series of talks to men during the conduct of a union revival now in progress:

"The evangelist gave a brief talk on 'Infidels and Infidelity.' His address was clear and logical and he took up the arguments advanced by Infidels and refuted them one after another."

In explaining why men become Infidels the preacher asserted that the conduct of some church members brings discredit upon religion and creates doubts concerning Christianity. We contend that this is not the cause of our Infidelity, and when we point to the erring Christians we do not give their misconduct as the reason for our disbelief, but merely refer to their misdeeds to show that religious belief does not always make men virtuous. When we decided upon the truth or falsity of a creed we do not base our opinion upon the character of its adherents. We examine the creed, not the Christian.

In further accounting for the Infidelity of our city the preacher said that "disbelief was due to ignorance." If that be true, why is it that we know not of any Infidel becoming a believer, while many Christian thinkers have renounced their faith? Even Christian libraries contain material and literature to show that Moncure D. Conway, the student and thinker, who after having been an able Methodist preacher became an Infidel, had never repented his change of views, and died a loyal Freethinker. Ernest Renan, religious in youth, was in his latter years an Infidel. In our time we find J. E. Roberts of Kansas City whom our evangelist calls an "Infidel" and thinks he is thereby hurling an epithet at him.

We were told of charitable institutions founded by Christians, and the question was asked, "What have Infidels ever done?" Having access to a Christian library I consulted a cyclopedia to find if that Christian assertion were true, and I find the preachers have falsified the facts. I find that America had an Infidel named Stephen Girard, a banker, who died in Philadelphia in 1831. The cyclopedia speaks of him as a Freethinker and an admirer of Voltaire and Rousseau; it tells of his assistance given when yellow fever raged in Philadelphia, of his numerous and liberal contributions to charitable institutions and societies, and states that he founded an institution of learning.

The evangelist told us that the greatest thinkers of the world, the greatest poets and philosophers, were Christians, but he did not admit that there were many exceptions. Christian propagandists do not admit such things. Some time ago I made the assertion to a number of Christians that Thomas Jefferson was an Infidel. They did not seem to believe it, and all stated that they never hear such a statement made before. Had I told them that I got the fact from some Infidel author they would have still doubted Jefferson's Infidelity, but I was able to refer them to a Christian book, and of course from such a source we can get but a reluctant admission. In "The New American Cyclopedia" published by D. Appleton & Co., 1872, Vol. IX, page 767, I find the following with reference to Thomas Jefferson:

"He carried the rule of subjecting everything to the test of abstract reason into matters of religion. Discarding faith as unphilosophical, he became an Infidel."

In the Literary Digest of December 22, 1906, appears an extract from the Outlook which characterizes the religion of Abraham Lincoln as a form of Ag-

nosticism. From Freethought literature we can gather the names of hundreds of great Infidels, but not so many from Christian writers, yet we can gather the names of Darwin, Humboldt, Franklin, Spinoza, and others, and one who certainly did not recant, whose Infidelity was so genuine that he would not deny it to save his life, who was burned at the stake by the Christians—Giordano Bruno.

The preacher linked the Anarchists with Infidels, meaning to convey the impression that to be one is to be the other. Robert Ingersoll was an Infidel and a Republican. Thomas Paine was far from an Anarchist. Thomas Jefferson was a Democrat. The Anarchist who slew the priest in Denver was not an Infidel, but, according to the reports of the associated press, was a sincere Catholic, a devout believer, who although he hated the priests yet loved his religion.

The world is yet to learn of a crime committed as the direct result of Infidelity. The world will soon forget the recent Christian crime in Pennsylvania where a sincere believer in God's Book murdered his niece, a child of five years, thinking he was executing a command of his compassionate God.

THE BEST EXTANT.

From W. W. Yarnall, Pennsylvania.
E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

Inclosed find \$3 for another year's subscription to The Truth Seeker.

I consider said paper one of the best publications extant. There is not a periodical in this country, or in any other, that surpasses it in the good sense and useful knowledge with which its pages abound. It tells plainly the simple truth about things in general, and the Bible in particular. And I am glad to see that it is gaining a steady foothold in the civilized world; that it is keeping step with the march of progress.

I believe that a man of mature years who really thinks that the Old Testament is the inspired word of the great Maker and Ruler of the world, that the book was written by a God of infinite wisdom and goodness, is hardly fit to have a vote, and much less to fill the high office of a governor or president in this free country. Such an one, in my humble opinion, comes so near being a half-witted fool that the difference between the two is so very small as to be imperceptible to the naked eye. Such an ignoramus ought to be led by the collar and breeches to the borders of civilization, and then given a tremendous kick into heathendom, where I think he properly belongs. The influence of all such worketh every time against truth and justice in this republic.

A SUGGESTION AS TO MARK TWAIN.
From Dr. G. G. Eitel, Minneapolis.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

I have often thought that if Mark Twain (Mr. Clemens) could be induced to write a number of articles on Freethought, etc., they would be very widely read and therefore do a vast amount of good. He could get anything that he would see fit to write, published in some popular magazine or even in the daily newspapers.

Would it not be a good idea for you to try to induce Mr. Clemens to handle his pen in this direction during his latter days?

AN INDEPENDENT TEACHER.

From A. B. Cookerly, Indiana.

E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

In regard to one of the late articles in The Truth Seeker as to the teacher in the public schools and necessary submission to the people's views of Christianity, I am a teacher and am glad to say that I have never met any such obstacles in the expression of my Freethought opinions outside of the school-

room. But, of course, when teaching we must teach things just as they are, modestly, and be very careful not to interfere with the rights of others which I claim for myself. If a pupil and his parents are Christian I should not tell him they are wrong where such a matter is a question of dispute.

A PREJUDICED ORTHOGRAPHER.

From Henry Schwartz, Brighton, England.
E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of Buchner's "Force and Matter," sent me from America through Messrs. Watts & Co. I cannot refrain from expressing an opinion on the American way of dealing with books in the English language. On opening this Buchner-in-English I find before my eyes "The famous English traveler," etc. Now, there is no such word as (to) travel or traveler in the English language. I am prepared to find other incongruous deviations from the English literary standard. Apart from the fact that these alterations are wholly unnecessary and useless, one is surprised that these mutilated books are offered to the English public in the form of a gratuitous offense. Commercially the sales of many of these very useful American reprints, etc., would easily be doubled if the defacement of English words were discontinued. Personally, I am unable to hand any of the books issued in America to young readers, especially foreigners, owing to the corrupt rendering of many words which have long ago been established in spelling under the English standard and which in American printers' hands are turned into inanities. As has already been clearly demonstrated, the "or" in the American printers' "neighbor" has no justification except as an attempt to create an American departure from what has grown out of the English life. Why is nei retained and the hour which accurately symbolizes the English sound in neighbour, altered into "bor" for which no equivalent sound exists in the world? The spelling of English words according to "Latin" models is, to say the least, a pedantic affectation, presuming that people must be better acquainted with 'Roman' usage than with the more recent Norman influences. Again as also pointed out centre makes the natural central, whereas center is neither latin nor correct as central and an obvious vulgarity. Again where the s has been long ago adopted (as in civilise) in English in place of z, what earthly sense can there be in upsetting rule, raking up the antiquated form again and printing the z in whole editions. Truly, one marvels at this unnecessary interference in matters literary by a people who aim at cultivation and enlightenment, basing their whole intellectual output on purely English standards. Instead of learning to love these American publications, one gets to look upon them with loathing and blots out the bad spelling for fear of corrupting chance users.

FOR SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

From Earle Cornwell, Nebraska.

Mr. E. M. Macdonald—Dear Sir:

You surely haven't much time to spare, but please give this letter of mine due consideration. Mr. Macdonald, I respect you as a man who has the courage of his own convictions, which is a hell of a lot more than the average man of to-day has, and I want to know why it is or isn't right to change our spelling to the simplified.

It is a whole lot easier and faster, and I don't know of anybody against it but the church.

I come to the words time and time again in my copy of The Truth Seeker, "though," and "through," and have to stop and look twice to make out which is which, and it is aggravating to have to stop a train of that for this.

FREETHOUGHT BOOKS.

From The Truth Seeker Company's Catalogue.

62 VESEY ST., NEW YORK.

All books ordered from The Truth Seeker Company are sent by mail or express prepaid on receipt of price. If your order amounts to \$10 or over, send us the list of books you have selected, and we will by return mail tell you what reduction we can make on them. We will do the best we can for you.

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AGE OF REASON. By Thomas Paine. Cloth, with steel plate portrait, 50 cents. Paper, no portrait, 15 cents.

From new plates, on good paper, and revised by the most authentic editions of the work, this is the best as well as the cheapest "Age of Reason" to be had.

AGE OF REASON. By Thomas Paine. Presentation Edition. Postpaid, \$2.

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ALAMONTADA, THE GALLEY SLAVE. By Heinrich Zschokke. Translated from the German by Ira G. Mosher, LL.B. Paper, 25 cents.

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Second edition, with large new half-tone Portrait, the best picture extant. This pamphlet is the only work which was completed before the death of Miss Collins, her other manuscripts being lost.

APOSTLES OF CHRIST. By Austin Holyoake. (Tract.) 5 cents.

A consideration of the characters of the followers of Jesus.

ASTRO-THEOLOGY. By L. L. Dawson. (Tract.) 5 cents.

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THE BIBLE OF NATURE. By Prof. F. L. Oswald. Cloth \$1.

An outline of the Religion of the future; preaching the gospel of "Redemption" by reason and science; reconciling instinct and precept; and making nature the ally of education.

CAREER OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS. By Hudson Tuttle. Paper, 25 cents.

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This is Judge Waite's masterly address delivered at the Freethought Congress of 1898.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH: His Life and Writings. (See "A Few Words About the Devil.") Cloth, \$1. Paper, 50 cents.

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CHRISTIANITY: ITS NATURE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CIVILIZATION. By Charles Watts. (Tract.) 5 cents.

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A small but valuable tract for promiscuous distribution wherever the Sunday bigots are enforcing their Sunday Laws. Hand a copy to your Sabbatarian neighbor.

CHRISTIAN SCHEME OF REDEMPTION. By Charles Watts. (Tract.) 2 cents.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND MODERN SKEPTICISM. By the Duke of Somerset. Paper, 25 cents.

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Showing that the Christian Christ is a composite of earlier messiahs, and is not a historical personage.

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COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW. By Lemoyne Benjamin. (Tract.) 5 cents.

COMMON SENSE. By Thomas Paine. Paper, 15 cents.

Remarks on Government addressed to the people of America, urging a separation from England. It is in this pamphlet that the expression "Free and independent states of America" first appears and it was the arguments Paine here used that influenced the colonists to rebel, and led to the establishment of our present government.

CONFLICT BETWEEN REASON AND SUPERSTITION. By T. C. Widdcombe. Paper, 10 cents.

Theology and religion by the light of

(Continued on page 349.)

CHILDREN'S CORNER FOR BOYS AND GIRLS OLD AND YOUNG

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."

June.

When the bubble moon is young,
Down the sources of the breeze,
Like a yellow lantern hung
In the tops of blackened trees,
There is promise she will grow
Into beauty unforecast,
Into all unthought-of gold.
Heigh ho!

When the Spring has dipped her foot,
Like a bather, in the air,
And the ripples warm the root
Till the little flowers dare,
There is promise she will grow
Sweeter than the Springs of old,
Fairer than was ever told.
Heigh ho!

But the moon of middle night,
Risen, is the rounded moon;
And the Spring of budding light
Eddies into just a June.
Ah, the promise—was it so?
Nay, the gift was fairy gold;
All the new is over-old.
Heigh ho!

—Harrison S. Morris.

The First Sunday Train.

The first railroad train to run regularly on Sunday in this country followed the establishing of the pioneer milk store in New York city. Thaddeus Selleck started that store at 193 Reade street in the spring of 1842 for the sale of Orange county milk, the completion of the New York and Erie Railroad as far as Goshen having made it possible for the farmers of that region to send their milk to New York by train and boat.

The railroad then extended only from Goshen to Piermont, on the Hudson River, and its connection with New York was by boat. There was no train or boat on Sunday. In fact, there was only one passenger train each way on weekdays, and a freight train ran every other day.

The milk arrived at New York in good time and always in good condition, but Selleck's customers demanded fresh milk on Monday morning as well as other days, and that demand could not be supplied unless there was a train to bring milk to him on Sunday. Selleck began in the spring of 1843 efforts to induce the railroad company to put on a Sunday train for milk, the milk traffic having become the most important item of transportation on the new line.

The railroad management wouldn't listen to the proposition then, because of the opposition to it that arose, particularly from the ministers and their congregations. The opposition was so great that church members who were milk shippers were threatened with dismissal from their church communion if they should ship milk on Sunday trains.

The discussion continued from the spring of 1843 until August of that year. The New York consumers of Orange county milk had begun what would now be called a boycott against it because they could not get fresh milk on Monday morning. This boycott became so serious that the railroad company was losing the most profitable part of its traffic.

Therefore, while not announcing it officially, the company notified its two conductors, Captain Ayers and Hank Stewart, that after the first Sunday in August they must take turns in running the train that carried the milk every Sunday until further notice. The railroad had then been extended to Middletown, nine miles beyond Goshen, and the milk shipping territory was much enlarged.

On no railroad in the country had any Sunday train been regularly run up to that time. The church people not only in Orange county but of New York also denounced this one as too awful to contemplate, and one Goshen divine declared from his pulpit that "the curse of God would surely fall upon all concerned in it or who patronized it."

It looked very much at the start as if such prophecies were to be fulfilled, for on the very first trip of that original Sunday train the locomotive was thrown from the track near Sloatsburg by a misplaced plank at a highway crossing and it plunged into the pond at the side of the track, dragging with it the two cars carrying the milk. No lives were lost, but the locomotive and the cars lay sunk in the pond twenty-four hours before they could be removed—and the first Sunday shipment of milk never reached its destination.

But the railroad company would not accept this mishap as a judgment on it for running a Sunday train, and persisted in the innovation. A great many Orange county farmers who could not at first reconcile their religious convictions with doing business on Sunday refused to ship their milk on this train for some time, but as they saw a good thing passing along without getting their share of it, and as Selleck after a while notified these farmers that if they couldn't ship milk on Sunday they need not ship any on any other day of the week, they compromised with their consciences in some way and became Sunday shippers, just like their worldly minded neighbors.

Promptly they were cut off from communion with their churches, but as familiarity with the Sunday train gradually seemed to take its curse off opposition to it relaxed and it at last ceased to offend even the church element. In time all the excommunicated farmers were taken back into the fold. Progress had won a victory, and the church acknowledged its defeat.

Going to John

"Going north, madam?"
"No, ma'am."
"Going south, then?"
"I don't know, ma'am. I never was on the cars. I'm waiting for the train to go to John."
"John?"
"Oh! John's my son. He's out in Kansas."
"I'm going to Kansas myself. You intend to visit?"
"No, ma'am."
She said it with a sigh so heart-burdened the stranger was touched.
"John sick?"
"No."

The evasive tone, the look of pain in the furrowed face, were noticed by the lady who asked these questions as the gray head bowed upon the toil-marked hand. She wanted to hear her story, and to help her.

"Excuse me—John in trouble?"
"No, no—I'm in trouble. Trouble my old heart never thought to see."
"The train does not come for some time. Here, rest your head upon my cloak."
"You are kind. If my own were so I shouldn't be in trouble."
"What is your trouble? Maybe I can help you."

"It's hard to tell it to strangers, but my heart is too full to keep it back. When I was left a widow with three children, I thought it was more than I could bear; but it wasn't bad as this—"

The stranger waited till she recovered her voice to go on.

"I had only the cottage and my hands. I toiled early and late all the years till

John could help me. Then we kept the girls at school—John and me. They were married not long ago. Married rich, too, as the world goes. John sold the cottage, sent me to the city to live with them and he went West to begin for himself. He said he had provided for the girls, and they would provide for me now."

Her voice choked with emotion. The stranger waited in silence.

"I went to them in the city. I went to Mary's first. She lived in a great house with servants to wait on her; a house many times larger than the little cottage—but I soon found there wasn't room enough for me—"

The tears stood in the lines of her cheeks. The ticket agent came out softly, stirred the fire, and went back. After a pause she continued:

"I went to Martha's—went with a pain in my heart I never felt before. I was willing to do anything so as not to be a burden. But that wasn't it. I found they were ashamed of my bent old body and my withered face—ashamed of my rough, wrinkled hands—made so toiling for them—"

The tears came thick and fast now.

The stranger's hand rested carelessly on the gray head.

"At last they told me I must live at a boarding-house, and they'd keep me there. I couldn't say anything. My heart was too full of pain. I wrote to John what they were going to do. He wrote right back, a long, kind letter for me to come right to him. I should always have a home while he had a roof, he said. To come right there and stay as long as I lived. That his mother should never go out to strangers. So I'm going to John. He's got only his rough hands and his great warm heart—but there's room for his old mother—God bless—him—"

The stranger brushed a tear from her cheek and waited the conclusion.

"Some day when I am gone where I'll never trouble them again, Mary and Martha will think of it all. Some day when the hands that toiled for them are folded and still; when the eyes that watched over them through many a weary night are closed forever; when the little old body, bent with the burdens it bore for them, is put away where it never can shame them—"

The agent drew his hand quickly before his eyes, and went out as if to look for the train. The stranger's fingers stroked the gray locks, while the tears of sorrow and of sympathy fell together. The weary heart was unburdened. Soothed by a touch of sympathy the troubled soul yielded to the longing for rest, and she fell asleep. The agent went noiselessly about his duties that he might not wake her. As the fair stranger watched she saw a mile on the careworn face. The lips moved. She bent down to hear.

"I'm doing it for Mary and Martha. They'll take care of me some time."

She was dreaming of the days in the little cottage—of the fond hopes which inspired her, long before she learned, with a broken heart, that some day she would, homeless in the world, go to John.

Twelve Billion Newspapers.

It is estimated that the annual aggregation of the circulation of the newspapers of the world is some 12,000,000,000 copies. To grasp an idea of what these figures mean one should be told that these papers would cover no fewer than 10,450 square miles of surface; that they are printed on 781,250 tons of paper; and, further, that if the number (12,000,000,000) represented, instead of copies, seconds of time it would take more than 333 years for them to elapse. In lieu of this arrangement, we might press and pile them vertically upward to reach our highest mountains.

Topping all these and even the highest Alps, the pile would reach the magnifi-

cent altitude of, in round numbers, 500 miles. Calculating that the average man spends five minutes in the day reading his paper (a very low estimate), we find that the people of the world altogether annually consume in the reading of their papers an amount of time equivalent to 100,000 years.—Harper's Weekly.

Contents Computed.

"Civil service examinations," says a government official, "are not infrequently the source of no little amusement."

"Some years ago there was an examination of candidates in New York for the position of park grass cutter. To this question, 'What are the cubical contents of a room 15 feet long, ten feet wide and eight feet high?' one applicant returned the answer. 'One bedstead, a bureau and a washstand. If such a room was a kitchen or a parlor, it would be larger, and contain more articles.'—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

Sure of Mother.

"Now, Jamie," said a school teacher, "if there were only one pie for dessert, and there were five of you children and papa and mamma to divide it among, how large a piece would you get?"

"One sixth," replied Jamie, promptly. "But there would be seven people there, Jamie. Don't you know how many times seven goes into one?"

"Yes'm. And I know my mother. She'd say she wasn't hungry for pie that day. I'd get one-sixth."

A Natural Error.

The little daughter of a homoeopathic physician received a ring with a pearl in it on the Christmas tree. Two days later she poked her head tearfully in at the door of her father's office.

"Papa," she sobbed, "papa, I've lost the little pill out of my ring."

The Hen's Purpose.

An old hen was pecking at some stray carpet tacks in the back yard.

"Now, what do you suppose that fool hen is eating those tacks for?" said Homer.

"Perhaps," joined his better half, "she is going to lay a carpet."

How?

The teacher was telling of the effects of cigarette smoking on the heart, and added, "People with weak hearts often die."

A deeply interested boy asked here: "How often do they have to die before they stay dead!"—Wasp.

Fresher.

"Can any little boy," asked the new teacher, "tell me the difference between a lake and an ocean?" "I can," replied Edward whose version had been learned from experience. "Lakes are much pleasanter to swallow when you fall in."

The Lesson of the Trees.

Master, I learn this lesson from the trees: Not to grow old. The maple by my door Puts forth green leaves as cheerily as I, When I was taller than this selfsame tree, Put forth my youthful longings. I have erred, Standing a bleak and barren leafless thing Among my hopeful brothers. I am shamed. I will not be less hopeful than the trees; I will not cease to labor and aspire; I will not pause in patient high endeavor; I will be young in heart until I die.

—Richard Kirk.

"Work for some good,
Be it ever so slowly;
Cherish some flower,
Be it ever so lowly."

Buxom.—Mr. Chicago—I saw your daughter Marie last evening, and she looked quite pale and fagged out. Is she delicate?

Mrs. Pittsburg—No, indeed! There is not a girl in society as indelicate as Marie.—Judge.

At Newport.—Little Girl—Oh, mamma! Tell me! When will I be big enough to be unhappily married?—Life.

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(Continued from page 347.)

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Gems of Thought.

Blessings on Science! When the earth seemed old;

When Faith grew dotting, and our reason cold;

'Twas she discovered that the world was young,

And taught a language to its hisping tongue.

—Mackay.

To gather much thought into few words stamps the man of genius. Therefore, if possible, the quintessence only!—Schopenhauer.

"It is with the narrow-souled writers as with the narrow-necked bottles; the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring it out."

"If the author is good, it does not matter so much how bad is the subject; if the author is bad, it does not matter at all how good is the subject."

Few write in the way in which an architect builds; who before he sets to work, sketches out his plan, and thinks it over down to its smallest details.—Schopenhauer.

Without liberty there can be no such thing as conscience, no such word as justice. All human actions—all good, all bad—have for a foundation the idea of human liberty, and without liberty there can be no vice, and there can be no virtue.—Ingersoll.

"When we observe the accordance and harmony between ancient and modern myths and mysteries, we readily perceive how little originality our modern faith contains; for there is not a rite, ceremony or belief we now profess that cannot be traced to its origin in Chaldean idolatry—in Assyrian, Egyptian or Roman mythology.—Inman's "Ancient Faiths."

I am wax—I am energy. Like the whirlwind and waterspout I twist my environment into my form whether it will or not. What is it that transmutes electricity into auroras, and sunlight into rainbows, and soft flakes of snow into stars, and adamant into crystals, and makes solar system of nebulae? Whatever it is, I am its cousin german. I too have my ideals to work out, and the universe is given me for raw material. I am a signet and I will put my stamp upon the molten stuff before it hardens. What allegiance do I owe to environment? I shed environments for others as a snake sheds its skin. The world must come my way—slowly, if it will—but still my way. I am a vortex launched in chaos to suck it into shape.—Ernest Crosby.

"The Heart Knoweth."

Sometimes my little woe is lulled to rest. Its clamor shamed by some old poet's page—

Tumult of hurrying hoof, and battle-rage,
And dying knight, and trampled warrior-crest.

Stern faces, old heroic souls unblest,
Eye me with scorn, as they my grief would gage.

A mere child, schooled to keep upon the stage,
Tricked for a part of woe and sombre-drest.

"Lo, who art thou," they ask, "that thou shouldst fret
To find, forsooth, one single heart undone?"

The page thou turnest there is purple-wet
With blood that gushed from Caesar overthrown!

Lo, who art thou to prate of sorrow?"
Yet,

This little woe, it is my own, my own!
—Charlotte Wilson.

The Author.

Men called him friendless and alone;
For in a dark and dreary room
His solitary taper shone

Upon the midnight's utter gloom.
Yet still he labored on, and wrote
Of simple things, the fair and sweet,
That only poet hearts may note

And poet homage make complete.

Men called him friendless. Yet at last,
When Death, because he grieved so long,

A snowy raiment o'er him cast
And bade him join the uncounted throng.

A thousand hands their laurel brought,
A thousand hearts their gift of rue;
For those who read the work he wrought
Had loved him, though he never knew.

—Lalla Mitchell.

Not for Parsons.

Naturally—"What is it you like best about us girls?" asked the sweet young thing.

"My arms," answered the youth.—Boston Transcript.

Missionary Work—"So you once lived in Africa, Sam?"

"Yes, sah."
"Ever do any missionary work out there, Sam?"

"Oh, yes, sah! I was cook for a cannibal chief, sah!"—Yonkers Statesman.

The Old One's Fault—"What brought you here, my poor fellow?" the Chicago settlement worker asked.

"I married a new woman, sir," the prisoner groaned.

"Aha, and she was so domineering and extravagant that it drove you to desperate courses, eh?"

"No; the old woman turned up."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Some Silent Winners.—Examine our list of Presidential candidates and see how few of them made stump speeches.

George Washington made none.

Thomas Jefferson made none.

John Adams, John Quincy Adams, James Madison, James Monroe made none.

Neither did Andrew Jackson, nor Martin Van Buren, nor General Harrison, nor James K. Polk, nor Franklin Pierce, nor James Buchanan.—Weekly Jeffersonian.

Seems to Keep Low Company.—Mr. Louis Harrison says, in a letter to the Sun, that he has met many ministers, and "all have held that a theatrical life was incompatible with pure, sweet, Christian living."

Three of this opinion that he says he knew were the Rev. Jere. Cooke, who eloped with Floretta Whaley; the Rev. J. Frank Cordova, who eloped with a choir girl, and got three years, and a minister in San Francisco, who was hanged for murdering two girls. Anybody might happen to know one of these ministers, but what will Mr. Harrison say to the suggestion that to know all three of them implies an extraordinary taste for criminal society?—Life.

All Three Kinds.—There is a village in New England which clings fondly to the customs of the past and has small regard for innovations. Not long ago an old resident died. The lawyer who went up to settle the family affairs stayed overnight at the little inn.

He was a dyspeptic, and ever cautious about his food. Therefore he looked searchingly at the waitress as she stood at the breakfast-table the next morning to greet him.

"I'm—er—obliged to be very careful of myself," he said, solemnly. "My diet is extremely limited. What sort of breakfast food have you? That is all I take in the morning, except dry toast."

"We have apple, squash and mince," said the girl, regarding him in kindly and sympathetic fashion. "You can take your choice, or have all three, if you like."—Youth's Companion.

The South Going Dry.
Lay the jest about the julep in the camphor balls at last.

For the miracle has happened and the olden days are past,
That which made Milwaukee famous doesn't foam in Tennessee,

And the lid in Alabama is as tight locked as can be;

And the comic paper Colonel and his cronies well may sigh,
For the mint is waving gally, and the South is going dry.

By the stillside on the hillside in Kentucky, all is still,
And the only damp refreshment must be dipped up from the rill.

North Carolina's stately Governor gives his soda glass a shove,
And discusses local option with the South Carolina Gov.

It is useless at the fountain to be winkful of the eye,
For the cocktail glass is dusty and the South is going dry.

It is water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink,
We no longer hear the music of the mel-low crystal clink

When the Colonel and the General and the Major and the Jedge
Meet to have a little nip to give the appetite an edge—

For the eggnog now is nogless and the rye has gone awry,
And the punchbowl holds carnations and the South is going dry.

—The Voice.

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Of Varicocele, Seminal Weakness, and Impotency or Lost Manhood. If you or any of your friends are suffering from these diseases see that you send six 2 cent stamps FOR MY BOOK explaining my treatment, and in which a statement of these complaints and their evil effects are given, together with sworn testimonials—undisputed evidences of my success. I have never seen a case of Varicocele, Seminal Weakness and Impotency properly treated by any other method than mine—a medicine applied externally. I have never seen a case so far advanced that my treatment would not give the greatest benefit, and those cases are few and far between which it will not completely and permanently cure. I therefore wish to make my treatment as public and widely extended as possible. I can give treatment just as effectively by mail at a distance as in my office. I make no charge for advice by mail and my FEE is moderate for the wonderful benefit you will receive. Address me at Vineland, N. Jersey, where I have been in Medical Practice for 35 years.

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News of the Week

The steamer Kronprinz Wilhelm sailed from New York last week with \$7,100,000 in gold for Germany and Paris.

Francois Coppee, the famous French poet and playwright, and dean of the French Academy, died May 23, aged 66 years.

The battle fleet has called at Bellingham, Seattle, and other Washington ports. It will not stop at Apia, Samoa, a German port.

In the Concho valley, Texas, there was a hailstorm, May 20, which killed calves, colts, and sheep. Report says that the hailstones were as big as baseballs.

While he was singing a hymn in St. Matthew's Lutheran school, this city, George Weitzen, who was intended for the ministry, died instantaneously, May 15.

A resolution providing for the election of United States senators by popular vote was defeated in the U. S. Senate, 33 to 20, May 23. Senator Owen of Oklahoma introduced it.

A train bearing a load of pilgrims to a shrine where miracles are reputed to take place was wrecked near Antwerp, in Belgium, May 21, and sixty of the passengers were killed.

Rioting and dynamiting of cars have marked the strike on the three-cent municipal street car lines in Cleveland. Last Sunday the strikers voted to arbitrate and go back to work.

The grounding of the New York Fire Department yacht Velox in the East River disclosed the fact that the city's vessel was being used to take the Irish Cardinal Logue and eleven other Catholic priests on a junket.

The New York Department of Health has appealed from the decision of Judge Dickey of the Supreme Court in Brooklyn that the death certificates of osteopaths must be accepted. The regular doctors are behind the appeal.

Mae Catherine Wood, who sued United States Senator Platt for divorce, not only lost her case but was put in jail on a charge of perjury. She put in evidence a marriage certificate of a form which was not printed until the year after the date which it bore.

That conspiracy in restraint of trade, the Sunday law, was enforced to the letter in East Orange, N. J., last Sunday. Laundrymen were arrested for delivering clean clothes in the morning and a caterer for accommodating his customers with ice cream.

The House of Representatives, May 22, rejected the amendment to the postoffice appropriation bill providing for a subsidy for ocean mail steamers. The scheme was denounced as a "monumental plunder of the national treasury in behalf of the private shipping interests involved."

Earl Gulick, a boy soprano who sang in the Church of the Heavenly Rest, this city, and also before President McKinley and President Roosevelt, who praised him, received a medal from Andrew Carnegie. The prominence thus gained introduced him to bad company, and the other day he was arrested for robbery.

The Rev. Dr. Charles L. Goodell of Calvary Methodist church, this city, was a promising candidate for the office of bishop before the Baltimore conference until rival nominees circulated the fact that he was a divorced man. Although the Rev. Goodell was not the "guilty party," so called, the revival of the scandal defeated his aspirations.

For attending a theatre performance on Wednesday evening instead of prayer meeting, the Rev. Dr. J. H. Clark, a Methodist Protestant clergyman of Camden, was ousted from the ministerial education board by the Methodist Protestant General Conference at Pittsburg, May 23. The play the Rev. Mr. Clark attended was Hall Caine's "The Christian."

The municipality of Paterson, N. J., has begun a suit for libel against the Broadway Magazine and Broughton Brandenburgh for disparaging statements regarding that city. Brandenburgh wrote an article for the magazine entitled "The Menace of the Red Flag," in which Paterson was represented as a city of Anarchy, or something of that kind.

The orders issued by the Board of Health of New York City requiring that all persons who milk cows must wear white duck overalls and jackets, otherwise the milk will not be allowed to enter New York, have placed the majority of milk producers in a predicament. Much of the milking has heretofore been done by the wives and daughters of farmers, all of whom now declare that they will never don the overalls. The farmers think they cannot afford to dispense with their female help and they are at a loss to know what to do.

A convention in New York, called by J. Eads How, chairman of the National Committee for the Relief of the Unemployed passed resolutions that the association demand of the Legislature that it at once appropriate \$6,000,000 for improving the condition of the roadways, deepening and improving waterways and do other municipal and state work on which the unemployed could be put to work at union wages. Other resolutions declared in favor of the initiative and referendum and a cooperative commonwealth as a final solution of the problem of idleness and poverty.

Prime Minister Asquith, of England, replying May 20 to a delegation in favor of woman suffrage, said that the government intended to pass a comprehensive measure of electoral reform, and that should an amendment favoring woman suffrage be introduced the government would not oppose it, provided the proposed change was upon democratic lines. He admitted, respecting woman suffrage, that he had not "reached the state of grace which its advocates enjoyed," but he had an open mind. He was aware that about two-thirds of his colleagues favored it. This declaration means that the government will not attempt to influence its followers, but will leave all to vote as they please. The suffragettes were not satisfied with Mr. Asquith's statement, and twenty of them stormed his residence. Six were arrested.

On the night of May 17, the Rev. S. C. Coffman, pastor of the Meadowdale circuit in Marion county, W. Va., and formerly pastor of the Hope Methodist church of Wheeling, killed his young wife. About 5 o'clock next morning the preacher, covered with blood, staggered into a farm house half a mile from his home and exclaimed: "I have killed my wife!" When neighbors got to the Coffman house they found the body of Mrs. Coffman covered with wounds in the yard. She had been literally cut to pieces. A bloody razor at her side showed how the deed had been done. Coffman was put in the Marion county jail at Fairmount. He says that at 2 o'clock in the morning he awakened and found himself in the yard standing over the dead body of his wife with the bloody razor in his hand. Coffman is 30 years of age and has been eccentric. He has been holding revival services and on the night of the murder had his biggest meeting. He pleads a brainstorm.

After having held her captive for a year in the dungeons of the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, the Russian government announces that it is about to bring Mme. Catherine Breshkovsky to trial upon a charge of treason. The aged woman, who has given more than half her life to the uplifting of the Russian peasantry and who has suffered no less than fifteen years' imprisonment for her activity in the cause of a free Russia, now lies beneath the indictment of the czar's special inquisitorial commission. She will be tried upon the specific charge of distributing arms and conducting a revolutionary propaganda among the peasant members of the revolutionary organization. The extreme penalty for this offense is death. Mme. Breshkovsky has been a co-prisoner with Nicholas Tchaikovsky, the "Founder of the Russian Revolution." A petition for the release of these two prisoners was sent last December to Premier Stolypin by a group of prominent Americans who presented the sentiments of thousands of citizens of New York, Chicago, and Boston.

Postmaster Morgan of New York has ordered that the general delivery windows at the general post office are to be kept open for business twenty-four hours a day, even on Sundays and holidays, whereas it has been the practice to close them at midnight on week days and at 6 p. m. on holidays. As the postoffice is maintained for the convenience of the public, which pays the deficit, the order is a dictate of the simplest kind of common sense.

Lectures and Meetings.

The Sunrise Club.—The next dinner of the Sunrise Club will be held at the Cafe Boulevard, Tenth street and Second avenue, on Monday evening, June 1. "What Did Walt Whitman Intend to Teach?" will be the subject of a symposium, the speakers being Horace Traubel, John H. Johnston, Theodore Schroeder, and James F. Morton, Jr. Notify the secretary, E. C. Walker, 244 West 143rd street, if you are going.

Walt Whitman Fellowship.—The fifteenth annual convention will be held on May 31 at the Hotel Brevoort, New York, in the afternoon at 3 o'clock for readings, addresses, and music, and at 7 in the evening, for dinner and informal speeches. Tickets for the dinner are \$1.50. Notify Horace Traubel, Camden, N. J.

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

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.

May 31.—2:30 P. M. Debate on "The Impracticability of Socialism" between Edward Dobson and D. K. Young. At 7:30 P. M., lecture on "Liberty and Progress." By Edward Dobson.

THE BIBLE AS IT READS

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St. John 2:16—"Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

1 Cor. 14:34, 35—"Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

St. Matt. 16:3—"O ye hypocrites, can ye not discern the signs of the times?"

St. Matt. 24—"Tell us what shall be the end of the world. Jesus answered and said, as the days of Noah were, Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom and there shall be famines and pestilences, and except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved."

Eccle. 4:4—"But the earth abideth forever."

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