

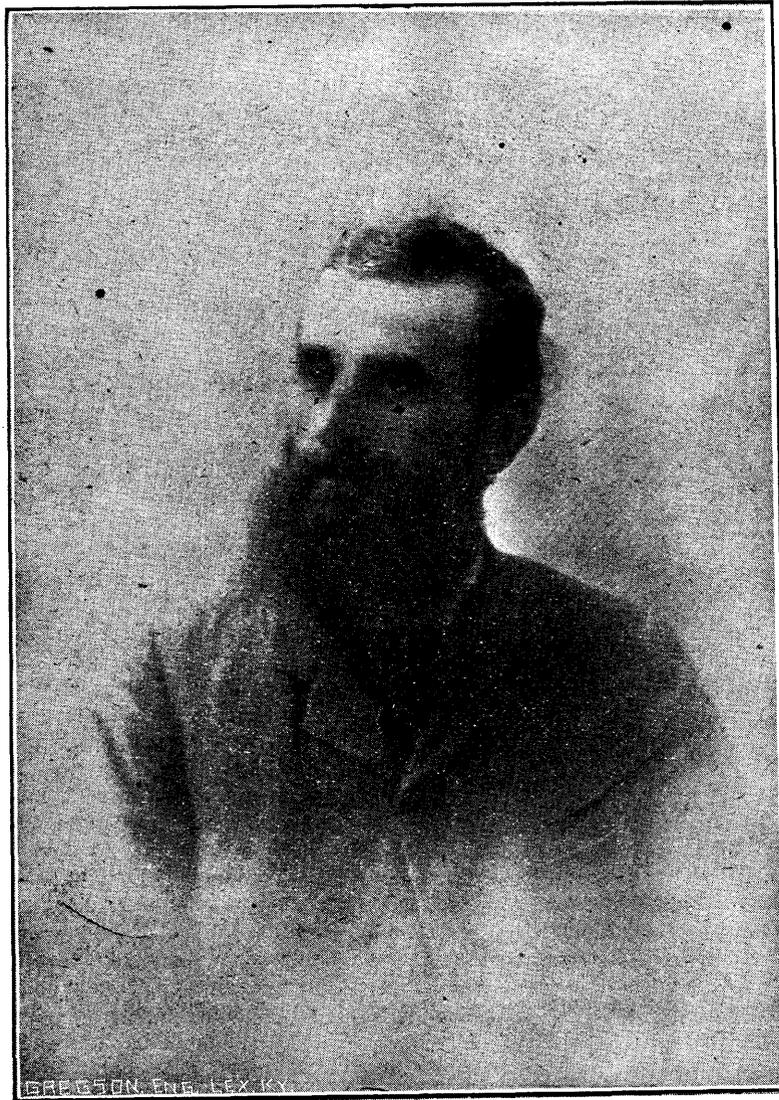
BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



CHANNING SEVERANCE.

Brilliant Advocate of the Philosophy of Freetought.

CHANNING SEVERANCE

The subject of the weekly sketch in this issue, having no choice in the selection of his parents, had a minister for his father, and was born into this world under the influence of Universalism, for both his parents accepted that unpopular brand of Christianity 54 years ago, when he made his appearance among the hills of Vermont.

His sire was the son of a Presbyterian deacon, and consequently lived in an atmosphere of hell fire and religious gloom during his boyhood days.

The Bible was the accepted authority on all the affairs of life, and how to make themselves miserable to please God and secure entrance into the 7x9 orthodox heaven that Presbyterians believe in, was the one primal object in life. The old deacon prayed and pleaded with God to keep 'em out of hell, and beat the boys with a rod, as counselled by Solomon, until nearly man grown. Religious fears darkened all the joys of life, for such fears beget other fears as naturally as our surroundings shape our thoughts; and every waking hour of his parents were characterized by worriment over this world as well as the next. That spirit of gloom and endless worry that was transmitted to him by his never-at-rest mother, and the solemn views of life as instilled into him by the worst branch of a hell-fire religion ever known, were never eliminated from his nature during life, nor much lessened by the consoling doctrines of Universalism, which Presbyterianism drove him into and made him a clergyman for 35 years. And that streak of pessimism which permeates his descendants can be traced to the dark and foreboding doctrines of a religion that rested for centuries on the Puritans of New England and their descendants, like a pall of midnight darkness. We of the present are what the past has made us, for there is no break in the endless chain of cause and effect, and the influence in some form of the worst and meanest religion ever devised by priestcraft—Christianity—has been woven into our nature; and it has augmented the troubles of this life by piling up the terrors of the next, and generations must yet come and go under the influence of Freethought before the damnable results through heredity can be eliminated—that long belief in an angry God and everlasting torture for sinners is responsible for.

From Presbyterianism to Universalism was a long step toward Freethought, and two generations from the old blue-bellied deacon attained the mental freedom expressed in that word; for his grandchildren are out of the theological woods entirely, and basking in the sunlight of Reason.

The subject of this sketch claims no remarkable accomplishments in life, and appears among the Blade's collection of Freethinkers only as a sincere and determined opponent of priestcraft and mental bondage of every kind. He has been using his pen since 1876, when his first article appeared in the old Boston Investigator; and from time to time he has broken into nearly all the Freethought publications since then. His first article was on the god idea, which he regards as the basis of mental slavery the world over; and believing that clear and rational thinking is an impossibility while the god idea rattles around in any man's mind, he is still a knocker on that proposition. In writing he has always had two objects: To free his own mind and to stimulate thinking in others; for stagnant thoughts and mental inaction are the worst things that can afflict any community. The mind must have food as well as the body, and the exchange and interchange of radical thoughts which Freethought publications have made possible has done more to push the world along and insure progress than any other force in society. No matter what a man thinks, if his thoughts are

regulated by reason, let him turn them loose, and the world will be benefitted thereby.

It is ideas that move the world, and if wrong ideas move it they must be changed, and to effect changes, agitation and commotion are necessary in the realms of thought, so place no obstructions in the pathway of progress. Because the churches and religion have always stood in the way of man's advancement, is why he hates and combats them, and as long as life lasts they will find in him a foe to the extent of his ability. We cannot all be Ingersolls, or Bradlaughs, but we can all do a little, and a multiplicity of ordinary workers can have an influence that will leave results. So, as one of the ordinary workers, he stands up to be counted, and to refer to some of the events in his life, as others have done in biographical sketches; and as distance will always preclude our meeting face to face with co-workers in the Freethought movement to a great extent, this picture and sketch idea of getting better acquainted is a happy thought on the part of the Blade publishers, though somewhat expensive to them.

Where we have read men's thoughts for years we feel more or less acquainted, and an interest exists in the personality of all such that creates a desire to know something of life work and experiences. What have they done and how have they fared on the journey to the grave, which is the one place we are all headed for. Channing Severance left home at 14 years of age and has been knocking about ever since. From the ranch to the railroad was among his earliest experiences, and 12 years of his life were passed on the railroad, he being a freight conductor at 19 years of age. After that he went to California, where he has since resided, for 25 years. Most of that time he has been an humble follower of Jesus Christ the Carpenter, but he recalls two weeks when he followed in the footsteps of Mohammed—the mule driver. But whenever and wherever the opportunity, he has always promulgated and defended Freethought ideas. In 1887 he delivered the first Paine memorial address in Los Angeles to an audience of 1,200, and was president of the first Freethought organization established in that city. He also had the honor and the pleasure of delivering the first Ingersoll memorial address in the same place; and besides conducting various funeral ceremonies where the clergy were not desired, he has for years contributed radical ideas to local papers on various subjects that concern mankind and his welfare. For 30 years he accepted a belief in modern spiritualism, but reason, experience and philosophical meditations drove him into the materialistic realms of thought, where he now abides in peace and quiet; content when this life is ended to return to the unconscious elements out of which came self consciousness. This change was made in 1854. He regards Nature as a blind force, with infinite powers that reach to infinite realms in space; without consciousness, plan or purpose in her movements. He sees no place or necessity for a god of any kind, and thinks if one existed with power to control Nature and her movements, the mind would run up against a greater mystery than Nature herself.

Judging the future from the past, he does not believe this world will ever be much different in the future than it has been in by-gone ages, for under the law of periodicity we do as Voltaire proclaimed, alternate from barbarism to civilization over and over again, as day and night alternate. The earth is dotted with the ruins of nations, and mighty empires have risen only to fall, decay and sink into oblivion. It is self-existing law that controls what we for want of a better name call destiny; and as such a thing as endless progress, or progress without reaction was never known, reason tells us it never will be.

THE CURSE OF THE GOD IDEA

Christians Believe Without Sense or Reason and Build Their Faith on Credulity.

(By Channing Severance.)

Anything that prohibits the free use of reason and dominates the human mind with autocratic power is a curse to man's welfare, happiness and progress. The god idea has always done this, and always will, while it finds acceptance through man's credulity.

If one believes in a god he does so because credulity rises superior to rational, common sense, for no god can be discovered in the universe or conceived of by man's mental powers, that has anything to do with Nature and Nature's laws.

Not the slightest reason exists for the idea of a god such as Christians believe in, for he is a personal being with omnipotent powers, and to them, from a fixed and definite location, regulates and controls an infinite universe. They believe without sense or reason that he can suspend the action of natural laws at will; perform miracles; hear prayers and answer them; know every thought and feeling of 1,500,000,000 people on the face of this earth, and keep track of every individual's record, good or bad, so as to know how to reward or punish him in the spirit world, where he finds it convenient to keep out of sight, while doing all these things.

Nothing but the imagination could ever construct such an idea and call it god; and in the imagination is where he originated, where he lives and does business. He has never been found anywhere else, and the search for him has been long and thorough by doubters and unbelievers. Now what is the imagination that makes all the gods, gives them power to do impossible things, creates the Jewish Jehovah accepted by Christians; who, with all his multitudinous duties and occupations, finds time to count the hairs on the heads of one billion five hundred million individuals.

The imagination is the human mind running wild without the restraint or control of reason, and when in that condition it is like a ship on the ocean with no one controlling the rudder, for its movements are subject to anything that influences them. It has been a favorite pastime with men to send their imaginations into the invisible realms of space, and there to create gods to account for natural phenomena; and at one time heathen mythology had a god for every department of Nature, to make things go.

Then, as now, these gods took the form of man, same as the Christian's god Jehovah does, and never has the imagination of human beings created any other kind of a personal god, because no higher form of intelligence is known on this earth than that seen in mortal man. As this is the generally accepted god to-day by all the Christian churches that are orthodox, it is the idea I am dealing with in these remarks. Who first created a personal god to explain natural phenomena, and to regulate human conduct by proclaiming his desires, we do not know; but we do know that this god idea, all through the ages past and gone, has been the source of power for priestcraft to enslave men's minds and rob them of the fruits of their labor.

Starting with God as a basis to work on, priestcraft has built a spirit world out of the same kind of material, constructed a human soul that there lives forever, and has made the priest a necessity to insure happiness in this imaginary world. It is the slickest thing ever conceived of to control men's actions and obtain their money; and fear has ever so completely dominated credulous minds that a steady stream of gold and silver

has always flowed into the pockets of the priesthood. Untold millions of their dupes have lived in misery and poverty while giving to build costly churches and feed, clothe and shelter these drones and parasites.

The God idea and its attendant conceptions of hell and heaven, immortal souls and endless life, has not only made cowards and slaves of the mass of mankind, but fools of the most ridiculous kind. And yet every man that lives, or ever did live, had within himself the power to escape all this and to defy the efforts of any priest or god man to enslave him. That power lays in thought, and the use of his reasoning faculties; and if every man living knew this and would act accordingly, the priest would be a back number to-morrow and the last costly church would have been built on the face of this old earth. Wrong thinking insures fear, slavery and debasement; right thinking, courage, freedom and exalted spirits. You cannot believe in a god and not be enslaved by his supposed wishes; and the only way mankind can escape the machinations of priestcraft, is to let go of god and every species of folly attached to that idea. Let god depart from the mind and the priest must go too, for his power to delude, bamboozle and make first-class fools of the credulous is gone.

This idea of a sacred phantom up in the sky that we must fall down and worship is so absurd and ridiculous to men who think and reason without a priest to guide, that serious discussion seems superfluous; and yet, think of the weak and perverted minds that are enslaved by it, and all through life live in fear and trembling lest they do something to offend and endanger their immortal souls after death. None of these credulous victims of belief in a sky phantom have any particular fear of injury from their god in this world; they only fear punishment for present deeds in the life to come—if there be one—but there is no more knowledge of such a life that the priest can give than there is of the god and his wrath by which they are terrified.

Before believing too much it would be well for men's peace of mind to start their belief on some well demonstrated fact, for beliefs that have no solid foundation are mighty poor things to be disturbed by. If there is a future life no knowledge of such a life is attainable, for our senses do not enable us to discover it, and we can only view a spirit world through faith, same as we must look into space for stars not reached by any telescope yet made. But here we have two kinds of faith; one is based on desire and the other on probability, for souls are unseen and unknown entities if they exist; while stars, we know exist, for they can be seen; and probability says more exist beyond our vision. But a faith that can see immortal souls in an invisible spirit world is a stronger article than I possess.

I have no words of condemnation for those who wish to believe in immortal souls and an endless existence in an imaginary world, but to permit themselves to be terrified in this world by fears connected with a phantom god and an imaginary world is to invite trouble they might avoid, and to suffer needless mortal agony.

The Christian's god is nothing but a bugaboo, as were the gods of heathen mythology, and every other kind that mortal man has created; and all the life we know anything about is this one; so good horse sense should put an end to belief in gods of all kinds until better reasons for having such a belief can be found; and until some evidence of another and immortal life can be found, it is folly to cultivate fears in regard to it; so let us devote our time and attention to this world and put the priest out of business by rejecting his god and all the fancies built up around him.

Striking a Balance Sheet

Continuation of the Bitter Struggle for Civil Power Between Ecclesiasticism and Freethought.

(By Judge Parish B. Ladd.)

The church, again being out of funds, sold every place within its gift, some of them several times over, leaving the purchasers to fight for possession between themselves; not only this, but indulgences for the commission of all kinds of crime, including murder, were sold, even peddled among the people. Holding a commission, one Ste'zel traveled over Europe selling such indulgences. In many places he did a fine business in his sales. Feeling the loss of power Gregory XI. returned to Rome (1378), where he soon died. It will here be noticed that many gaps have been left open in this narrative. This I have been forced to do, to avoid too long an article, but I have left no loopholes where it is necessary to show the struggle for power between Freethought and Popedom and Christianity gone to seed.

Urban VI., after Gregory, was elected by the papal party. To this the French king and cardinals dissented and elected Clement VIII. Then the council of Constance was convened, which elected Martin V. (1417-31). This was followed by Bohemia, who elected Bossel pope. Here we have four popes all at one time; but Bossel was soon deposed in favor of Martin, who made a desperate attempt to reform the priesthood, to reform Christianity, which had sunk so low as to become a stench in the nostrils of all decent men, who were Freethinkers, all others were popes, priests and their cattle.

Taking, as I truly may, Machiavelli's three degrees of capacity of men, "That one class understands things by their own natural powers; another when they are explained to them; a third, not at all." In dealing with them, he says different modes must be used. The last class, he says, are the most numerous, so simple and weak that they are easily duped. The definition of Machiavelli could not be improved on. The first class is confined to Freethinkers, reasoners. The second class to men and women who cannot, do not, or dare not reason. To this class belongs most of our clerics, a few women and some men. The third class takes in the great herd of human cattle who move only as directed by their superiors. To this class belongs the lower clergy and their dupes—the real believers in the prevailing superstition, people who must have a Totum to worship.

At this last epoch scepticism pervaded

all classes. It was seen that Christianity was not only a failure, but false in fact; that the boast of the priests that the system was for the elevation of the race was all false, and that its long trial had proved it such. All except the pope, his priests and the proletaire were infidels—Freethinkers; most of them Atheists. Even some of the popes and priests were unbelievers. These Freethinkers stood alone at the helm of progress for the uplifting of humanity. They were moving to overthrow Christian barbarism. Pope Pius II (1450-63), on the throne, commenced to gather the cohorts of his Christian hell to fight the Infidels, as he styled all his opponents. While Pius was thus mustering his forces, the gods stepped in and killed him. Paul II. (1450-64) being in sympathy with the Freethinkers sought to restore paganism as a better system than Christianity. Here we have Popes Alexander VI. and Julius II., whose lives were little better than criminals. Ecclesiastical corruption, the natural fruits of Christianity and its Bible, had reached a limit where longer submission was impossible. Calvin and Luther come to the front, popedom is up in arms. These men being priests demand the local revenues; the pope claims all; they throw down the gates and proclaim liberty—liberty for themselves, not for all. But the gates once open, neither of these men could shut them. Both were intolerent; while Calvin burned Servetus over a slow fire, Luther vented his spite by abusing all Freethinkers. Both needed the aid of civil powers, then mostly in the hands of Freethinkers, with which to ward off the pope; so they were powerless to enforce their intolerance.

Clement VII., now pope (1523-35), is just in time to witness the sack of Rome (1527) by the troops of Charles V., who became not only emperor of Rome, but protector of the church. From this time until the close of the eighteenth century, the history of the church may properly be divided into three periods. But as the events during this time have little bearing on the ecclesiastical and civil strife for power, I close this matter in brief, as follows: From 1530 to the seventeenth century numerous attempts were made to reconstruct the papacy, but in vain; there was nothing to reconstruct, popedom had lost its civil power, decline had set in under Pope Pius VII.

Under Paul III. (1534-50) the society of Jesus (Jesuits) was formed, which has become a terrible power in the hands of the pope, who it obeys or not as it sees fit. This society everywhere established has interfered with civil government, in conse-

quence of which it has been banished from every government in Christendom, from some of them two to four times. It is now working to undermine our American system with luring prospects of success.

Benedict XVI. (1740-50) at the helm, found all Europe so sunk in ignorance and crime that the more intelligent people, called Infidels, had united to crush out the brutal priesthood. The clergy of Austria and France were at war, so that the last half of the eighteenth century found the popes in dire distress over the situation. The papacy, to save itself from destruction, was forced to dissolve the order of Jesuits. The House of Austria having withdrawn from papal rule, placed Emperor Joseph II. at the head of the church. Pius VI. threw himself into the arms of Joseph. Here the French revolution breaks out, which, in its intemperate fury, the people having so long smarted under popish rule, sweeps away king, priest and church alike. The pope is forced from Rome and held a prisoner at Valance, where he dies August 29, 1799. The king's head goes off. Napoleon, by edict, abolishes the papacy, but the cardinals continue to hope. They meet at Venice December 1, 1799, and elect Chiaramonti as Pius VII., who petitioned Napoleon to save the church. Here Pius makes a forlorn effort to restore the morals. Pius is followed by Leo XII., Pius VII., Gregory XVI. Pius IX., succeeding Gregory, for two years keeps up the strife for reform, when he falls into the hands of the revolutionists, escaping in disguise, he flees from Rome to Gaeta, where he is arrested and brought back to Rome by the French forces. On December 8, 1854, he issues the bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, which gave the Virgin Mary a place in the foetus of the Catholic church. December, 1864, he issues the encyclical *Quanta Cura*, fixing certain errors for condemnation.

Romagna, a part of the pope's territory, being occupied by his troops, after a feeble resistance against the Sardinian forces, yields up the territory to the crown under King Emanuel. From this time until 1870 Pius IX. is maintained at Rome by the French army. On the 18th of July, 1870, the vatican council decided the infallibility of the pope. The war breaking out between France and Prussia forced the withdrawal of the French army from Rome. This left Emanuel a free hand, nor was he long in using it, for he sent a force for the capture of Rome. The vatican force could make but feeble resistance; the king captured the city and annexed it to his kingdom. With this the civil powers of the vatican came

to an end. Popedom lost all, and its doom in Europe was sealed forever. Likely to be driven out of Europe the present pope is laying his nefarious schemes to capture our country and make it a second Christian hell on earth. In this he has gone so far as to form an alliance with our political leaders, who, in exchange for the Catholic vote, are placing in all important positions the bulls of Rome. This nefarious scheme began with Harrison, continued under McKinley and Roosevelt and now has entrapped both Taft and Bryan, who stand ready to barter off American freedom for the presidency.

The subject of witchcraft has played too important a part during the contest in Europe to be passed over in silence. A little of it here and this article must close. So little has been heard of witches in the last hundred years that most people think it a small affair and that mostly confined to Salem. Never were they so sadly mistaken. For more than 300 years the shrieks from every nook, corner, city, town and precinct in Europe was heard the dying groans of countless women as they were being tortured by every device that the priesthood could invent, and finally the smoke ascended from their quivering flesh and crackling bones only to tell of their last agonies, which still rouse the sympathies and sadden the heart of the reader of the history of those times that tried the souls

of Freethinkers. Not so with the priest who rejoiced over the burning of witches to fulfil scripture, "Suffer not a witch to live," and other kindred teachings of the holy Bible. Numerous estimates of the number of witches put to death by the most competent writers foots up from seven to fourteen millions, while one of the most conservative estimates fixes the number at 9,000,000. These women witches were supposed to be in league with the devil working for the allurement of souls from Christ and Christianity, and for blighting the harvest, bringing on pestilence, famine and other injuries of a temporal nature. While witchcraft was recognized, to a limited extent by paganism and Mosaism, we read of no tortures or murders before Christianity. The torture and murder of these innocent women was reserved for the Christian savages of the dark ages, whose priesthood often boasted of the number that they had burned at the stake. The laws for the punishment of witches were in every instance the work of the priesthood.

Although witchcraft was believed in by all classes, at one time, and the witches were tried, condemned, tortured and put to death by the civil authorities, the priesthood was back of all, Protestants and Catholics alike were the instigators of the prosecutions. The Bible being their authority, it became the special duty of the priests to hunt up, furnish proof, convict and rejoice

over the agony of the dying victims. In time these thinking men, Freethinkers, awoke from the general hideous scenes and began to reason on the matter. Although the proof of witchcraft was overwhelming, it was so incredible, so at war with the laws of nature, that thinking men finally refused to believe that the witch stories could be true. These men finally resorted to ridicule as a means to stop the persecutions. They said it was impossible that the woman witch could be in different places at the same time, or that she could go up a chimney and ride through the air on a broomstick, or that she had the powers of producing famine, pestilence and the like; all of which had been sworn to by witnesses in court and believed by the judges. In time common sense was aroused and commenced to investigate. Then witches grew less and less, until witchcraft was no longer believed in, except by the divine priesthood, who stood in their last ditch with their holy Bible as a breastwork. In the end the cleric had to give it up, though it rested on Bible authority. Now a man or woman would be looked on as insane if he or she should attempt to maintain these Bible statements, just as well authenticated and just as false as all the rest of the Bible.

My next will necessarily be long; it will deal with the revival of learning in Europe, the work of Freethinkers.

The Truth Shall Make You Free

How Pitiful to Waste a Child's Time by Teaching it Superstitious Falsehood.

(By Julia C. Coon.)

"A crowned caprice is god of the world;
On his stony breast are his wings unfurled;

No ear to hearken, no eye to see,
No heart to feel for a man hath he."

The little story of Chinese children in the "Girls' Hall of Learning," in *The Youths' Instructor*, reveals a sad aspect. Awakened to some of the wrongs in their own land, these children imagine or have been taught that America is a free nation, simply because every four years "the people write down the name of the man whom they wish to govern the country, and the man whose name is written by the greatest number of people is chosen ruler."

It could hardly be expected but that children would think that this must be the essence of liberty. They truly, could not yet have had an opportunity to learn that the rule of an ignorant majority would not be likely to be better than that of an au-

to cracy, nor could they have had any means of knowing of the vast amount of money continually expended to mislead the mass of the people—the people who produce the country's necessities, and induce them to tie their precious votes over obscure issues, leaving the country to be wholly ruled by a plutocracy as cruel and opposed to the real progress and intelligence of the nation as is that of China.

Nor could the children in the "Girls' Hall of Learning" have had any real knowledge of Christianity, its history and purpose. Their instruction along this line had been wholly superficial and one-sided. Else one of them would not have averred that the "Gospel of Jesus Christ" would be a benefit to China, or that it could change the hearts of the people and give them true light. The child had been taught nothing of the 1,500-year rule of Christianity in Europe—darkest of all dark history. Nothing of its clanking chains, its dungeons, its racks and its stake-burnings. Nothing of the immortal Bruno and thousands of others whom the Christians put to a horrible death

for being unable to believe the Christian dogmas. Else, she would not have builded her hopes on this vilest of religions to work any reformation in China. Nor had she heard of the toiling millions in America, of women who sew by the midnight lamp, and slave children who yield up their lives in factories, in order that Christian millionaires and Christian fakirs may live in luxury and idleness. Had the children been taught the real truth, they would not have builded their childish hopes on a mere will-o'-the-wisp, a changing from an autocracy to a plutocracy, or a changing of worship and faith from one "savior" to some other.

Could our children be taught the real truth in these schools that cost so much in time and money, how straight and true would be the path up the mountain side of Evolution. The truth indeed shall make us free. Oh, the pity that we waste away children's precious time teaching them falsehoods of the infallibility of Confucius, or Jesus or Mohammed, when they would as well learn the truth that is to make the

whole world free and unselfish and happy. The shame that our children are not taught that their lives are their one chance in all eternity to make a fight for truth and right and that of death they must yield the fight to other hands and sink back into oblivion. It is natural so; it is better so, and the world has never yet had reliable evidence that death is not the end of life forever.

Of all the horrible wrongs perpetuated against humanity today, the worst is the old, old teaching of some creator who desires our "faith" and worship, and of a future life. Its origin is well known. The god-idea originated in the minds of savage fakirs, who used it to profit by the ignorance and gullibility of their followers; but it is used by the same kind of people and for the same purpose today. The populace is lulled into a willingness to be robbed of its birthright by the assurance that it is some god's will, and a promise of future crowns and mansions.

Of all the gigantic swindles ever invented it is the greatest, for it swindles men, women and children out of their reason, and all that makes this life worth living. There could be no greater swindle conceived than the palming off of such books as the Bible or the Koran as the word of a supposed creator.

Let us teach our children only truth. Let us teach the hope of Evolution, rather than the hopelessness of degeneration.

IN THE HOUR OF GREAT NEED.

Following is a list of the names and addresses of Liberal speakers who are prepared to conduct funeral services over the remains of deceased Freethinkers.

On account of probable delay it would be advisable to call them by telegram.

Josephine K. Henry, Versailles, Ky.

Dr. J. B. Wilson, 206 East Fourth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Parker H. Sercombe, Editor Tomorrow, 139 East 56th Street, Chicago, Illinois.

John R. Charlesworth, Lexington, Ky.

Marion W. Marley, Bucklin, Kansas.

A. J. Clausen, St. Ansgar, Iowa.

Stanberry Alderman, McConnellsville, O.

H. H. Lane, 292 N. Front Street, New Haven, Conn.

Dr. Perry Engle, Newton, Iowa.

WANTED—Success Magazine requires the services of a man in Lexington to look after expiring subscriptions and to secure new business by means of special methods usually effective; position permanent; prefer one with experience, but would consider any applicant with good natural qualifications; salary \$1.50 per day, with commission option. Address, with references, R. C. Peacock, Room 102, Success Magazine Bldg., New York.

Who Knew Primitive Man?

Question Propounded in Criticism of the Blade and one of its Writers.

(By Wm. Smith, M. D.)

As my reply to yourself and A. A. Snow sent some time ago has not been published, I presume it has not reached you, and as much as I do not wish to reiterate that again, I will try to answer some of the arguments that are brought forth by the believers—the Materialists or Spiritualists.

In the physical body of man there are many parts and elements. In the mind there are many principles; each is complete. Every element of the body retains its own individuality, either in the body or out of it. The dissolution of the body does not change the element. Every faculty of the mind is ever the same, either in the mind of man, animal, bird, fish, or wherever mind is. The actions in the body are dual.—absorption and repulsion. The faculties of the mind are also dual in their action, and as one part of the body cannot perform the functions for another part, neither can one faculty of the mind perform the functions for another faculty. Energy is the only energiser. Firmness is the only principle that is firm; Fear is the only principle that produces fear; Love is only that, that can love, and so it is with each and every principle of the mind. Each principle of the mind and every element of the body is perfectly just what it is. No element of the body, no principle of the mind can influence any other; each remains ever the same. Let it be understood by principle I mean a cause; also in the word body, and the word mind, you embrace in the one word many elements and many principles.

In order to show the duality in mind, I will now mention a few of the faculties that are in opposition: Intelligence, opposed by Animality; Reverence, opposed by Profanity; Benevolence, opposed by Selfishness; Truthfulness, opposed by Secretiveness; Sociability, opposed by Combativeness; Philanthropy, opposed by Destruction; Hope, opposed by Desperation; Love, opposed by Hatred; Patience, opposed by Irritability; Firmness, opposed by Fear; Hardihood, opposed by Sensibility; Energy opposed by Relaxation; Playfulness, opposed by Melancholy; Chastity, opposed by Amativeness; Caution, opposed by Recklessness; Modesty, opposed by Ambition; Spirituality, opposed by Infidelity; and so I might go on showing the duality.

Every principle or cause is unchangeable. It cannot be annihilated. It is perfect. It does not progress or retrograde. Combat-

iveness does not become more or less combativeness. Energy does not become more or less energy. So with every other faculty or principle of the combination that has been named—Mind. It is the same with every element of the body. Not an element, principle, cause, either physical or mental, has ever progressed or retrograded; each is just what it ever has been, and must continue to be, unless existence is annihilated.

There is so much said about primitive man that I would like for some one to tell me the particular time this primitive man first made his advent upon the earth, and who became acquainted with him?

I think it is evident that there is not nor ever has been any thing, being or universe that has or can produce something greater than itself. I for one cannot accept the idea that man sprang from the lower order of the animal kingdom.

It is true that the animal uses some of the same faculties of the mind that man does, but this does not prove that man sprang from the animal; it only shows that the same faculties are used by both. It is also true, wherever any faculty is used its demonstration is the same. The faculties, comparatively speaking, are like the tools in the mechanic's tool chest,—no matter who or what uses the tool, the work of the tool is the same. So it is with the faculties of the mind.

It is true one principle or cause cannot influence another, but as mankind generally believes they think they can, it is for us to show where they make the mistake. If that were true, all principles, causes, would long ago have been destroyed. We may direct any faculty of our mind to one or more objects; we may think we are using certain faculties and not be using them at all; we see this demonstrated by the churches, by many Freethinkers, by the Spiritualists; and many other professions. The truth is, almost every one of them use the faculty of combativeness more than any other. All this talk of religion and god, either for or against, is purely from one claiming they are right, while the other is wrong. If they were to ask themselves this question: Do I use the faculties of the mind that my opponent uses and in the same degree? do you suppose there would be combating? I think not. How much better it would be for the human family if the faculties were studied more in their action and use. Let people become acquainted with them, and know where they speak and act from, and superstition and wars,

hate, lying, stealing, licentiousness and all other crimes would be no more; but until the time comes that individuals will know to a certainty what faculty of the mind they are using, we will have designing men and women ruling the people under the name of Church, Religion, Freethought, Spiritualism, Christian Science Materialism, or some other beliefs just as foolish.

It is a truth that all believers are disbelievers, and all disbelievers are believers, —they all combat.

Before closing this article, I wish to refer to what A. A. Snow wrote in answer to my article that was published. He says:

"Does matter act in some cases through the power of the gods and in all other cases because of the properties within it, because of its own nature? Or in other words, is matter in some cases only the football of the gods; acting only as it is acted upon, while in others it is self-acting? Surely if self-acting at all, it is always so, and it surely is, and we have absolutely no evidence of its acting any other way."

In answer to what he has written, I will say: Matter never acts; it is moved from one location to another, and oft times it appears to us that matter acts, because the forces that move matter are not seen and matter is seen. To us it appears to move. It is upon the same principle that the balloon, we say, ascends; the heat carries it up and not the principle in matter, for matter never moves of itself.

Again, he says: "Protoplasm that builds up any very complicated structure is governed by these experiences."

He forgets that the protoplasm itself was built out of material. Yes, Mr. Snow, the protoplasm of the cell is material; the smallest speck, be it so small that the strongest magnifying glass cannot show it if a speck at all, it is material. The builder uses the material; it also uses such principles and elements as is necessary to build a body, but I am sorry that the ingredients it has to build from is not always what we call the very best. At some future time I may tell you about the builder.

Muncie, Ind.

FOR THE EMERGENCY FUND.

WILKES BARRE, PA.—Enclosed find one dollar. Subscription to the emergency fund, Your Fraternal—L. K. DERBY.

For the Good of the Cause.

VISALIA, CALIF.—Herewith enclosed please find \$5 money order; \$1.50 for renewal of my subscription, the balance for the good cause of the Blue Grass Blade. Please send me one extra copy of the Blade with Ingersoll's picture and short biography of his life.—A. MITCHELL.

More About Mars

Response Made to Last Article of Charles O Hays.

(By Franklin H. Heald).

In the Blade of August 9th., my friend, Chas. O. Hays, after repudiating the Nebular Hypothesis, still maintains his position that the planet Mars is older than the Earth and bases his opinion upon what he considers my mistakes in estimating the height of mountains upon our neighboring planets.

Admitting that Mars has no mountains, he says: "It could scarcely be expected that mountains equal to those upon the Earth, could exist on a planet so much smaller." Allow me then, to call his attention to our satellite, the Moon, which in bulk, is 45 times smaller and in weight 80 times smaller than the Earth and yet has mountains almost if not quite as high as those of the Earth. I will only refer to Peabody's Elements of Astronomy, Note 343, p. 178, which gives the highest at 25,000 feet. This authority was published in 1869 and my own observations place them nearer 30,000 feet. Although Mars is twice the diameter of the Moon, he figures that "since the surface of gravity of Mars is but two-fifths that of the Earth, it is not probable that mountains more than two miles high could ever exist on that planet." Now by this method of reasoning, the Moon, being so much smaller than Mars, as Mars is smaller than the Earth, should only have mountains four-fifths of one mile high, while they are five miles high in fact, thus showing conclusively that the height of mountains are forced by the crystalization of a planet from molten matter which must necessarily greatly increase its bulk and force up its mountain ranges along the lines of least resistance. On our Earth, many of these lines seem to be on western coasts, where the water recedes on account of the rotation of the Earth on its axes, towards the East.

As to the height of the Mountains on Venus, I admit that I have only measured their shadows in the termination of Venus' crescent. In my book, Possession of Planets, to which Mr. Hays refers, I have quoted on page 92, from Lockyer's Astronomy note 265, which places them "exceeding twenty miles." Peabody, note 415, p. 216, places them at 27 miles and others at a later date, still higher. I believe my estimate of 30 miles will be found more nearly correct.

Mr. Hays shows that Mars is more dense

than the Earth and asks: "Does this great density indicate a young and thin crusted planet?" I answer yes; and point to our Moon and almost all other crystalized matter in proof of it. The Moon is so small and "dead," that there is but little doubt, that it is further substantiated by the fact that its density or proportional weight is only about half that of the Earth, although the Earth already has a very thick crust. Mars, on the other hand being almost entirely molten, is very dense. We will never find "gaseous interiors" to Planets, any more than we will find patches of red-hot gas in space or any more than we will find patches of air or gas under 2,000 feet of sea water where the pressure is nearly half a ton to the square inch.

To my critic and friend, Joseph B. Thorn, who objects that if Mars is covered with water, it would not be red; let me suggest that it might be covered with red water. Or better still, it might be red wine, or the blood of Jesus possibly. But seriously, I believe that when the crust of a cooling Planet first breaks along the line of least resistance, to allow the crystalizing of its interior to go on, the cleavage would be in a straight line and the irregularities would come afterwards by the erosion of water and ice upon the elevated matter. I also wish to say to both Mr. Hays and Mr. Thorn, that water which is converted into steam (gas) is invisible, which removes their objections to Mars' internal heat. Any matter which is converted in to gas, is invisible until it is crystalized by cold, and if this were not the case we could not see any of the space must be filled with expanded and invisible matter in order to transmit the electric force of light and heat.

I appreciate the respect of my friends and most sincerely return the compliment, but I do refuse to be tied to this old "wrong end-before" theory, that the oldest Planets are farthest from the sun. Everything in the Solar System proves the reverse.

The Sun must be fed with fuel, in order to maintain its heat (which is electricity) and the gas which it expands by its intense heat must go up. Not only must it go up, which is every direction from the Sun in our Solar System, but when it condenses from gas, it must come down again, and the Planets are forming in the zone of Nebula which lays beyond Neptune, and on the plane of the Sun's Equator (at right angles to the Milky Way) and they are coming down.

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MIND, SCIENCE, SUPERSTITION.

Prominent among the controversies that are now taking place in the world of advanced thought is the influence exercised, that may be exercised, or that is likely to be exercised upon the individual mind by superstition during scientific research.

Many who are more or less imbued with superstition, in any of its forms, are inclined to regard the mind as an entity, a thing, to be actually felt and capable of dissection and analysis. The more modern view is to regard the mind as a result of a combination of mentalities, or faculties, of which the brain is the central organ. The mind is not a material form. Animals, capable of sensation, which includes innumerable forms, possess thought, reflection, conception, perception and memory. These mental forces, or processes, constitute all we know of mind. The stronger these forces, or process are capable of operating, jointly or severally, the stronger the power and influence of the mind. As the mind is but a mental process it is readily understood how weak minds can be more influenced by superstition than minds of stronger capacity.

All science is but a method of ascertaining, by observation and experiment, through demonstration, of the physical forces of nature, their mode of operation and the results obtained.

Superstition is but a belief or a specific form of belief in

which an ignorant or abnormal religious feeling is shown, as by venerating things that deserve no veneration, or by attaching undue importance to forms and observances in themselves; in other words, it is primarily a belief in a specific religious system, which is regarded by all others than the believer, as being unreasonable and without authoritative support, in other words, a false system of religion. This applies with equal force to all religious systems under the sun.

Individual minds may be influenced by superstition to such an extent as to warp proper scientific investigation, leading the investigator to false conclusions, but such a result does not alter or change the character of a single scientific fact.

From the results obtained by reason of the first series of examinations in the Correspondence School, the Blade finds considerable satisfaction and gratification. From time to time we have argued that once a student can be held to take the full course of instruction prescribed the mind will be forever freed from superstition and all that it implies.

In order to convince our readers that such a result would surely obtain, we take the privilege of culling from the examination sheet of Mr. Ashley Johnson, of Arkansas, the following questions and answers, as they were given and answered in the Astronomical series:

Question 6.—“Give an example of a correct and a false deduction.”

Answer.—“A false deduction is one derived from general principles which are assumed to be correct. Perfect deduction is one arrived at by comparing carefully the results of deduction from actual phenomena.”

Question 12.—“What relation does a superstition bear to the law of cause and effect?”

Answer.—“It merely affects the individual mind, but bears no relation to the law.”

In those two answers may be found a full and complete argument to all the theology in the world. It will explain why the so-called religious mind is incapable of correct thinking and true investigation. In it we may find the real difference between scientific inquiry and theological assumption, the one believes from inclination, the other accepting only facts that are proven.

The answer to question 12, as above given, could not have been satisfactorily explained in any other way. Superstition does affect the individual mind, but all the superstitions known to man cannot change, alter, amend or suspend the operations of natural law, and upon this hypothesis all the great glory of scientific achievement has been won. And how many are the individual minds yet dominated and influenced by superstition? How many are the individual minds that yet fail to comprehend the fact that their personal belief does not and cannot affect a fact, a truth? Beliefs may change. Beliefs do change. Facts remain the same, for these cannot be changed.

Our friends may now be able to understand that the School is a safe dependency for the eradication of superstition. This is its mission. It even aims to go further

than training the minds of its pupils, for it hopes to prepare them in such a way that they can instruct others in the knowledge they thereby obtain.

Referring to the answer given to question 6, we may observe the scientific method of reasoning. As a rule, theologians merely assume certain premises to be correct, and it must follow that no matter how true may be their methods of reasoning, to start with an incorrect premise must lead to an incorrect conclusion. The trouble is not with deductive reasoning, but with the foundation upon which that reasoning is built. This leaves the theological citadel in a shaky condition, shattered by every wind that blows from the cloud of facts.

The Blade assumes pride in the results here obtained from this first examination, and reasoning from cause to effect, we may further assume that as the scientific investigation proceeds the less opportunity will superstition have of influencing that mind.

Mention might also be made that Mr. Johnson received a perfect grade in his astronomical examinations for September studies.

Self-confidence in such a result gave us every possible encouragement to proceed with the work of building up the Correspondence School. Although we shall be compelled to conduct it at a financial loss for this year, yet, the good it has already done is a sort of a compensation for it shows that our labors will not be in vain.

MANHATTAN LIBERAL CLUB.

Among the oldest and most militant of the organized societies of Freethinkers is the Manhattan Liberal Club of New York City. Its platform was among the freest of the free, and all scholars, no matter where they came from, or what they had to advocate, were given the right of speech therefrom. The discussions that invariably follow have led to innumerable spirited controversies, hugely enjoyed by the Club's patrons, and its work for Freethought, a free press and free speech, is to be commended.

From a recent report submitted by its Secretary, W. J. Terwilliger, it appears that its officers and directors, or some of them, argued in favor of abandoning the organization, permitting it to lapse into disuse, simply because there had been felt a depreciation in the financial patronage necessary to its maintenance, thereby incurring a heavier burden upon the remaining few. The Blade is pleased to note that the proposition did not meet with the favor of the majority, and a few of the most prominent of the leaders, including Dr. E. B. Foote, insisted that the Club should be revived and perpetuated, and led off with a good subscription to its fund to enable the Club to carry out its purposes and objects.

This action is gratifying in the extreme. The Club has served too good a purpose in the past to justify its dissolution. Its force and power in the great metropolis of the Republic are still essential as a means of safeguarding the rights and liberties of the people. There can be no just

ground for dissolving it upon the plea that many other societies of a similar character are now at work in the same locality, for the more societies of the character of the Liberal Club we can boast, the better and stronger becomes the advocacy for mental liberty. Had all church denominations acted upon the same hypothesis their organization would not be what it is today.

By all means keep the Club going. Keep it on a high plane. Every Freethinker in and around New York should rally to its support. We can ill afford to lose such an organization as the Liberal Club. Its loss would be a reflection upon the cause of Freethought in America. There are hundreds, nay thousands, of liberal men and women in and around Greater New York who might be brought into co-operation with the Club by proper effort. The Blade has not an over large number of subscribers in that city, but it has some, and if its services can be of any avail its columns are open for that purpose.

SUFFER THE CHILDREN, ETC.

The Baptist World of Louisville is in high jinks over the reported success of an evangelical mission in New York City during the recent summer months through the medium of gospel tent campaigns, and claims innumerable new souls for Christ as a resultant. The World goes into ecstasies and gives vent to overjoyous feelings because of such a showing.

Aside from the psychology and pathology of any such conversion, the World must not take such matters so seriously. Two thousand years have passed since the central figure of Christianity was supposed to be on the earth, and the world is four-fifths pagan. With Christian influences on the wane, the outlook for a total conversion is not very rosy, and if the Blade can exert any influence upon the issue the day of final Christian triumph will be considerably delayed.

From its column of slush and exuberance we read the following:

"A marked feature of the services this season at many of the centers has been the unusual attendance and interest of boys and girls. Five or six hundred boys and girls fairly overflowed the Swedish tent every night, until the committee substituted a larger tent. The interest of the young people is most encouraging, as a life-time service for Christ is of much greater value than that of a 'death-bed' repentance."

So after all, it is a case of counting over chickens before they are hatched. Boys and girls, yea, full five or six hundred of them, were brought to the stool of repentance and these have actually confessed Christ. But what a sad commentary upon Christian effort! Who can guarantee the religious pretensions or beliefs of a single, solitary one of the entire number ten years from now? Children, with half formed minds and intellect, have ever been the prey of the church advocates, and we still find them boasting that they can successfully preach to infants.

It is interesting to note, however, that the World places a greater value upon a life of service to the cause of Christianity than in a mere death-bed repentance. Freethinkers can respect the most rabid orthodox believer, provided he be truly consistent in all things pertaining to his belief, shaping and moulding his life therewith, and they may also pity him. And yet a life of devotion to an ideal, even though that ideal be error, is more to be admired than a life of dissolution and debauchery. But The World, it seems, still stands for and claims a virtue in "death-bed repentance," a claim that upsets all the extravagant assumptions of the militant church. Death-bed repentances and sinister designs upon little children constitute the saving power and grace of orthodox Christianity. No wonder intelligence evades it. No wonder thinking men and women have so little regard for such a system.

The untutored savage was just as capable as the most intelligent of the preachers that Christendom can boast. The mind of a child unskilled in the arts and wiles of religious controversy and the impaired mental faculties wrought by disease are about on a par. An orthodox acceptance may be admitted or assumed and the demands of the church are satisfied.

The probable conversion of these children is heralded as a "marked feature" of the occasion. A feature is something that stands out more boldly, more prominently than the things by which it is surrounded, and when that feature becomes especially "marked" it must be regarded as a feature of all other features and is, therefore, the very best the purveyor has in his shop. The application of a "marked feature" to this raid upon the infantile intelligence of New York and its environments, spells a sad failure for the orthodox church, and at the same time implies that the attendance and conversion of five or six hundred little children was the very best the gospel tent campaign could accomplish.

Verily, indeed, unless ye become as a little child again ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, so mote it be.

GOD, RELIGION AND POLITICS.

To love a fictitious god is regarded as a higher and purer human motive than a love of country by The Westminster, an orthodox organ published at Philadelphia in the interest of the Presbyterian church.

The argument is used and advanced as a cogent reason for so-called religious people interesting themselves in the political issues and struggles of the day, and at the same time, as a justification for religious publications dealing with political measures from orthodox viewpoints and urging a sort of combined political action by their adherents.

Narrowed to a recognizable point of vision, love of god is simply obedience to the preacher. The latter know nothing of god, but assumes a knowledge he knows he does not possess. So long as he can succeed in fooling the people into believing such an assumption his position and salary may be safe, but once his flock is able to read and

understand his very inmost thoughts, job and cash will vanish together. All the people can ever learn of this supposed god is by what comes from the lips of the preacher, and from what they can read in religious journals edited by preachers. Properly interpreted, the love of god is simply a confidence in the preacher, and it is to the interest of the profession that foolish religious people shall take an interest in politics.

Judging from many of the laws that now disgrace our statute books, both State and Federal, far too many religious people have taken an interest in politics. But for the influence of the religiously insane we would not now be hampered by Puritanical blue laws, and the wasteful expenditure of thousands of dollars every year from out the public treasury in a foolish and futile attempt at the enforcement of those blue laws. All such laws are for the personal aggrandizement of the clergy, the enrichment of the church, and to gratify the selfish ambition of the piously insane. Sordid politicians have yielded to the orthodox importunities from time to time as a means of gaining votes in political contests, and but few have the moral courage to manifest the slightest opposition to orthodox demands. Political candidates feel that to join some church will be a step towards an election and specious promises are made if successful at the polls. All the laws that are absolutely necessary to the good government of human society, in any land, could be printed in one single issue of the Blade, and those laws should be so plain and so simple that all could read and understand, but under existing conditions statutes do not mean what they say, and not one lawyer in a thousand can tell what the law on a given subject is until he has examined the books and the authorities.

Greater interest in politics by religious bodies means the undoing of the state. It means a rapid declination and disintegration of the body politic. It means the establishment of a religio-political hierarchy in which the "will of god" as expressed and expounded by the preacher, becomes the supreme authority. In that day liberty, charity and mercy are lowered into the grave. Humanity will become as so many puppets, played with, toyed with and bled to support an aristocratic class led by the clergy.

One may look upon the diatribe in The Westminster as an appeal for help to save the theological ship from sinking in the deep waters of the higher criticism and intellectual thought. The clergy can hardly fail to recognize that they are incapable of exerting any great influence upon matters or issues of great public moment, and this loss of power is a serious blow to them and their profession. True patriotism, however, will continue to be measured by love of country, which stands first in every patriotic heart, ignoring the gods and their assumed representatives.

Civilization has been costly. The great history of humanity represents a series of serious failures. Human blood and human life have been sacrificed in its behalf. The church has never helped, it has always obstructed. Just as the flower appear to be most perfect its petals begin to fall and the flower, petals, root and stem, are scattered

and trampled into the dust. So it is with civilization. It is governed by the same inexorable law. Civilization was wrested from the ignorant hands of orthodoxy. To permit orthodoxy to resume power and authority, will scatter the petals of the beautiful flower we have succeeded in cultivating and its death will be imminent.

FROM A SCHOLAR'S POINT OF VIEW.

Ecclesiastical narrowness and intolerance have become axiomatic.

It is a common and ordinary proceeding when seeking a parallel or an extreme, in order to draw a comparison by way of illustration, to say "as hot as hell" or "as mad as hell", and we know that the speaker has used an extreme in order to demonstrate the intensity of the temperate or degree of temper referred to. In such figures of speech, hell is used as a standard by which the auditor shall measure the subject under discussion. As a rule, the greatest extreme has been employed.

In denunciation of a University Trust, composed of neighboring schools, believed to be in some sort of a conspiracy to kill, by starvation, the institution over which he presides, Chancellor McCracken, of the New York University, compared their intolerant and selfish attitude with the orthodox churches. Judging from the tenor of his utterances, the learned Chancellor keenly feels the spirit of competition and the intense rivalry it has created, and in uttering his condemnation sought an extreme by which the illiberality of nearby schools towards his institution might be afforded a comparison, and in the moment selected that which appeared to him to be the worst form of intolerance known. His selection was timely and true. He said:

"Everyone has heard of the narrowness and intolerance of ecclesiastical magnates, but the very coldest reception I ever saw given by a group of churches to the advent of a new church in their neighborhood was an affectionate embrace compared with the reception that has been given to the New York University."

The foregoing statement is both remarkable and peculiar, and in more instances than one. First, it places ecclesiastical narrowness and intolerance as an axiom, and second, assumes that it is so common that every one must have heard of it. It is also a declaration that a given group of churches can be guilty of tendering a cold reception to a new church in their neighborhood, for the learned Chancellor says that he has actually experienced such, and the use of the language, "the very coldest reception I ever saw" implies that he has had more than one such experience, and would lead to the inference that he has met up with a large number of such cases. Coming from such a source, the statement must be given all due credit. In a large measure he has uttered a commonly known truth, for no one, save and except the church advocates themselves, will dare deny that such an extreme narrowness, intolerance and illiberality exists among them.

So far as the Chancellor used the expression for the pur-

pose of making a comparison, we care not to discuss. Our only purpose here was to give emphasis to the comparison drawn, as showing, by such an eminent authority, that church bitterness towards those of an opposing faith is now universally recognized and admitted, that it can be used in a public address to point a moral and adorn a tale.

THE GIRL AND THE PREACHER.

Some time ago Miss Laura A. Smith made a tour of the fashionable churches incognito for the purpose of testing the sociability of the parson and congregations, with the result that a startling story found its way into public print, much to the chagrin of the clergy in general, and more particularly to those in charge of the churches she had visited.

Recently, Rev. John Thompson, of Chicago, utilized his summer vacation by undertaking a similar task, and not very strange to relate, he reports finding a vastly different condition of affairs than those discovered by Miss Smith.

But little argument is necessary. The preacher had a purpose to serve. Miss Smith had none. The preacher started upon his mission for the express purpose of finding what he wanted. Miss Smith went after results alone, no matter what those results would be. The preacher would not be expected to find anything detrimental to his religion or his profession. Miss Smith would have reported the results of her investigations with the same courage had she found them to be the same as the preacher now reports. All other preachers will be proud of Mr. Thompson, but the big world of men and women will believe Miss Smith in preference to the preacher, because they actually know that what Miss Smith had to report was true in every particular.

STUDENTS' EXAMINATIONS.

Several of the students in the Correspondence School have as yet failed to send in their examination papers. This failure is to their own detriment. It will be an utter impossibility to properly instruct when the rules governing examinations are not complied with. Every examination yet passed on needed some corrections, perfection in studies only being attained by one student on one subject. Examinations are necessary for the correction of erroneous impressions drawn from a study of the text and all students who have not yet forwarded their examinations are urged to do so at once.

Since offering the announcement in the Blade of the Editor's desire to give lectures in Indiana and Illinois, some very flattering offers have been received, but these are still inadequate to compensate for the trip and pay all traveling expenses. Five additional appointments are needed, and friends having the opportunity to arrange for lectures are urged to communicate with the Blade at the earliest convenience, so that dates may be arranged without conflict or disappointment. The trip will be made, if at all, about the last week in November or the first week in December.

AN ESSAY ON LIFE.

Must be Materialistic Basis and is Dependent upon Environment.

(By Merricus.)

LIFE.—This speaking of the open road. The sesame of presentment of truth.

Life, as most generally understood, is orthodoxly known as a fountain of beginning, from which individuality springs, with as many radiations as does the millions of rays of the ever-glowing sun, luminating the pathway of so-called righteousness. Aye, the sun's rays may reach into every crevice in the ethereal canopy, may even penetrate the inmost globule of nature itself, yet without the repulsive force of gaseous matter surrounding each individual planet or star, its retroactive rays become not visible to that same created spring of life. It must have its assistance from immediate environments, or glow not in heaven above or hell below. Its correlative is found in that part of its own creativeness, and thus life's limited sphere lives within itself. Cannot reach outward. Its pagan teachings circle round and about its own statuesque with no care for enlightenment of science, but seeking its surcease from mythical traditions as homogeneous, as ever were Grecian Mythology or the Arabian Nights. As a boy, we were often forced upon our ingenuity to overcome overwhelming impossibilities, and fill vacancies of uncertainty; so we supplied our missing "sinkers" from fishing lines by molding them with leaden pellets and the use of a half joint of dry cane. Its principle remained, but how many could have been cast from one reed! Life incipency may move forward on its onward march, moulten after the laws of nature, but its source, even as insignificant, will always remain the same.

But why should a so-called life be launched upon the sea of Eternity with only its outward destiny under control of the ego within. Would a just and human creator whirl into the unknown, his image with no imbuism to fight the greedy attacks of perdition, except the knowledge that we must shun the Hell to come? Our mind is given control over its recepticle, the mass containing it, but how much control over itself? So far as known to itself, it is a perfect vacuum. If known to itself, would not the garndeür of the symetry of its building be far beyond our most sanguine imaginations? And yet our orthodox brethren will instill into the unthinking, as belief that a just god has withheld from him this secret, merely to show, and keep before him an awe of the "terrific power behind the throne." "That we are punished for the sins we wot not of."

It would seem, then, that this great man

is quite a humorist, to perpetrate so many jokes on his "boys" by consigning their souls to eternal damnation, when he had first withheld from him the right to distinguish and guard against the esse of manhood. Forsooth, pagan; you may continue to kiss away the brass toe of your idol of bronze, erected by your "sacred" priests!

But to one and all, we look to see a serenity of sweet purpose in the magnetism of truth.

OH! FOR A WORKING FUND.

(By Lou Lawrence.)

In a letter to Dr. Bowles ament the Free-thought work, I have just written, "O, for a fund to send out a corps of fieldworkers; a la the Salvation army method!" and in following out the idea, in my letter, I have become enthused with the plan, and have decided to write it out as a sort of suggestion to those interested in Free-thought propaganda; and if you think it worthy I would be glad to have you give it a place in The Blade.

Of the proposed corps, one 1st class lecturer would be the important quantity. Then a musician of fair ability would be desirable, and a sort of general utility person essential. It should be the latter's work to arrange for meetings, solicit members and contributions, and to act as general secretary. If he could talk some, or prepare papers, give appropriate readings, or furnish any creditable sort of entertainment, so much the better. Indeed it might be necessary that he should be able to do some such work, especially if the musician should be dispensed with.

There are, no doubt, a number of places where arrangements could be made for one-day conventions to be entertained by such a corps of workers; with, if possible, a little help from local talent; and much good would be done. Rationalists would be encouraged to show their colors more boldly, enthusiasm would be created, and a goodly number of clubs organized. One such convention would stir up more thought than the distribution of \$50.00 worth of literature, and could be held for less than that sum. While few will refuse to accept a tract, only those who are already somewhat interested will read it. Besides, there is no appeal so successful as personal appeal.

As to expenses, the main lecturer should have a decent remuneration; but there are, probably, enthusiasts who would be willing to fill the other places for little more than their expenses.

As Secretary of the Buckeye Secular Union, I would like to correspond with Free-thinkers at various points, who would like to have such meetings at their places, and

who would be willing to help make the necessary arrangements. As I bear the "expense" of my correspondence in this work, I would care to hear from only those who are in sober earnest and who know that a hall, or other room in which to hold meetings, would be furnished by the local friends. I would, however, be pleased to hear from those who have ideas, or other assistance toward the success of such a plan, to offer.

DAVE'S LETTER.

To His Dear Heavenly Father.

(Copyright applied for, 1908, by Franklin H. Heald.)

My dear heavenly father. Are Angells Tales covered with hare like there heds are, or are they covered with fethers like there wings or dont Angells have Tales? I can't see there tales in the pictures, becaus there heds are always turned this way.

When I asked the Sunday School teacher about it, she just giggled and told me to go and ask my papa, but he didn't no; only he says they are bound to have sum kind of a tale that will spred out, or thay wood always turn duple summersets when thay try to fly. Joe says "we outent to talk 'bout sich sakred things, in no sich away, same as tho they was comon folkes," and he 'lows if he was my daddy about to ours, he wood learn me more religion than my own papa does in to years. I am glad he aint. He says when he was a boy, if he had asked questions like I do, like enuf they wood of killed him with a Blacksnake whip or either learned him that it is a boys plase to listen to them that you appoint and not ask fool questions about things that nobody can answer and there dont anybody no anything about and dont want to and has no rite to no, except bye faith. He says it dont make any differense to a boy nor to nobody else whether the Sun goes round the world, or whether the world goes round the Moon, and its none of there busness and dont make any diference to you eyther, he says, but all we hav to do is mind our own busnes and listen to them as do no, and work six days then go to the house of the lord and rest on the sabbeth and eat the body and drink the blud of the blessed master and not be always asking questions. He says a boy like I am that is allowed to always ask questions, is mighty liable to be a skeptick and go to Hell and burn forever the same as little babys do that are not bablized in holey water before thay dye. When I asked him which is the worss, skepticks or wouldticks, he got madder than ever and went off to work. Joe has to git awful mad, to go to work when he dont hav to.

Dont you want me to ask questions and why dont you answer me? As ever

DAVE.

The Blade's Correspondence

DECIDEDLY UNORTHODOX.

CHATTANOOGA, TENN.—I have been getting the Blade occasionally. I presume the reason for that it, is was addressed to me at St. Elmo, and I live at 645 Boyce Street, Chattanooga, Tenn. But then I presume that the missing ones were picked up by some of the faithfuls. And if they read it, I am sure that their running-gear will need more than ordinary greasing to get it back to superstition. I was a regular subscriber for the Blade when Bro. Moore was the editor. And some years ago, he, like all big preachers, had to go to the holy land to pick up some relic of the feed trough where Mary had a lamb, and also a chip of the cross that the Boy was hung on between the two thieves. I have often thought that in those days it was the custom and the law of the Jews that a young maiden, unmarried, who was found to be pregnant, was taken outside of the town or city and there stoned to death. Why the man who seduced the maiden knew this law among the Jews, and so did this fellow, the Holy Spirit. Why in h—l didn't they take Holy Spirit outside of the gates and stone him to death. A loving, a merciful, and all wise god. Powerful and almighty. Think of a crime like that, and he at the head of the throne of heaven. Why didn't he cut a rib out of some fellow and make for himself a woman and take her into heaven with him. No one has ever heard of a woman going to heaven, not even Mary, the mother of that boy Jesus, was ever heard of going anywhere. I would not be found dead in a place where there are no ladies and women. So I have concluded to go to h—l, and when I get there I shall plow that country all up, good and deep, harrow and rake over all the land, make flower gardens and blue grass fields; bore and dig wells, make beautiful walks and drives (not gold walks), but soft, mellow, good and pleasant to walk on. They say the devil is at the head of Hades, or hell. When we get there that fellow will have to behave, because there is no one individual that we cannot handle. Why Sampson pulled down a grandstand filled with many thousand people, and the weight of it could not be numbered, yet a little woman beat him so he became like an ordinary man, and that is the way we will fix the devil. I have a splendid good opinion of the few copies of the Blade I have received, and especially of John R. Charlesworth, who is

a tried and true friend of human rights and truth, a teacher of mental and moral liberty. We have not near enough such men as Mr. Charlesworth of the Blue Grass Blade. I enclose here my subscription for the Blade. Wishing you a long life and a happy and prosperous one, I am very truly yours.—CHRIS BATEMAN.

IF ALL WOULD DO AS THIS!

MARIETTA, O.—Thought I would write you a few lines to state that the Blade's family here is all O. K. I have spent my vacation up in the dark hills of Monroe county. Have had a good rest and a nice time, and am now ready to peddle Uncle Sam's junk for another year. I had a nice letter from Bro. George Roberts last week, and he says for me to get busy and get up a club here. It will be the Helen M. Lucas Club No. 2. There should be no other name considered. I shall give you the full details later on. Well I sent about 40 copies of the Blade to a friend of mine in Wheeling the other day, and asked him to try and get me some subscribers. If they come I will send them in as soon as they arrive. I feel pretty sure of getting some because there are lots of Freethinkers up there. I herewith enclose one dollar for to continue the subscription of the Blade to William H. Buck. When I sent in his name in the other batch it was only for 6 months. He met me the other day and gave me this dollar, and says he would like to have the Blade continue coming. He makes good use of his paper. He reads it and passes it down the line. You can book me down for a copy of the bound volume of the Blade. When she is ready let me know and I will send \$3.50. I also send you an editorial from the Ohio State Journal, which is unique in more than one sense of the word. As I know of nothing further at this time, I shall close, wishing you and yours and the whole Blade family the best of success. I am, as ever, yours.—WM. H. COX.

IS WELL KNOWN IN THE CAUSE.

I am sorry to say that I am unable to pay you what I owe you. The Blade that you send me I give away or sell them. I often get twenty-five cents apiece for them. My friends know that I am hard up for money. But I hope to be able to send you a little very soon. I haven't been able, for the last two years, to read anything or hardly walk.

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NEED OF EMERGENCY FUND.

The following communications are printed in order to acquaint our more well-disposed readers with actual facts. Business depression, induced by political necessities to old parties, augmented by old age and incapacity, prevents many from taking the Blade. For further comment upon these letters see the editorial column, but after reading what is published below, all will see the necessity of the fund we have suggested.

Names and places of residence are omitted because of a desire to save embarrassment.

OLD AGE AND POVERTY.

I received a letter from you a few days ago, asking me to do something for you on what I owe you. I acknowledge the debt, and it is a just one, but I am poor and depend partly on my children for my support. I am unable to pay you, and must ask you to stop my paper, not that I do not like it, but because I am too poor to take it. I think it is the best paper I ever read. About eight years ago I got one of your papers, then published by Mr. C. C. Moore, and I have been a Freethinker ever since. I have no reverence for gods or priestcraft. When my days are ended I want no skylights at my bed or at my grave. Thanking you for your kindness and liberality in bearing with me so long I will take a sad farewell of the dear old Blade.

A CASE OF BAD LUCK.

Please discontinue the Blade until I can get straightened out. Through sickness and lack of employment I have got badly behind, not only to you, but other debts have accumulated. Don't think hard of me, for I have taken the paper since 1899, and think it the brightest paper of its kind. Am working now, and hope soon to pay up. I know you are in need, and it is my duty as much as any one's to help you by paying up. Wish I could do even better. I have helped C. C. Moore in time and am glad I did, for he was worthy of all the help he ever got and ten times more. I can never forget how hard he fought for what he thought was right and never faltered. Some times I think he was ever greater than Ingersoll or Paine.

ONE MORE CASE.

On the 27th of December, 1907, I lost my mill by fire, which left me in bad shape. I had no insurance on either mill or stock. Am not able to pay what I owe. Did hope at first to be able to rise again, but the panic has finished my business for me. Will ask you to stop my paper, as I do not wish to increase my obligations. If I get

able I will pay what is due you. Am 66 years of age and in good health. Wish you well.

WILL STAY WITH THE BLADE.

RANDOLPH, TEXAS.—I was a subscriber to "Higher Science," and I am now receiving the Blade because of the suspension of Mr. Heald's paper. Sorry to know that Higher Science suspended, but I suppose that could not be helped. I like the Blade very well, and will renew when my time is up if I can. I send you a paper for publication if it is good enough for your columns. If you publish the piece, please send me 20 copies containing it and your bill for same. Yours for Freethought.—J. M. GILBERT.

NAME AND ADDRESS SENT.

SULPHUR SPRINGS, TEXAS.—Please give me, on enclosed card, the name and address of the secretary of the "Paine Memorial Association," as I have one dollar to contribute to the fund. Will send it as soon as I learn where to send. Hope that you will respond immediately, and oblige.—H. H. TARTER.

SENDS HIS RENEWAL.

SEATTLE, WASH.—Enclosed please find check for \$1.50, subscription to the Blade. Also notice my change of address as above. I also wish to point out to you that for about 3 months I never received the Blade at all. Now, if you would kindly send me a few copies of the Blade containing that article of mine "Let There Be Light" it would put us about right, and I would give them to the Hardshell Baptists.—B. CLAVERY.

ONE WAY TO DO GOOD.

BOLIVAR, MO.—I have a number of Freethought friends. I told them of the Blade and they asked me to request you to send them a sample bunch. As I am away the most of the time, I cannot get papers delivered to me, hence don't subscribe, yet I do all I can to disseminate the truth. If you mail a bunch to Mr. Dow Harriman, Wheatland, Mo., Dow will hand them out in a way likely to do you good.—H. E. BRANCH.

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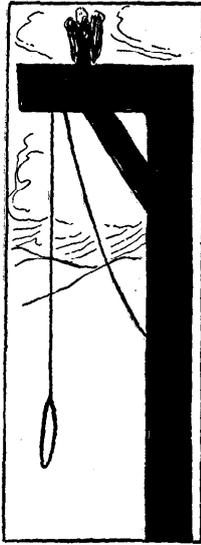
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