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To be Occupied by Eminent Divines, Scientists, Philosophers and Teachers.

AN INTELLECTUAL FEAST FOR THE READERS OF THIS PAPER.

A Department that Would Prove an Attraction in any of the Leading Magazines of the World.

SAVIORS.

Their Relation to the World Considered.

An Address Delivered Before the Chicago Secular Union, BY JAMES ABBOTT.

[Reported for The Progressive Thinker's Rostrum.]

As we look down the dim vista of the past, we find mythology has played an important part; and played it exceedingly well. The traditions and superstitions of one age have been systematized in another; only to be believed by succeeding ages as divine revelations. Pagan deities have been set up to rule in the imaginations of men; while the Almighty is believed to have found it necessary to send his only begotten son into the world, not once only, but many times. They have a very limited view of religious history who assume the gentle Nazarene was the only son sent. Where the knowledge of his life has not come, we find men, both savage and civilized, have apotheosized other heroes who closely resemble the Christian Saviors in many particulars.

This belief in some superhuman saving power is not an unnatural one. Man must necessarily appreciate his weakness and seeming helplessness, as against the elements by which he is surrounded. In the beginning of his earthly existence he was dependent on nature. If a husbandman, the earth afforded him grain which he laid in her bosom for nurture. When the grain sprang up, he soon discovered that sun, rain and air were necessary for its growth. If a shepherd, his flocks no less required water to drink and warmth to cheer them. The wind could counteract the excesses of both; could cool the land of the heat of one, and clear away the deluge of the other. Sun and wind and rain were necessary for his happiness; even for his support. But they were above his control, and seemed to favor him at their own will. He felt that they were his superiors, and their spontaneous action suggested the idea of their personality. So the elements and common phenomena were deified. But how was he to propitiate them? How was he to make the clouds rain, the winds blow, the sun shine, when his crops, his herds or himself required it? If his fellow-man was to be conciliated and won to perform some act of favor, the request must be preceded with the indulgence of some wish of the other. A gift must be offered. Applying the same reasoning to the capricious elements, he concluded a gift must be offered if he would enjoy their favor. Hence the origin of sacrifice. But if the gift were wanting, instinct had already taught him the power of flattery; and this was the origin of hymns of praise, followed by prayer. Here we have a system of element worship, which I take it was the first worship of the world. Man's conscience taught him there was some unseen, unknown, almighty being in and out of the world, some one to bring death and receive him after death, some one to create himself and the world around him. We find this idea deeply rooted in men of the very earliest times of which we have any record, though the ideas of the Supreme Being were always shrouded with mystery and uncertainty.

But Jehovah was believed to be too aristocratic to be on familiar terms with his subjects, or at all accessible to their prayers. Hence was gotten up a mediator or middle-man to stand between God and his people, and serve as a factor for both. The Lord was supposed to be frequently angry with his people, and threatening to punish them. Hence this middle divinity, this second person of the trinity, stepped in to intercede on behalf of the people, and tone down, as it were, the more severe nature of the first person.

But the principal circumstance which led to the conception of a Savior, was the desire to continue in sin and wrong-doing, and still escape its legitimate consequences. It came to be believed, and is still believed by many, that people may run riot in wickedness, plunge into all manner of indulgences, until death approaches, when they have nothing to do but to ask forgiveness and cast the burden of their iniquities on some crucified Savior, who suffered once for all, the just for the unjust, that we might escape.

The doctrine of the atonement is essentially immoral in that it causes him who ought not to suffer, to suffer in place of him who ought. It reverses the law of nature which says every action must have its effect. It substitutes a weak faith for resolute knowledge. It could have no other origin than a wish on the part of the wrong-doer to be free from the natural consequences of wrong-doing; a doctrine which I consider

wholly irrational, and which would have no place in this nineteenth century, were it not for an hereditary superstition which obscures the mental vision and blunts the moral sense of the people of our day. The light of reason cannot be seen, when clouded by the mists of faith.

Modern Christians flatter themselves that they, as the legatees of the ancient Jews, are God's special favorites; that he became incarnated for the special purpose of manifesting mercy toward a part of the human race, those who did their thinking (or rather, failed to do their thinking) after certain prescribed formulae. Several nations, with equal bad grace, have announced that they were God's chosen people, and have complacently assumed themselves better than their neighbors. The fabric of Christianity rests upon this claim of a franchise, a monopoly of divine grace; and Jesus Christ is the central figure of the alleged "Scheme of salvation," around whom has been woven a network of theology and dogmatism so intricate and complex that even the grand intellect of a Bruno could not grasp it.

Who is this Jesus? We have little regarding him outside the New Testament, and are obliged to rely mainly on that narrative, defective as it is, for our information. I cannot agree with those who regard Jesus as an altogether mythical person. I do not believe the gospel accounts wholly legendary, although we are accustomed to find the legendary and miraculous gathering, like a halo, around the early history of all religious leaders, until the sober truth runs the risk of being altogether neglected for the glittering and edifying falsehood. The historic character of Jesus is also established by such authorities as Pliny, Tacitus, Lucian, Josephus and the Talmud. Jesus was a living personality, as were nearly all the divinities of ancient mythology. True, there were a few back numbers, like Chaos and Chronos, who belonged to the original stock, and never lived upon earth, according to the legends. But all such seem to have gone out of business. The real live gods of the world, those who had the potency to summon an ecumenical council or establish an inquisition were once flesh and blood.

It is doubtful whether Jesus is the correct name. The Talmud says his real name was Ben Panther. The word Jesus is a corruption or another form of Joshua. As Joshua led the children of Israel into the promised land, so the followers of Ben Panther believed he, as their Messiah, would lead them into the promised land of a restored kingdom. It is easy to see how the people would call their Messiah who could do that a Joshua or a Jesus. The Jews as a nation were broken up. Their idea of a Messiah was that of a deliverer from national servitude. Such the prophets had predicted; and when Jesus proclaimed himself the Messiah so long foretold, the disciples, whose expectations were entirely materialistic, hailed him as he who should restore Israel. But when he said his kingdom was not of this world, the people were disappointed, and many turned from him with heavy hearts. He did not fulfill their hopes.

The family of David had become extinct; but some prophets had said the Messiah was to be of the House of David. Hence a genealogy had to be invented, to connect the Messiah with David, although the two different genealogies given in the Gospel are a dismal failure. The Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem. Hence the awkward detour, and the anachronism of the Gospel in narrating the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, when he was probably born at Nazareth, because he is constantly referred to as a native of that place.

He unquestionably belonged to the sect of the Essenes. The Jews were divided religiously into the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. And it is remarkable that while the Pharisees and Sadducees receive so much attention in the New Testament narrative, this third sect of Judaism should receive none at all. Is it possible that these sacred writers wished to conceal the fact of Jesus's connection with the Essenes? He must have belonged to this sect, because of the many points of their belief which he taught; points wherein they differed radically from Judaism, as expounded by the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Essenes provided just a sufficiency of the necessities of life. Their converse was only on such parts of philosophy as concerned man's relation to God. They abhorred slavery, served their neighbors, had a community of goods, practiced celibacy, were simple and modest, regarded the world with contempt, bore all suffering with equanimity, and fully believed in a future existence. They lived together in the same houses and villages, sustaining the poor, the sick, the aged. They were an order of working monks, rather than mendicants. All these points of

teaching, Jesus borrowed from this sect, to which he belonged.

From the narrative, we learn that he started out a plain country lad, born of obscure parents, earning his living at the carpenter trade. He had little knowledge of the kingdoms and principalities and ways of the world; nor did he seem to care to learn. He never heard of such a thing as positive science, which had begun to take root in Greece and surrounding countries. The Jews of his day were still dwelling in profound ignorance of that development which had begun to assume form elsewhere. And Jesus was not one whit in advance of his countrymen in those respects. They were passionately fond of the marvelous. The marvelous was to them the natural, not the exceptional. And so it was with Jesus. To him the supernatural was the natural. This habit among the masses led to the grossest credulity; but in Jesus it arose to a consuming idea of the intimacy between God and man.

The miracles of Jesus are not made as much of as formerly. They consisted mostly of healing the sick. The science of medicine was wholly unknown in Judea, as instance his casting out of demons. Where sickness was regarded as a punishment for evil, what more natural than that the Holy Man should be regarded as the Great Physician? What more natural than that the contact of such a person should work wonders through the minds of a simple people? The narrative says that Jesus performed these feats with reluctance, and only after much solicitation. When the public asked for something open and notorious, he replied that no sign should be given. These marvels add nothing to the beauty of his teachings. It is only weak minds which are convinced of moral truths and duty by an exhibition of the miraculous. For instance, two and two make four, just as certainly without a miracle as with one. Jesus did not need to turn water into wine at Cana to prove the beauty of the saying, "Blessed are the pure in heart." The assertion proves itself. But in the age in which he lived his teachings, to gain credence, needed the added weight of the miraculous. They mar the beauties of those teachings in our eyes, but perhaps we should never have heard of the teachings, were it not for them.

Jesus remained close to nature. His most beautiful parables are drawn from his simple surroundings. Instance, the lilies of the fields. What more charming than his saying of them, "They toil not; neither do they spin; yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." His teachings, as for instance, the beatitudes, are fresh, unartificial, abounding in allusions to nature, flowing without reserve by the road, on the hillside, at the lake, at the well, at the banquet of both Pharisee and publican. Jesus preached plain truths. He preached himself. And if the people's minds had not been warped by previous conceptions and prejudices, they would easily have comprehended him. To the Samaritan woman at the well he said, "The hour cometh when ye shall worship neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem; but when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Or he might have said, shall worship the truth, for truth is God. At that well of Samaria, Jesus proclaimed that religion which must ultimately dominate the world; namely, the worship of the truth. Humanity has not been able to reach this ideal, but it is toiling after it, and may yet have it within its grasp. When communing with the beauties of nature, Jesus appeared at his best. The same sentiments had been uttered long years before, but never in so sweet and touching a manner. They were full of the perfume of the flowers among which he dwelt on the enchanted shores of Galilee! Nothing in the world's history ever approached them.

Living in a land whose climate relieved the people from that intensity of struggle for existence which we experience, his mind had opportunity to unfold and dwell in the ideal. And he is a perfect ideal. It is the ideal which must be the ultimate abiding place of all our faith and hope. And this immortal expression of it is all the more beautiful, because of the dark background of superstition, ignorance and race-hatred in which it is set. It is like the snow-flower of Siberia, all the more exquisite because of the bleakness of its surroundings. Under the conditions in which he lived we would expect the idealist to say, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." What would we think of a man to-day acting on that suggestion, who took no thought for the morrow? Yet eighteen hundred years ago in Galilee, such a thing contained no absurdity.

Jesus suggested to his disciples persecution, but never resistance. He would annihilate riches and power, but never for an instant to seize them himself. His idea was purity of heart triumphing over force.

He was not a Spiritualist; that is, a believer in the material and spiritual. For to him all was spiritual. To him, the spiritual was the manifestation of the ideal. To him, it was the real. He would found the kingdom of God among men, to which he did not call the priests, the rulers, the doctors, but the common people.

There is nothing of the metaphysical in

Jesus. He had none of the dogmatism of Paul and little of the subtlety of Plato. He did not enter into long dissertations to prove that the merciful are blessed. He simply said, "Blessed are the merciful." The Deity of Jesus was not the God of Israel, but of humanity. His creed, the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of men. The golden rule had been proclaimed before. But this to him was not enough. He said, "If any one smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left also. Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you. If ye love them only which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" This doctrine of returning good for evil was something of which Judaism had never dreamed.

Jesus never claimed to be an incarnation. Whenever he spoke of himself as the "Son of God," we have no reason to think it was in any different sense from that in which we could all use the term. The title did not please him. His favorite title was the "Son of Man." Jesus never called himself the Son of David. The idea of the incarnation is an after-thought, and the divine honors which are now offered him he never demanded, and would have rejected with sorrow that any one should so misconceive his mission.

Other Jewish reformers had preached reform in the name of the law. At first Jesus seemed to have a high regard for the law, but later on, he preached that it must be superseded. The conventionalities of Jerusalem disaffected him. They had no charm to one brought up among the unconventional of nature. The religion of grimaces he despised. His sympathies overleaped the boundaries of Judaism, as instance, the Good Samaritan. The orthodox Pharisees he had no patience with, being unorthodox himself. He denounced them as blind leaders of the blind. Hence he became a hated object to the narrow fanaticism of his nation.

With that bitter railing he exposed the hypocrisy of the Pharisee who was particularly to pray and give alms in public. And if he could enter a Papiet church of Chicago to-day you can well imagine his amazement and sorrow at the hollow mockeries which are repeated in his name. Would he not say of them, "Ye are blind leaders of the blind?" Or if he stepped into one of our aristocratic Protestant churches would he not denounce them as "wolves in sheep's clothing," "whited sepulchres, pleasing to the eye, but full of dead men's bones."

Like many another of the world's illustrious, his mind seems to have risen up, to have reached out into the realms beyond from which to draw his inspiration. Even as the mountain peaks are covered with the light of the rising sun while the valleys below remain in the shadow, so his mind was crowned with a radiance of revelation, while the masses below him were still in densest darkness. Whether these inspirations were from above or the evolutions of his own soul is a question about which men will probably always differ. But it is certain that his ideals were altogether beyond anything found in Judaism.

While early in his mission Jesus incutted observance of the law, later he rose above the law and proclaimed the true religion of the heart. And as his teachings fell on the ears of an unbelieving world, it tinged his life with sadness and disappointment. In bitterness of soul he says of the city of his adoption: "Thou which art exalted to heaven shalt be brought down unto hell. For if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."

In manner of expression Jesus was thoroughly oriental. Amongst the orientals a critical regard for absolute truth of narrative was little known. They then saw, and still see, everything through the magnifying lens of their imagination and enthusiasm. We should not be surprised that Jesus was imbued with the same spirit. He had exaggerated ideas of his own mission and importance. For instance, he says: "The Queen of Sheba came from the most uttermost part of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here." Carrying his ideas to the extreme, as do all enthusiasts, he announced the kingdom of God at hand. But it was this very assumption that gave his name a vitality among the people. He taught, not as the scribes and Pharisees, but as one having authority.

Jesus was more than a reformer. He was the founder and most conspicuous exponent of that religion of humanity which is the coming religion. He has been to religion what Aristotle was to philosophy, and Greece to the fine arts. Many of his beauties are hidden by the faults of his disciples and historians. At the same time we may suppose many of his errors have been dissembled. I confess that I can find no words to paint the matchless sublimity of a character so altogether unique, both on account of the elements which went to make it up, and the changes in the world which it has wrought. No charge of moral obliquity was ever breathed against it. And the beauty of Jesus is not in any patent scheme of salvation which his followers have constructed after certain plans and specifications. It is Jesus himself, the living man. Such a character has a powerful hold upon the sympathies of poor downtrodden humanity; and it is not so much a wonderment after all that his uneducated followers endowed him with divine attributes and reckoned him a God.

Such, in brief, is the partial outline of a life which in three years' public ministrations brought up to the Jewish people, and afterwards changed the trend of modern history; an illustrious life, given an immortality by its tragic ending. Jesus had little regard for his personal safety, and continued his teachings in the face of what must have been certain death. But he did not deviate from the path which he had marked out. Once, in the garden of Gethsemane, he seems to falter. But he regains his composure, and goes to his fate with calmness and forgiveness; to that same fate which has met humanity's best friends. The people have ever crucified those who would redeem them.

I would be glad if we could draw the curtain here, remembering Jesus only as the friend of the poor, the agitator, the reformer, the revolutionist, the heretic of his time, hurling his philippics against the shams and pretensions of his orthodox persecutors, the unflinching martyr, who, forgetting self, laid down his life on the altar of principle. And we would, were it not for the extraordinary claims made regarding him. We are told that he constitutes thirty-three and one-third per cent of Deity, and that our eternal salvation depends on believing concerning him something which he himself expressly repudiated. To see whether this claim is well founded, it becomes necessary to examine another side of his character. This we can take no pleasure in doing, because the world is disposed to treat leniently the errors and even sins of those who have rendered humanity great service. We would follow that course here, were it not for the preposterous claims which the church, with almost savagery, is continually forcing upon us.

Pursuing our investigation further, we find this so-called perfect God was but an imperfect man; that this all-wise being was unwise in many particulars. Let me point out some of the palpable errors into which Jesus fell. One was his contempt of the world. While living in it, he lived entirely outside of it. The modern tendency is not to despise our present conditions, but to elevate and make the most of them. Jesus said, "Take no thought for the morrow," instancing that two sparrows, though sold for a farthing, are provided for by the divine arrangement. According to our notions, this is the opposite of all principles of thrift. This sentiment, essentially Galilean, had a decisive influence on the destiny of the nascent sect who regarded all the cares of life as evils which stifled the germs of good. Jesus was fond of citing the case of the man who, after enlarging his barn and laying up stores for many years, died before he could enjoy them. The saying had much force in Galilee, where brigandage was common, and the rich had no sure possessions. What man to-day preparing to go a journey, would follow the direction of Jesus, to carry no script in his purse. If he did, he would most certainly have to travel in an empty box car. This detaching men from the affairs of life, results in most serious drawbacks and embarrassments. It is the antithesis of the scientific method.

Jesus evidently held the ideas of the Ebionites, whose tenet was that the poor were the favored of God, and should inherit the kingdom of heaven. This was to be a balancing of conditions with the rich, who in this world enjoyed all the good things, while the poor had practically none of them. We have an evidence of this in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The text attributes no moral turpitude to Dives. He was lost simply because he was rich, and Lazarus was saved simply because he was poor. However, there is no pretense made by any Christian sect on the face of the globe, of following the injunction of Jesus, as it is utterly impracticable. Likewise was his advice that his disciples sell all they had and follow him, seeking first the kingdom of heaven. His command to resist not evil, if obeyed, would soon result in our being overrun by the criminal and vicious. His injunction to hate father and mother; brother and sister, is entirely unnatural. His saying that all things asked in prayer, believing, should be realized, sets aside all natural laws, and if followed, would encourage sloth and misery. His reasons given for the blessing of the different classes mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount, are illogical, and much better reasons could be assigned. His reason why a certain man was born blind is irrational. He treated disease as a punishment sent from God. His statement that his followers should speak new tongues, handle serpents, drink poison, and heal all manner of sickness by the laying-on of hands, is absurd; and is conspicuous by its non-fulfillment. He taught that the end of the world was near at hand, saying, "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled. There be some standing here which shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." Are the Millerites guilty of any greater folly when they set a certain day and hour for the universe to collapse, and gather themselves together with their tariff-taxed cotton gowns, so that they may get to heaven ahead of their fellow-mortals and secure front seats? The declaration of Jesus about the stars falling sets at naught all we know of the principles of astronomy.

His errors of omission, however, are greater than his errors of commission, and banish the possibility of his being an all-wise Deity. If he was the very God, why did he not rebuke the despotic forms of

government which existed in his time? He should have told the people something of the true principles of democracy. He should have laid bare the evils of slavery and polygamy. He should have said something of the evils of intoxication, instead of manufacturing wine at a wedding-feast. He should have given us something about the necessity of mental culture and moral science, and that most important lesson, the necessity of self-development. He should have taught that everything is governed by natural law, instead of by the whim of an angry God. He should have taught that right and wrong are natural principles; that virtue has its own reward, and evil its own punishment. He should have taught that violation of natural laws must be followed by evil consequences, which any mere formal declaration of belief is powerless to avert. He should have taught that man is responsible to himself alone for his belief. He should have taught mental liberty instead of blind faith. And finally, he might have taught the doctrine of evolution, as furnishing a philosophic solution of all actions, both good and bad. A person of infinite wisdom would have brought to light all these glorious truths, and many more.

But instead of a God giving us these helps to the world's development, especially as he was right here on the ground, our progress has been left to be worked out entirely by ordinary folks, by the uninspired, and generally by the heretics, the infidels, the so-called atheists of their times. In celestial things the world has had a surfeit of advice, often enforced at the point of the sword. But in all material things, mankind has had to hustle for itself.

And again, the saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," if uttered by Jesus, exhibits a bigotry and ferocity of spirit quite unaccountable. I, for one, will not slander the name of Jesus of Nazareth by admitting that he ever uttered them. They are not in harmony with the trend of his life and character, as portrayed in the Gospel. They are an interpolation, a pious fraud, put there by some later zealot, to encourage punctuality and liberality in the payment of the revenues demanded by the church.

Jesus proclaimed the supremacy of the spiritual whose law was love. But it was reserved for those great minds which came later, like Alexander Von Humboldt, to proclaim that not the world alone, but the universe, is governed by law.

From all this we see that Jesus, though in many respects the most remarkable character the world has ever seen, was just such a man as his times would produce from a mind of his mold. A deeply religious man, an enthusiast, a reformer, an infidel of his day, he nevertheless fell into most of the errors of his time. In scientific or philosophic attainments he was not more advanced than the scribes and Pharisees whom he scored so unmercifully. The old testament abounds in contradictions of almost every moral science. Yet Jesus had neither the wisdom nor the inspiration to set those errors aright.

To believe that a person guilty of so many errors of omission and commission was an all-wise God is to stultify our reason and degrade our moral sense, while it detracts from the homage which is justly due so grand and noble a life as we have been considering.

These considerations seem to my mind a sufficient refutation of the interpretation which has been placed by the church upon the life of Jesus. But the greatest difficulty which students of history find in accepting the extravagant claims made for him, is that his every claim, every point in his life and doctrine, has been anticipated by several centuries. If churchmen claim they have a patent on their scheme of salvation, we must plead want of novelty and previous dedication to the public use. It is just to say that none of the other saviors anticipate all the claims made concerning Jesus. The central claim, however, is that of the incarnation and atonement. These claims have been made of many. The different saviors of the world anticipate, some a few and some many of the claims made regarding Jesus. As we examine the pages of antiquity, we find several alleged gods were born of virgins in a miraculous manner. Stars have directed wise men to their birth places. The magi have visited the infant saviors. The 25th of December is the reputed birthday of some, although it is quite certain it was not that of Jesus. The idea of the trinity was held in India and Egypt, as well as several other countries, long centuries before. Its place in the Christian system is undoubtedly borrowed. There are something like a dozen saviors, so regarded, in the different religions of the world, who have become incarnated, taught new religious principles, suffered death, and afterwards occupy in heaven substantially the same place Jesus does in the trinity. I have not the time to sketch all those persons who once lived upon earth and subsequently were made the recipients of divine honors. Let me, however, mention some of these heathen saviors who bear a striking resemblance to Jesus, and about whom similar claims have been made. There is Buddha and Krishna of India, Mithras of Persia, Osiris of Egypt, Wodan of Scandinavia, Indra of Thibet, Zoroaster of Thrace, Quetzalcoatl of Mexico, Prometheus of Caucasus, besides several others. All were regarded as sons of God and the second person of a supposed trinity.

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SAVIORS.

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I will mention some of the parallels between them and the Christian Savior, and then submit whether Jesus of Nazareth is the only savior the world ever had. Many of the claims concerning these different saviors are unfounded, and much uncertainty surrounds them. But this only intensifies the parallel.

Perhaps Mithras of Persia comes as near to our commonly accepted idea of the Savior as any. The date of his birth is uncertain, but his worship had largely spread in the third and second centuries B. C. He was incarnated, the second person of a trinity, and interceded with the first person on behalf of his believers. He was a god of great purity, moral goodness and knowledge. His system of religion taught that there goes on in the world as a whole, and in the life of each individual, a continual struggle between good and evil. Mithras was always engaged in this struggle between good and evil, and his religion taught all alike to aid in the battle. Victory could be gained only by sacrifice and probation. Mithras is conceived as always performing the mystic sacrifice through which alone the good will triumph. The human soul, which has been separated from the divine nature and has descended to earth, can ascend and attain union with God through fasting and prayer. The sacrifice, which is always being offered by Mithras, makes this ascent and union possible. Those who would follow Mithras had to pass through probation, scourging, fasting and an ordeal by water, and were then admitted as soldiers of the true religion. Does not this sound strangely like an exegesis by some learned doctor of divinity on the fundamentals of the Christian system? And does it not anticipate in many important particulars the extravagant claims made concerning Jesus?

Another character to which I will briefly allude is Quetzalcoatl, a divinity of the ancient Mexicans. He is claimed to have been born of a virgin, was sometimes represented as nailed on a cross between two thieves, suffered death, and was afterwards worshipped as the second member of a trinity. The ancient Mexicans also had a god who was tempted forty days. They practiced baptism. They also believed the doctrine of the atonement, and the necessity of a mediator between God and man. The parallels between this crucified savior and Jesus were so striking, that when the Spaniards invaded Mexico they thought the Mexicans must have been taught by some stray apostle. But as to morals, virtue, charity and good will, the ancient Mexicans, as well as the Peruvians, showed themselves vastly superior to their Christian conquerors. While the invaders carried aloft the banner of the cross, they were guilty of the most appalling atrocities. The pagan world would have difficulty in finding instances of brutality and inhumanity more shocking than were exhibited by these followers of the Prince of Peace. Which proves that blind devotion to any form of religion does not prevent the commission of every known crime.

Perhaps that religion which anticipates Christianity most completely, preceding it by several centuries, is Buddhism. Instead of having one savior, and an imported one at that, such as we have, the Hindus, by the protection and encouragement of home industry, produced nine avatars or saviors. These incarnations of Vishnu were Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parashurama, Ramachandra, Krishna, and Buddha; with a tenth avatar yet to come, called Kalki, who will descend from heaven at the end of the present age, seated on a white horse and destroy the universe.

The eighth avatar, Krishna, bears a striking resemblance to Jesus. The tyrant Kansha, who was ruling at the time of Krishna's birth, being foretold of the prowess of the infant, sought to destroy him. But the god's interposed, and Krishna's father fled with him out of the country, while Kansha ordered all the male children put to death. Later, Krishna re-entered his native country, became a famous religious teacher, had twelve chosen disciples, of whom Arjuna was his beloved, and after suffering a violent death (some say he was crucified) took his place in heaven as the eighth avatar and received divine honors. Many of his precepts rise to the level of any Hebrew poetry or gospel narrative that can be found. It is a question just how much of his life furnished a model for the early Christians' idea of a Savior.

The ninth avatar of India was Sakia Muni, who was born about 650 B. C. Although called Buddha, that was not his cognomen, any more than Christ was the cognomen of Jesus. These were appellations of divine honor conferred afterwards. Sakia Muni, or Buddha, was taught in the faith of Brahminism, as was Jesus in the faith of Judaism. Brahminism bears to Buddhism the same relation which Judaism bears to Christianity. All the leading doctrines of Jesus were taught by Buddha. Buddha believed in his own inspiration, as also did Jesus. Buddhism taught that men suffered pain, misery and death for sins committed in a previous state of existence. Christianity teaches that we suffer for the sins of an ancestor thousands of years ago. Neither regards pain and suffering as the necessary result of certain actions. Both systems of religion attribute them to an offended deity, who must be calmed, appeased, propitiated. Both assert that men are debtors to God, and that miseries are duns to make men pay their obligations to heaven. Both Jesus and Buddha taught that to gain heaven we must renounce the world. Christians have added the necessity of a belief in Jesus as divine. Buddhists have added the necessity of a belief in Buddha as divine. But the claim of Buddha has priority over the claim of Jesus by several centuries. Buddha built upon Brahminism as Jesus built upon Judaism.

Buddha, like Jesus, wrote nothing. Although his salvation depends, so it is said, on correct belief in Jesus, not one scrap of writing has been left of his teachings, so that we may form a correct idea of what to believe. He only perpetuated his doctrines by word of mouth, and all evidence concerning the same is second-hand and hearsay; therefore incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial. Bethel was the sanctified place of Jesus. Bethel was the holy city of Buddha. Buddha, like Jesus, was cordially hated by the orthodox of his day; and each turn denounced the orthodox as hypocrites

and cheats. Buddha, like Jesus, taught that the comforts and pleasures of life are fetters which bind the spirit down to earth, and which we should as far as possible forego, fixing our minds on the future salvation, and altogether neglecting the present. Buddha held that to reach Nirvana, or the state of heavenly rest, we should keep the true faith, always act with a pure and honest mind, forsake all earthly things, study and obey the law, and that our minds should be abstracted from self-consciousness, and wrapped up in the contemplation of and communion with things spiritual. Buddha preached action, while Jesus preached inaction. The Buddhists used water for baptism, and taught humility. Each system had its sacred books of revelation, and the miracles of one are as absurd, frivolous and impossible as those of the other. If Jesus was Deity because he wrought miracles and because his teachings have produced a profound impression on the world, Buddha must have the same honors, because he also wrought miracles and produced great changes in religious history, he having more followers than Jesus.

In 1872 Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, a very learned Hindoo, went to England to investigate its religion, among other things, and to see whether it would be advisable to recommend its adoption in his native country. On his departure for home, he gave the English people a piece of his mind. A quotation will not be out of place in this hasty comparison of the two religions. He said, "Christianity is too narrow minded. Are the waters of eternal life of such a small quantity that you have to narrow the channels through which they flow in order to make them deep? Whenever there is life there is difference of opinion, but I protest against the spirit of antipathy and antagonism. The Christian life of England is more of a material than of a spiritual nature. There is a striving everywhere to find God in forms, ceremonies and dogmas. You have deified Christ, and render him homage which he never asked and would have protested against. Christ promised his spirit to his disciples, but the fulfillment of the promise seems not to have taken place even yet. Christians do not adore God, the spirit, but an incarnation. God does not require flesh and blood to manifest Himself, as He is omnipresent and fills the universe. If purity, truth, charity are Christian virtues, then Christianity is everywhere where these virtues are found, no matter whether their possessors are Christians, Hindoos or Mohammedans. I came here a Hindoo. I return a confirmed Hindoo. I have not accepted one doctrine which did not previously exist in my mind." And yet, we send missionaries to convert such poor benighted heathen as Baboo.

Krishna was the beginning, the middle and the end, as Jesus was the Alpha and Omega. Osiris of Egypt, and Krishna were both denominated "judge of the dead," as Jesus was "judge of the quick and the dead." The title "Son of God," was so common among all nations as to excite no comment. These various saviors were all of royal descent, though of humble parentage. Some, like Krishna, were saved from destruction in infancy, and exhibited early proofs of their divinity. They all preached that their kingdom was not of this world. Most of them suffered violent deaths, arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Many of them were anointed with oil, practiced baptism, and their followers have constructed a trinity of the deity fully as absurd as our own. The doctrines of sin, the fall of man, the atonement, the trinity, revelation, an angry God to be propitiated, future punishment, and so forth, were common to them all. The claims of all rest on precisely the same foundation as do the claims of Christianity; namely, miracles, prophecies and moral teachings.

The golden rule was not original with Jesus. It was announced by Pittacus 250 years before; by Confucius 500 years before; by Thales 460 years before; by Sextus 400 years before; by Aristotle 380 years before; by Aristippus 360 years before; by Isocrates 330 years before; and by Hillel 50 years before.

These various saviors have had as multiplex titles as had Jesus; such as "Lord," "Savior," "Redeemer," "Mediator," "Messiah." Osiris of Egypt was called "Lord of Life." Atys of Phrygia was styled "Lord." Narayan of Bermuda was styled "The Holy Living God." Krishna was called the "Savior of Man," the "Redeemer of the World," the "Holy Lamb." Thor of Scandinavia was the "First-Born Son of God." Pythagoras was called the "Light and Truth." Jesus was the "Lamb of God." The Mexicans had the "Ram of God." The Celts, the "Heifer of God," and the Egyptians the "Bull of God." You see the Almighty varied the bill of fare. On such uncertain foundation rests the superstructure of Christianity.

If all that I have been taught by the church concerning the Christian heaven is true, and that the only way to get there is through a process of mental gymnastics resulting in a belief on a divine Savior, I here and now give a quit-claim deed to all my right, title, and interest in that inheritance. For I believe that while heaven may have the better climate, hell will have altogether the better company. Heaven will contain all the hypocrites and sanctimonious frauds, the stockholders of the inquisition, the washers and ironers of the sacred dirty linen of Abraham, and Jacob, and David, the Calvins and Jonathan Edwards, the popes and cardinals and bishops and priests, together with the balance of the holy brushers-off of flies, and all the men who receive the last sacrament just before the sheriff springs the trap. I beg to be excused from associating with any such company.

I will engage board and lodgings across the gulf, where I shall expect to meet the infidels. I shall expect to meet the infidels and heretics of all time, the reformers and philanthropists, the world's emancipators, the noble army of martyrs whom the church has starved in dungeons, gibbeted, tortured, beheaded, drawn and quartered, persecuted and burned. Whatever fate an all-wise God has awarded them is good enough for me.

In ancient times, so the fable runs, the sons of men thought to build a tower whose top would reach to heaven. The project failed. But there is another tower, whose

foundation were laid long before Babel, whose walls are still building, though they may never be completed. It is the Tower of knowledge. Its bricks are made in every land and every age, brought together that we may wisely continue the building where our predecessors left off. True, we will not complete the structure. We never can. But we can raise the tower a little higher for others to carry on the work. And as the work progresses, from the greater elevation we get the clearer view of the past. We are now able to see that many things which our predecessors regarded as supernatural or divine, are only fantasies. From our vantage ground of a wider knowledge we discover that the Christian doctrine of an incarnated savior making sacrificial atonement is at best a plagiarism. It is impossible that all these saviors should be genuine. That the claims of one may be true, yet the claims of all the others must be false, yet they all rest on precisely the same evidence. As there are several of them, and the claims of each are no better than the claims of any other, how shall we decide which to accept? If I followed my uninspired reason, I should reject them all. But, I have been told that mere human reason is no safe guide; that I must "walk by faith and not by light." Therefore I hold the matter in abeyance until the day of judgment, where I am content to let the rival claimants fight it out beyond the clouds.

THE GARMENT OF DAYS.

And what art thou making, my child sweetheart, Out of the bright threads given by time—Garments of beauty, my child sweetheart, To wear in another clime? Garments of beauty all golden and bright, Set with the gems of a maid's pure thought; Gems of exquisite grace, sweetheart, With lilies of snowiest peace o'erwrought!

Oh! fashion them carefully, child sweetheart, The garments made of thy gift of days; Fill in the borders with blossoms of hope; Kind words spoken and prayers of praise. Oh! bend to thy task, my child sweetheart, These garments of thine immortal are; Choose the white jewel of Truth, sweetheart, To set in the midst—a glittering star.

So when thou'rt called by the King, sweetheart, Whose daughter thou art, thou shalt royally be clad in cloth of samite and gold, sweetheart, Spotless and fair to see.

And there in the King's court, child sweetheart, Thou shalt stand at the Master's knee, And hear the welcome "well done," sweetheart, In thy radiant purity.

—John Edmonds Gale.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Last night I commenced my work in this city of theological colleges and center of educational discipline, with a lecture on "The Religion of Spiritualism." The rain poured down all day and all night, and I was astonished to find a hall full of interested truth-seekers, among them Hon. A. B. Richmond, who applied such an effective counter-irritation poultice to the uneasy spleen of the "Seybert Commission," Bro. F. H. Bemis, a graduate of the Theological College and an able writer and speaker, C. W. Judd and wife, who live two miles out, (Mrs. Judd is own sister to Mrs. E. L. Watson,) and many of the best minds in the city, conspicuous among whom was Bro. H. Barrett, a Unitarian graduate and fine mind; and these had assembled in spite of the drenching rain, without even the shadow of a devil to whip them in, to learn of the truths and attractions of modern Spiritualism!

I find a good element here, a vital activity and cordial earnestness and sweet good will that are bracing and inspiring. Bro. A. Gasten and his estimable wife are a "light on the path" and their influence is felt and approved. A bright noble son and two beautiful daughters add attractiveness to the Gasten family and sensibly join the society congenial to the parents, and all go "merry as a marriage bell." Bro. and Sister Wilkins let their light shine and are rare examples for lookers on. They were devout and leading members of the church three years ago. Now they are as open earnest devotees of the spiritual gospel, and realize a great gain in the change. The church urge them to continue to walk with their old companions and give their influence to the church, which they may do without interfering with their spiritual faith. Thirty years ago they would have been summarily expelled from the church for acknowledging a belief in Spiritualism. Now the church wants to hold them, Spiritualism and all. Who says the world does not move? If they expelled all who believe in Spiritualism and seek communion with the departed, the church would go down to rise no more.

Walter Howell has done good work here. I hear he is in Titusville ministering to the spiritually needy. His lectures are of a high order and profoundly instructive, such as every Spiritual society ought to hear. Jennie B. Hagan is a favorite here, as elsewhere, and speaks here frequently. Bro. Willard J. Hull, of Buffalo, N. Y., spoke here two weeks ago and surprised and delighted all with his brilliant and original lecture. He is new in the field, but has few, if any, superiors, and is destined to be heard through the length and breadth of the land. He has been engaged for several lectures at Cassadaga the coming camp season.

I am credibly informed that the Unitarian Theological School here, while it is known to have some insight and private appreciation of the genuine value of Spiritualism, experts a freezing influence upon the spiritual aspirations of all who come under its intellectual psychology. Very few of them ever venture to appear among the Spiritualists, and with all their boasted liberality they virtually ostracize—if they do not anathematize—all who openly espouse the cause of Spiritualism. Unitarianism, like all the other Christian sects, is in leading strings. Yet, they are largely supported by Spiritualists, who while enjoying it privately do very little for the cause they secretly accept!

LYMAN C. HOWE.
Mendeville, Pa., Jan. 6, '90.

Sample Copies.

If you receive a sample copy, it is intended to do missionary work, and with your cooperation it will do it most effectually. After reading it, send it to a Spiritualist and request him to tell all his Spiritualist friends that THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is being published in Chicago, and that they should subscribe for it. Let each one who hears the good news, spread it far and wide, and it will not be long before we have 100,000 subscribers.

"Love of Country," "Liberty of Conscience," and "Loyalty to the Constitution."



ROME VS. REASON.

FROM THE FRONT.

We cannot refrain, just at this point, from calling the attention of our readers to a few of the current happenings in the near past. We wish to always be able to give news from the front, where Rome still persists in lengthening her record of crime and cussedness, and where Reason still holds the fort—the unsectarian school. On Dec. 27, at the occasion of consecrating three new Roman bishops at St. Paul, Minn., a sermon was preached by Walter Elliott, of New York. It was a "review of the ends and aims of Catholicism." He maintained that strong and independent natures have no use for Catholicity, because it was essentially a ritualistic and autocratic religion. It was this essential element, he affirmed, which made it difficult for Americans, naturally independent, to come under the dominance of the church; they disliked and resented human authority in the domain of conscience. This sentiment was the main obstacle to Catholicity in America; and to remove it was the foremost duty of the hour.

Rome having accomplished the above, read with satisfaction what Reason presents on the same date: "Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morgan has submitted to the Secretary of the Interior a supplemental report dealing with the problem of Indian education. It elaborates the idea heretofore formulated by him, that Indian children can be best taught in a system of common schools, non-partisan and non-sectarian."

That the Indians will take kindly to "non-sectarian" education we may infer from the following dispatch from Madison, Wis., dated Jan. 2, 1890: "Gov. Hoard was visited this afternoon by a number of Winnebago Indians from Marathon county, headed by the chief Big Hawk, who came to solicit his support in securing for the children of the tribe the privilege of attending the State public schools. The Governor promised to render aid in helping the little Winnebagoes to better educational facilities, and the red men are pleased at the prospect. The Indians do not take kindly to the mission [Roman Catholic] schools."

Dec. 27, '89 also records the doings of the State Teachers' Association of Illinois at Springfield. Following are extracts from a paper on "The Principles of Compulsory Education," read by Atty-General Hunt: "Realizing that the education of the masses is essential not only to the general welfare but to governmental security, nearly every constitutional government of Europe has already adopted the policy of compulsory attendance at school. These governments have all made statutory provision requiring children to attend school, and recognizing the right to compel attendance. If the necessity for general education is so evident as to induce such action on the part of the governments just mentioned, how much more strongly does the necessity suggest itself in a government of the people? That popular education is a matter of State concern, and that the founders of our system contemplated that the States should exercise their powers for its promotion, is conclusively shown by our entire history.

An elementary education is thus the right of every child in the State of Illinois. Equally uncontrovertible is the right of the State for its own welfare to have the child educated. Let the child progress sufficiently in the path of idleness to commit a crime, and no one will question the right of the State to deprive it of all personal liberty by incarcerating it in prison, even though the effect of this sovereign act, as is often the case, be to make the child more a criminal than before.

The consent of the parent to the punishment of the child will not be asked when the child commits crime; nor should the right of the State to secure to the child the benefits of a free school education, a strong security against crime, depend upon parental consent when the parent either deprives it of, or permits the child to ignore and shun all educational advantages.

In the judgment of many State Legislatures, among them that of our own State, the exigency has arisen, calling for the exercise of this power. The last General Assembly, realizing the necessity for some such action, passed an act containing rigorous and specific provisions relating to its enforcement, and this discussion is an evidence of the increased interest that has been awakened in the subject.

The principal requirements of the act is that every child between the ages of 7 and 14 years shall attend some public day school at least sixteen weeks in each school year, and charges the person having control of the child, either as parent or guardian, with responsibility for compliance with the law. Every one who has a due regard for the welfare of the child, and who believes in the principle that religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education should forever be encouraged, will acknowledge that this provision is both salutary and reasonable.

Presumably, every young man who will reach his majority will in the future be invested with and will experience the right of citizenship, which he properly may, together with the influence pertaining thereto. To make him a valuable citizen, and to make that influence safe, he must be educated; therefore let his parents or guardian, and they failing, the public see to it that he goes to school. In a government like ours, which must depend for its perpetuity on the virtue and intelligence of the people, there is no open enemy so dangerous as ignorance. Should I say that this is the monster that threatens our destruction I would be called an alarmist, but when I say that wherever ignorance is prevalent, free government is insecure, I utter a truth to which all will assent.

The power of the State, for its own security, and the duty of the State, both to

itself and the people, to provide against it is plain, and this power should be exercised and this duty performed, in a humane and practicable manner. Let the attendance of every child of suitable age be required by law, at some school where he may receive a good common school education. Fill the schoolhouses with youth seeking for wholesome education, and thereby deplete, at least in the future, the population of the workhouse and penitentiaries."

The address of Mr. Hunt may well be read and remembered by all true Americans. Compulsory education is the one fundamental measure that will preserve Reason from the attacks of Rome. But Rome had her say at the teachers' convention, and we quote from an address on the "Truant Law," by Henry Raabe, ex-superintendent of public instruction:

"I am of the opinion that all compulsion in order to be effective, should be of such a nature as not to excite the antagonism of the citizens; as not to hurt them in their feelings and rights. It is not desirable nor necessary nor practical that all the children should attend the schools of the State. It must be left to the parent to decide what school his child shall attend, and in what branches he shall be instructed. Private and parochial schools consequently will and must exist. I cannot conceive how any school in this country can afford not to teach the English language thoroughly. I cannot, on the other hand, understand why the authorities of private and parochial schools, to whose maintenance the State does not contribute one cent, should be compelled to teach certain branches in the English language. I do not think the value of a man as a citizen or a patriot depends upon the language he speaks or reads or writes."

This extract says what Rome says—line for line and word for word. When he says that the education of the child "must" be left to the parent, and that parochial schools "must" exist, he voices the line of attack of Rome in its war upon Reason. Perhaps Mr. Raabe never took into consideration the fact that the child had some rights in the matter, as well as the parent. That the parent, whose rights are so loudly insisted upon, where that parent is a Roman Catholic, has only the right to obey, without question, the mandates of a subject of the king of Italy, an alien not only to America, but an unscrupulous foe of all the measures that we undertake to preserve civil and religious liberty for ourselves and children.

But the day is breaking at last—the foul conspiracy hatched by that devil's brood—the Roman Catholic order of Jesuits—is being laid bare to its bones. Our American press, that so long has sought to avoid the "antagonism" of those citizens who are Roman first and American second, and who have carefully refrained from "hurting" their "feelings," now show indications of waking up from the Romish nightmare. The following is a case in point. The *Catholic Home* of Chicago asks:

"Will the *Chicago Tribune* tell us why it is not just as much within the competency of the State to prescribe one uniform type of religion as it is to enact one uniform type of education? If a compulsory education law is right, simply because the State, after mature consideration, has enacted it, why should not a compulsory religious law be right for the same reason? If 'all natural rights' and 'rights of conscience' are in the last resort subject and subordinate to the voice of the State or community, what is there to prevent the State from setting up its own Sunday-school and its own church, and compelling all citizens to patronize them? Should the community, after mature consideration, establish a State religion, would that be binding on the conscience of the citizens? If not, why not?"

To this the *Tribune* replied on Jan. 5, as follows:

"The man who can ask such a question as this is in crying need of enlightenment. He is not a product of the nineteenth century, but a survival of the dark ages. The western world, at least, has learned to distinguish between the things which are profitable on this side of the grave and those which may be of value beyond it. Hence it prescribes to no man what his religion or belief in spirits shall be. The individual who puts this question must have been born at a time or place when Church and State were not discovered, at a day when the Roman Catholic sect was in the habit of demanding that all men should worship at its altars, and was accustomed, if any failed to comply, to hand them over to a subservient State, with a request that they be burnt alive for the greater glory of God. That sort of thing is for some time over. The Church is forbidden to meddle in temporal affairs, and the State does not interfere about spiritual ones. Its province is restricted to doing what it can to fit men and women for useful lives and good citizens while on earth; and, with that object in view, the State requires that each child shall have an elementary education in secular studies for its own good, and to fit it the better for the battle of life. Knowledge is power, and ignorance is weakness, and a young man or woman who has been instructed in fundamental studies is a far more capable citizen than one who has been kept in illiteracy. Free, responsible government can only be maintained by intelligent and patriotic citizens. Every American child has a natural right to the means of acquiring knowledge which a secular education gives, and the State has a political right to the strength and support which such enlightenment confers on its citizens."

"The reason the State does not 'set up its own Sunday-school and its own church' is because the American State is not dogmatic; it teaches no creeds; it imposes no spiritual beliefs; it tolerates all religious faiths—permitting none, however, to usurp political functions, or to persecute other sectarians of different creeds. Such is the genius of American institutions since the foundation of the government."

From the foregoing facts we may conclude that the question of Rome vs. Reason is coming to the front—like Banquo's ghost, it will not down. The minor questions of the day can not much longer hide from the people the great dark pall of Romanism which threatens to engulf our land in the darkness of superstition, and seeks to place above our constitution the pope's triple crown.

WILLIS F. WHITEHEAD.

OUR JOURNAL OF CREMATION.

Cremation a Spiritual and Sanitary Necessity.

NOTE.—Under appropriate headings we propose to publish, from time to time, journals on subjects of deep and abiding interest to Spiritualists, as well as to all other classes. Each one will be continued for a time varying from three months to a year. They will prove veritable encyclopedias on the subjects treated. Spiritualists, Free Thinkers, physicians, ministers of the gospel, and progressive minds generally will find them of great value for reference.

"Death, when unmasked, shows a friendly face, And is a terror only at a distance."

"Our dead," "The loved ones departed," "The missing member of each family"; these and similar experience tell of the most tender and sad relations of life. Who has not felt sorrowing anguish, and is there a home where death has not entered?

And thus, one of the vital questions of the hour is: "How shall we decently, properly, care for the dear ones continually leaving our earthly homes, and with a proper and loving care? Cremation now demands our careful consideration."

Without question, Mr. Editor, to thus bury or dispose of our dead, committing to the fierce flames "the form so dear," quickly to see it vanish away—this to many must seem foolish, cruel, and to some (believers of the creeds and dogmas), positively wicked, and from these and similar reasonings, cremation must necessarily meet opposition, and suffer for a time from ignorance, prejudice and fashion.

We must expect this opposition; for, as in the past, it must continue in coming times, all new truths, all progress, every beautiful or grand idea in science or religion must be advanced with the heroic words and brave deeds of valiant souls, and sometimes gained with only fierce conflicts.

Witness Newton, Columbus, Harvey, Luther, and our own spiritual reform; and all philanthropic and noble ideas of progress have been cruelly opposed and injured. The world has, and will, crucify its saviors—those who seek to elevate and bless humanity. This is the lesson of past ages, and it will continue in all the future pages, as history truly records passing events. Custom, fashion, ignorance and the creeds will strive to prevent the new birth of any righteousness; and earth-born, base spirits will continue to cry out, "Crucify!" "Crucify!" the truly great, God-like, noble, pure and holy voices or lives seeking to die for the highest, holiest truth or good of humanity.

Mr. Editor, if in the past the tomb and the sepulcher were "the last resting place," now the vast increase of population, the cities and villages growing rapidly all around, with "health and virtue," demands a change; and cremation offers the most economical, speedy and beautiful method of safely disposing of the body, giving it quickly to the universe and God. It is Nature's plan for this change; with beautiful processes, dissolving to re-create in new forms of life and beauty. The leaf and verdure, the glory and beauty of spring, vanish with winter's cold and frost. All Nature, all the universe, is continually dying, changing, and with beautiful chemical affinities growing into some newer form of life and beauty. Cremation is the great universal law of Nature, for change, new life, and why not for the body?

It is one of the most economical and wise sanitary processes for dissolution, and could be made a beautiful religious ceremony, ministering to the highest spiritual feelings and the tenderest affection of the soul.

It is now a necessity, and only needs thought, agitation, to make enlightened, refined minds see the necessity and benefits of the change.

Wise sanitary measures now demand this, whilst the best thinkers and writers, and the rational progressive literature of the day sanction it. Already there are many true believers. Crematories have been built in various cities, with members and followers. The press (secular) speak kindly of the change, and good physicians know full well of the wise sanitary necessity of it, for the health and happiness of the living.

Our cemeteries, in large cities and suburban villages, are fast filling. Soon the vast army of new visitants must crowd the dead, and injure the living. The most fearful diseases spread quickly, sickness and death come from contagion. The air we breathe, the water we drink, becomes contaminated with noxious vapor, and pestilence will come (provided we do not guard against evil surroundings), and there is nothing viler or more dangerous to health than some sepulchers.

Thus the question of the hour is: "Where and how shall we place our loved ones to rest in death, with no fear of harm, and with the simplest sacred rites?"

Cremation solves many difficulties, and it is spiritual and beautiful. Shall we contrast it with the present custom of burial? The dull, cold earth, the silent sepulcher, the charnel place, with all the low, groveling changes to dissolution; "with the worm which dieth not," for the bright, purifying flames, the quick transformation, the beautiful chemical changes releasing the mortal from the spiritual essences, and leaving only the little urn of ashes "for an enduring token of love" of the departed dear one.

Fire purifies, and is a sacred emblem of worship, and in the end only by slower processes, the form (however dearly must dissolve—fade away—change with Nature's cremation. And who would thus choose, with vile, slow changes of 100 or 1,000 years to arrive at this consummation of life and death and dissolution? And thus our conclusions, viz:

1. Cremation is a necessity, a spiritual rite, and might be a beautiful ceremony.
2. A proper regard for the living now demands this change.
3. Cremation was one of the earliest methods of disposing of the dead; it was a false idea of the Christian era which first made it a fashion only to bury the dead.
4. A higher civilization,—refined, delicate, spiritual natures now seek a change, and this will soon come, as wiser, better customs show us how to truly honor our dead, and protect the living with cremation for burial.

SYLVANUS LYON.

We cannot furnish back numbers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. The demand for them has been far beyond our expectations. We are sorry to disappoint any one.

SAVIORS.

(Continued from first page.)

I will mention some of the parallels between them and the Christian Saviors, and then submit whether Jesus of Nazareth is the only savior the world ever had. Many of the claims concerning these different saviors are unfounded, and much uncertainty surrounds them. But this only intensifies the parallel.

Perhaps Mithras of Persia comes as near to our commonly accepted idea of the Savior as any. The date of his birth is uncertain, but his worship had largely spread in the third and second centuries B. C. He was incarnated, the second person of a trinity, and interceded with the first person on behalf of his believers. He was a god of great purity, moral goodness and knowledge. His system of religion taught that there goes on in the world as a whole, and in the life of each individual, a continual struggle between good and evil. Mithras was always engaged in this struggle between good and evil, and his religion taught all alike to aid in the battle. Victory could be gained only by sacrifice and probation. Mithras is conceived as always performing the mystic sacrifice through which alone the good will triumph. The human soul, which has been separated from the divine nature and has descended to earth, can be reascended and attain union with God through fasting and prayer. The sacrifice, which is always being offered by Mithras, makes this ascent and union possible. Those who would follow Mithras had to pass through probation, scourging, fasting and an ordeal by water, and were then admitted as soldiers of the true religion. Does not this sound strangely like an exegesis by some learned doctor of divinity on the fundamentals of the Christian system? And does it not anticipate in many important particulars the extravagant claims made concerning Jesus?

Another character to which I will briefly allude is Quetzalcoatl, a divinity of the ancient Mexicans. He is claimed to have been born of a virgin, was sometimes represented as nailed on a cross between two thieves, suffered death, and was afterwards worshipped as the second member of a trinity. The ancient Mexicans also had a god who was tempted forty days. They practiced baptism. They also believed the doctrine of the atonement, and the necessity of a mediator between God and man. The parallels between this crucified savior and Jesus were so striking, that when the Spaniards invaded Mexico they thought the Mexicans must have been taught by some stray apostle. But as to morals, virtue, charity and good will, the ancient Mexicans, as well as the Peruvians, showed themselves vastly superior to their Christian conquerors. While the invaders carried aloft the banner of the cross, they were guilty of the most appalling atrocities. The pagan world would have difficulty in finding instances of brutality and inhumanity more shocking than were exhibited by these followers of the Prince of Peace. Which proves that blind devotion to any form of religion does not prevent the commission of every known crime.

Perhaps that religion which anticipates Christianity most completely, preceding it by several centuries, is Buddhism. Instead of having one savior, and an imported one at that, such as we have, the Hindus, by the protection and encouragement of home industry, produced nine avatars or saviors. These incarnations of Vishnu were Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasinha, Vamana, Parashurama, Ramachandra, Krishna, and Buddha; with a tenth avatar yet to come, called Kalki, who will descend from heaven at the end of the present age, seated on a white horse and destroy the universe.

The eighth avatar, Krishna, bears a striking resemblance to Jesus. The tyrant Kansa, who was ruling at the time of Krishna's birth, being foretold of the prowess of the infant, sought to destroy him. But the god's interposed, and Krishna's father fled with him out of the country, while Kansa ordered all the male children put to death. Later, Krishna re-entered his native country, became a famous religious teacher, had twelve chosen disciples, of whom Arjuna was his beloved, and after suffering a violent death (some say he was crucified) took his place in heaven as the eighth avatar and received divine honors. Many of his precepts rise to the level of any Hebrew poetry or gospel narrative that can be found. It is a question just how much of his life furnished a model for the early Christians' idea of a Savior.

The ninth avatar of India was Sakia Muni, who was born about 650 B. C. Although called Buddha, that was not his cognomen, any more than Christ was the cognomen of Jesus. These were appellations of divine honor conferred afterwards. Sakia Muni, or Buddha, was taught in the faith of Brahminism, as was Jesus in the faith of Judaism. Brahminism bears to Buddhism the same relation which Judaism bears to Christianity. All the leading doctrines of Jesus were taught by Buddha. Buddha believed in his own inspiration, as also did Jesus. Buddhism taught that men suffered pain, misery and death for sins committed in a previous state of existence. Christianity teaches that we suffer for the sins of an ancestor thousands of years ago. Neither regards pain and suffering as the necessary result of certain actions. Both systems of religion attribute them to an offended deity, who must be calmed, appeased, propitiated. Both assert that men are debtors to God, and that miseries are duns to make men pay their obligations to heaven. Both Jesus and Buddha taught that to gain heaven we must renounce the world. Christians have added the necessity of a belief in Jesus as divine. Buddhists have added the necessity of a belief in Buddha as divine. But the claim of Buddha has priority over the claim of Jesus by several centuries. Buddha built upon Brahminism as Jesus built upon Judaism. Buddha, like Jesus, wrote nothing. Although our salvation depends, so it is said, on correct belief in Jesus, not one scrap of writing has he left of his teachings, so that we may form a correct idea of what to believe. He only perpetuated his doctrines by word of mouth, and all evidence concerning the same is second-hand and hearsay; therefore incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial. Bethel was the sanctified place of Jesus. Benares was the holy city of Buddha. Buddha, like Jesus, was cordially hated by the orthodox of his day; and each turn denounced the orthodox as hypocrites

and cheats. Buddha, like Jesus, taught that the comforts and pleasures of life are fetters which bind the spirit down to earth, and which we should as far as possible forego, fixing our minds on the future salvation, and altogether neglecting the present. Buddha held that to reach Nirvana, or the state of heavenly rest, we should keep the true faith, always act with a pure and honest mind, forsake all earthly things, study and obey the law, and that our minds should be abstracted from self-consciousness, and wrapped up in the contemplation of and communion with things spiritual. Buddha preached action, while Jesus preached inaction. The Buddhists used water for baptism, and taught humility. Each system had its sacred books of revelation, and the miracles of one are as absurd, frivolous and impossible as those of the other. If Jesus was Deity because he wrought miracles and because his teachings have produced a profound impression on the world, Buddha must have the same honors, because he also wrought miracles and produced great changes in religious history, he having more followers than Jesus.

In 1872 Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, a very learned Hindoo, went to England to investigate its religion, among other things, and to see whether it would be advisable to recommend its adoption in his native country. On his departure for home, he gave the English people a piece of his mind. A quotation will not be out of place in this hasty comparison of the two religions. He said, "Christianity is too narrow minded. Are the waters of eternal life of such a small quantity that you have to narrow the channels through which they flow in order to make them deep? Whenever there is life there is difference of opinion, but I protest against the spirit of antipathy and antagonism. The Christian life of England is more of a material than of a spiritual nature. There is a striving everywhere to find God in forms, ceremonies and dogmas. You have deified Christ, and render him homage which he never asked and would have protested against. Christ promised his spirit to his disciples, but the fulfillment of the promise seems not to have taken place even yet. Christians do not adore God, the spirit, but an incarnation. God does not require flesh and blood to manifest Himself, as He is omnipresent and fills the universe. If purity, truth, charity are Christian virtues, then Christianity is everywhere where these virtues are found, no matter whether their possessors are Christians, Hindoos or Mohammedans. I came here a Hindoo. I return a confirmed Hindoo. I have not accepted one doctrine which did not previously exist in my mind." And yet, we send missionaries to convert such poor benighted heathen as Baboo.

Krishna was the beginning, the middle and the end, as Jesus was the Alpha and Omega. Osiris of Egypt, and Krishna were both denominated "judge of the dead," as Jesus was "judge of the quick and the dead." The title "Son of God," was so common among all nations as to excite no comment. These various saviors were all of royal descent, though of humble parentage. Some, like Krishna, were saved from destruction in infancy, and exhibited early proofs of their divinity. They all preached that their kingdom was not of this world. Most of them suffered violent deaths, arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Many of them were anointed with oil, practiced baptism, and their followers have constructed a trinity of the deity fully as absurd as our own. The doctrines of sin, the fall of man, the atonement, the trinity, revelation, an angry God to be propitiated, future punishment, and so forth, were common to them all. The claims of all rest on precisely the same foundation as do the claims of Christianity; namely, miracles, prophecies and moral teachings.

The golden rule was not original with Jesus. It was announced by Pittacus 500 years before; by Confucius 500 years before; by Thales 460 years before; by Sextus 400 years before; by Aristotle 380 years before; by Aristippus 360 years before; by Isocrates 330 years before; and by Hillel 50 years before.

These various saviors have had as multiplex titles as had Jesus; such as "Lord," "Savior," "Redeemer," "Mediator," "Messiah." Osiris of Egypt was called "Lord of Life." Atys of Phrygia was styled "Lord." Narayan of Bermuda was styled "The Holy Living God." Krishna was called the "Savior of Man," the "Redeemer of the World," the "Holy Lamb." Thor of Scandinavia was the "First-Born Son of God." Pythagoras was called the "Light and Truth." Jesus was the "Lamb of God." The Mexicans had their "Ram of God." The Celts, the "Heifer of God," and the Egyptians the "Bull of God." You see the Almighty varied the bill of fare. On such uncertain foundation rests the superstructure of Christianity.

If all that I have been taught by the church concerning the Christian heaven is true, and that the only way to get there is through a process of mental gymnastics resulting in a belief on a divine Savior, I here and now give a quit-claim deed to all my right, title, and interest in that inheritance. For I believe that while heaven may have the better climate, hell will have altogether the better company. Heaven will contain all the hypocrites and sanctimonious frauds, the stockholders of the inquisition, the washers and ironers of the sacred dirty linen of Abraham, and Jacob, and David, the Calvins and Jonathan Edwards, the popes and cardinals and bishops and priests, together with the balance of the holy brushers-off of flies, and all the men who receive the last sacrament just before the sheriff springs the trap. I beg to be excused from associating with any such company.

I will engage board and lodgings across the gulf, where I shall expect to meet the infidels. I shall expect to meet the infidels and heretics of all time, the reformers and philanthropists, the world's emancipators, the noble army of martyrs whom the church has starved in dungeons, gibbeted, tortured, beheaded, drawn and quartered, persecuted and burned. Whatever fate an all-wise God has awarded them is good enough for me.

In ancient time, so the fable runs, the sons of men thought to build a tower whose top would reach to heaven. The project failed. But there is another tower, whose

foundation were laid long before Babel, whose walls are still building, though they may never be completed. It is the Tower of knowledge. Its bricks are made in every land and every age, brought together that we may wisely continue the building where our predecessors left off. True, we will not complete the structure. We never can. But we can raise the tower a little higher for others to carry on the work. And as the work progresses, from the greater elevation we get the clearer view of the past. We are now able to see that many things which our predecessors regarded as supernatural or divine, are only fantasies. From our vantage ground of a wider knowledge we discover that the Christian doctrine of an incarnated savior making sacrificial atonement is at best a plagiarism. It is impossible that all these saviors should be genuine. That the claims of one may be true, the claims of all the others must be false, yet they all rest on precisely the same evidence. As there are several of them, and the claims of each are no better than the claims of any other, how shall we decide which to accept? If I followed my uninspired reason, I should reject them all. But, I have been told that mere human reason is no safe guide; that I must "walk by faith and not by light." Therefore I hold the matter in abeyance until the day of judgment, where I am content to let the rival claimants fight it out beyond the clouds.

THE GARMENT OF DAYS.

And what art thou making, my child sweetheart,
Out of the bright threads given by time—
Garments of beauty, my child sweetheart,
To wear in another clime?
Garments of beauty all golden and bright,
Set with the gems of a maid's pure thought;
Garments of exquisite grace, sweetheart,
With lilies of snowiest peace o'erwrought!

Oh! fashion them carefully, child sweetheart,
The garments made of thy gift of days;
Fill in the borders with blossoms of hope,
Kind words spoken and prayers of praise.
Oh! bend to thy task, my child sweetheart,
These garments of truth immortal are;
Choose the white jewel of Truth, sweetheart,
To set in the midst—a glittering star.

So when thou'rt called by the King, sweetheart,
Whose daughter thou art, thou shalt royally be
Clad in cloth of samite and gold, sweetheart,
Spotless and fair to the eye;
And there in the King's court, child sweetheart,
Thou shalt stand at the Master's knee,
And hear the welcome "well done," sweetheart,
In thy radiant purity.

—Jda Eddings Gale.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Last night I commenced my work in this city of theological colleges and center of educational discipline, with a lecture on "The Religion of Spiritualism." The rain poured down all day and all night, and I was astonished to find a hall full of interested truth-seekers, among them Hon. A. B. Richmond, who applied such an effective counter-irritation poultice to the uneasy spleen of the "Seybert Commission," Bro. F. H. Bemis, a graduate of the Theological College and an able writer and speaker, C. W. Judd and wife, who live two miles out, (Mrs. Judd is own sister to Mrs. E. L. Watson,) and many of the best minds in the city, conspicuous among whom was Bro. H. Barrett, a Unitarian graduate and fine mind; and these had assembled in spite of the drenching rain, without even the shadow of a devil to whip them in, to learn of the truths and attractions of modern Spiritualism!

I find a good element here, a vital activity and cordial earnestness and sweet good will that are bracing and inspiring. Bro. A. Gasten and his estimable wife are a "light on the path" and their influence is felt and approved. A bright noble son and two beautiful daughters add attractiveness to the Gasten family and sensibly join the society congenial to the parents, and all go "merry as a marriage bell." Bro. and Sister Wilkins let their light shine and are rare examples for lookers on. They were devout and leading members of the church three years ago. Now they are as open earnest devotees of the spiritual gospel, and realize a great gain in the change. The church urge them to continue to walk with their old companions and give their influence to the church, which they may do without interfering with their spiritual faith. Thirty years ago they would have been summarily expelled from the church for acknowledging a belief in Spiritualism. Now the church wants to hold them, Spiritualism and all. Who says the world does not move? If they expelled all who believe in Spiritualism and seek communion with the departed, the church would go down to rise no more.

Walter Howell has done good work here. I hear he is in Titusville ministering to the spiritually needy. His lectures are of a high order and profoundly instructive, such as every Spiritualist society ought to hear. Jennie B. Hagan is a favorite here, as elsewhere, and speaks here frequently. Bro. Willard J. Hull, of Buffalo, N. Y., spoke here two weeks ago and surprised and delighted all with his brilliant and original lecture. He is new in the field, but has few, if any, superiors, and is destined to be heard through the length and breadth of the land. He has been engaged for several lectures at Cassadaga the coming camp season.

I am credibly informed that the Unitarian Theological School here, while it is known to have some insight and private appreciation of the genuine value of Spiritualism, exerts a freezing influence upon the spiritual aspirations of all who come under its intellectual psychology. Very few of them ever venture to appear among the Spiritualists, and with all their boasted liberality they virtually ostracize—if they do not anathematize—all who openly espouse the cause of Spiritualism. Unitarianism, like all the other Christian sects, is in leading strings. Yet, they are largely supported by Spiritualists, who while enjoying it privately do very little for the cause they secretly accept!

LYMAN C. HOWE.
Meadville, Pa., Jan. 6, '90.

Sample Copies.

If you receive a sample copy, it is intended to do missionary work, and with your co-operation it will do it most effectively. After reading it, send it to a Spiritualist and request him to tell all his Spiritualist friends that THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER is being published in Chicago, and that they should subscribe for it. Let each one who hears the good news, spread it far and wide, and it will not be long before we have 100,000 subscribers.

* Love * of * Country, * Liberty * of * Conscience, * and *
* Loyalty * to * the * Constitution. *



ROME VS. REASON.

FROM THE FRONT.

We cannot refrain, just at this point, from calling the attention of our readers to a few of the current happenings in the near past. We wish to always be able to give news from the front, where Rome still persists in lengthening her record of crime and cussedness, and where Reason still holds the fort—the unsectarian school. On Dec. 27, at the occasion of consecrating three new Romish bishops at St. Paul, Minn., a sermon was preached by Walter Elliott, of New York. It was a "review of the ends and aims of Catholicism. He maintained that strong and independent natures have no use for Catholicity, because it was essentially a ritualistic and autocratic religion. It was this essential element, he affirmed, which made it difficult for Americans, naturally independent, to come under the dominance of the church; they disliked and resented human authority in the domain of conscience. This sentiment was the main obstacle to Catholicity in America; and to remove it was the foremost duty of the hour."

Rome having accomplished the above, read with satisfaction what Reason presents on the same date: "Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morgan has submitted to the Secretary of the Interior a supplemental report dealing with the problem of Indian education. It elaborates the idea heretofore formulated by him, that Indian children can be best taught in a system of common schools, non-partisan and non-sectarian."

That the Indians will take kindly to "non-sectarian" education we may infer from the following dispatch from Madison, Wis., dated Jan. 2, 1890: "Gov. Hoard was visited this afternoon by a number of Winnebago Indians from Marathon county, headed by the chief Big Hawk, who came to solicit his support in securing for the children of the tribe the privilege of attending the State public schools. The Governor promised to render aid in helping the little Winnebagoes to better educational facilities, and the red men are pleased at the prospect. The Indians do not take kindly to the mission [Roman Catholic] schools."

Dec. 27, '89 also records the doings of the State Teachers' Association of Illinois at Springfield. Following are extracts from a paper on "The Principles of Compulsory Education," read by Atty-General Hunt: "Realizing that the education of the masses is essential not only to the general welfare but to governmental security, nearly every constitutional government of Europe has already adopted the policy of compulsory attendance at school. These governments have all made statutory provision requiring children to attend school, and recognizing the right to compel attendance. If the necessity for general education is so evident as to induce such action on the part of the governments just mentioned, how much more strongly does the necessity suggest itself in a government of the people? That popular education is a matter of State concern, and that the founders of our system contemplated that the States should exercise their powers for its promotion, is conclusively shown by our entire history."

"An elementary education is thus the right of every child in the State of Illinois. Equally uncontrovertible is the right of the State for its own welfare to have the child educated. Let the child progress sufficiently in the path of idleness to commit a crime, and no one will question the right of the State to deprive it of all personal liberty by incarcerating it in prison, even though the effect of this sovereign act, as is often the case, be to make the child more a criminal than before."

"The consent of the parent to the punishment of the child will not be asked when the child commits crime; nor should the right of the State to secure to the child the benefits of a free school education, a strong security against crime, depend upon parental consent when the parent either deprives it of, or permits the child to ignore and shun all educational advantages."

"In the judgment of many State Legislatures, among them that of our own State, the exigency has arisen, calling for the exercise of this power. The last General Assembly, realizing the necessity for some such action, passed an act containing rigorous and specific provisions relating to its enforcement, and this discussion is an evidence of the increased interest that has been awakened in the subject."

"The principal requirements of the act is that every child between the ages of 7 and 14 years shall attend some public day school at least sixteen weeks in each school year, and charges the person having control of the child, either as parent or guardian, with responsibility for compliance with the law. Every one who has a due regard for the welfare of the child, and who believes in the principle that religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education should forever be encouraged, will acknowledge that this provision is both salutary and reasonable."

"Presumably, every young man who will reach his majority will in the future be invested with and will experience the right of citizenship, which he properly may, together with the influence pertaining thereto. To make him a valuable citizen, and to make that influence safe, he must be educated—therefore let his parents or guardian, and they failing, the public see to it that he goes to school. In a government like ours, there is no open enemy so dangerous as ignorance. Should I say that this is the monster that threatens our destruction I would be called an alarmist, but when I say that wherever ignorance is prevalent, free government is insecure, I utter a truth to which all will assent."

"The power of the State, for its own security, and the duty of the State, both to

itself and the people, to provide against it is plain, and this power should be exercised in this duty performed, in a humane and practicable manner. Let the attendance of every child of suitable age be required by law, at some school where he may receive a good common school education. Fill the schoolhouses with youth seeking for wholesome education, and thereby deplete, at least in the future, the population of the workhouse and penitentiaries."

The address of Mr. Hunt may well be read and remembered by all true Americans. Compulsory education is the one fundamental measure that will preserve Reason from the attacks of Rome. But Rome had her say at the teachers' convention, and we quote from an address on the "Truant Law," by Henry Raabe, ex-superintendent of public instruction:

"I am of the opinion that all compulsion in order to be effective, should be of such a nature as not to excite the antagonism of the citizens; as not to hurt them in their feelings and rights. It is not desirable nor necessary nor practical that all the children should attend the schools of the State. It must be left to the parent to decide what school his child shall attend, and in what branches he shall be instructed. Private and parochial schools consequently will and must exist. I cannot conceive how any school in this country can afford not to teach the English language thoroughly. I cannot, on the other hand, understand why the authorities of private and parochial schools, to whose maintenance the State does not contribute one cent, should be compelled to teach certain branches in the English language. I do not think the value of a man as a citizen or a patriot depends upon the language he speaks or reads or writes."

This extract says what Rome says—line for line and word for word. When he says that the education of the child "must" be left to the parent, and that parochial schools "must" exist, he voices the line of attack of Rome in its war upon Reason. Perhaps Mr. Raabe never took into consideration the fact that the child had some rights in the matter, as well as the parent. That the parent, whose rights are so loudly insisted upon, where that parent is a Roman Catholic, has only the right to obey, without question, the mandates of a subject of the king of Italy, an alien not only to America, but an unscrupulous foe of all the measures that we undertake to preserve civil and religious liberty for ourselves and children.

But the day is breaking at last—the foul conspiracy hatched by that devil's brood—the Roman Catholic order of Jesuits—is being laid bare to its bones. Our American press, that so long has sought to avoid the "antagonism" of those citizens who are Roman first and American second, and who have carefully refrained from "hurting" their "feelings," now show indications of waking up from the Romish nightmare. The following is a case in point. The *Catholic Home* of Chicago asks:

"Will the *Chicago Tribune* tell us why it is not just as much within the competency of the State to prescribe one uniform type of religion as it is to enact one uniform type of education? If a compulsory education law is right, simply because the State, after mature consideration, has enacted it, why should not a compulsory religious law be right for the same reason? If 'all natural rights' and 'rights of conscience' are in the last resort subject and subordinate to the voice of the State or community, what is there to prevent the State from setting up its own Sunday-school and its own church, and compelling all citizens to patronize them? Should the community, after mature consideration, establish a State religion, would that be binding on the conscience of the citizens? If not, why not?"

To this the *Tribune* replied on Jan. 5, as follows:

"The man who can ask such a question as this is in crying need of enlightenment. He is not a product of the nineteenth century, but a survival of the dark ages. The western world, at least, has learned to distinguish between the things which are profitable on this side of the grave and those which may be of value beyond it. Hence it prescribes to no man what his religion or belief in spirits shall be. The individual who puts this question must have been born at a time or place when Church and State were not disassociated, at a day when the Roman Catholic sect was in the habit of demanding that all men should worship at its altars, and was accustomed, if any failed to comply, to hand them over to a subservient State, with a request that they be burnt alive for the greater glory of God. That sort of thing is for some time over. The Church is forbidden to meddle in temporal affairs, and the State does not interfere about spiritual ones. Its province is restricted to doing what it can to fit men and women for useful lives and good citizens while on earth; and, with that object in view, the State requires that each child shall have an elementary education in secular studies for its own good, and to fit it the better for the battle of life. Knowledge is power, and ignorance is weakness, and a young man or woman who has been instructed in fundamental studies is a far more capable citizen than one who has been kept in illiteracy. Free, responsible government can only be maintained by intelligent and patriotic citizens. Every American child has a natural right to the means of acquiring knowledge which a secular education gives, and the State has a political right to the strength and support which such enlightenment confers on its citizens."

"The reason the State does not 'set up its own Sunday-school and its own church' is because the American State is not dogmatic; it teaches no creeds; it imposes no spiritual beliefs; it tolerates all religious faiths—permitting none, however, to usurp political functions, or to persecute other sectarians of different creeds. Such is the genius of American institutions since the foundation of the government."

From the foregoing facts we may conclude that the question of Rome vs. Reason is coming to the front—like Banquo's ghost, it will not down. The minor questions of the day can not much longer hide from the people the great dark pall of Romanism which threatens to engulf our land in the darkness of superstition, and seeks to place above our constitution the pope's triple crown.

WILLIS F. WHITEHEAD.

OUR JOURNAL OF CREMATION.

Cremation a Spiritual and Sanitary Necessity.

NOTE.—Under appropriate headings we propose to publish, from time to time, journals on subjects of deep and abiding interest to Spiritualists, as well as to all other classes. Each one will be continued for a time varying from three months to a year. They will prove veritable encyclopedias on the subjects treated. Spiritualists, Free Thinkers, physicians, ministers of the gospel, and progressive minds generally will find them of great value for reference.

"Death, when unmasked, shows a friendly face,
And is a terror only at a distance."

"Our dead," "The loved ones departed," "The missing member of each family"; these and similar experience tell of the most tender and sad relations of life. Who has not felt sorrowing anguish, and is there a home where death has not entered?

And thus, one of the vital questions of the hour is: "How shall we decently, properly, care for the dear ones continually leaving our earthly homes, and with a proper and loving care? Cremation now demands our careful consideration."

Without question, Mr. Editor, to thus bury or dispose of our dead, committing to the fierce flames "the form so dear," quickly to see it vanish away—this to many must seem foolish, cruel, and to some (believers of the creeds and dogmas), positively wicked, and from these and similar reasonings, cremation must necessarily meet opposition, and suffer for a time from ignorance, prejudice and fashion.

We must expect this opposition; for, as in the past, it must continue in coming times, all new truths, all progress, every beautiful or grand idea in science or religion must be advanced with the heroic words and brave deeds of valiant souls, and sometimes gained with only fierce conflicts.

Witness Newton, Columbus, Harvey, Luther, and our own spiritual reform; and all philanthropic and noble ideas of progress have been cruelly opposed and injured. The world has, and will, crucify its saviors—those who seek to elevate and bless humanity. This is the lesson of past ages, and it will continue in all the future pages, as history truly records passing events. Custom, fashion, ignorance and the creeds will strive to prevent the new birth of any righteousness; and earth-born, base spirits will continue to cry out, "Crucify! 'Crucify!' the truly great, God-like, noble, pure and holy voices or lives seeking to die for the highest, holiest truth or good of humanity."

Mr. Editor, if in the past the tomb and the sepulcher were "the last resting place," now the vast increase of population, the cities and villages growing rapidly all around, with "health and virtue," demands a change; and cremation offers the most economical, speedy and beautiful method of safely disposing of the body, giving it quickly to the universe and God. It is Nature's plan for this change; with beautiful processes, dissolving to re-create in new forms of life and beauty. The leaf and verdure, the glory and beauty of spring, vanish with winter's cold and frost. All Nature, all the universe, is continually dying, changing, and with beautiful chemical affinities growing into some newer form of life and beauty. Cremation is the great universal law of Nature, for change, new life, and why not for the body?

It is one of the most economical and wise sanitary processes for dissolution, and could be made a beautiful religious ceremony, ministering to the highest spiritual feelings and the tenderest affection of the soul.

It is now a necessity, and only needs thought, agitation, to make enlightened, refined minds see the necessity and benefits of the change.

Wise sanitary measures now demand this, whilst the best thinkers and writers, and the rational progressive literature of the day sanction it. Already there are many true believers. Crematories have been built in various cities, with members and followers. The press (secular) speak kindly of the change, and good physicians know full well of the wise sanitary necessity of it, for the health and happiness of the living.

Our cemeteries, in large cities and suburban villages, are fast filling. Soon the vast army of new visitants must crowd the dead, and injure the living. The most fearful diseases spread quickly, sickness and death come from contagion. The air we breathe, the water we drink, becomes contaminated with noxious vapor, and pestilence will come (provided we do not guard against evil surroundings), and there is nothing viler or more dangerous to health than some sepulchers.

Thus the question of the hour is: "Where and how shall we place our loved ones to rest in death, with no fear of harm, and with the simplest sacred rites?"

Cremation solves many difficulties, and it is spiritual and beautiful. Shall we contrast it with the present custom of burial? The dull, cold earth, the silent sepulcher, the charnel place, with all the low, groveling changes to dissolution; "with the worm which dieth not," for the bright, purifying flames, the quick transformation, the beautiful chemical changes releasing the mortal from the spiritual essence, and leaving only the little urn of ashes "for an enduring token of love" of the departed dear one.

Fire purifies, and is a sacred emblem of worship, and in the end only by slower processes, the form (however dear) must dissolve—fade away—change with Nature's cremation. And who would thus choose, with vile, slow changes of 100 or 1,000 years to arrive at this consummation of life and death and dissolution? And thus our conclusions, viz.:

1. Cremation is a necessity, a spiritual rite, and might be a beautiful ceremony.

2. A proper regard for the living now demands this change.

3. Cremation was one of the earliest methods of disposing of the dead; it was a false idea of the Christian era which first made it a fashion only to bury the dead.

4. A higher civilization,—refined, delicate, spiritual natures now seek a change, and this will soon come, as wiser, better customs show us how to truly honor our dead, and protect the living with cremation for burial.

SYLVANUS LYON.

We cannot furnish back numbers of THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER. The demand for them has been far beyond our expectations. We are sorry to disappoint any one.

THE HOME CIRCLE FRATERNITY

The Evolution of a New Religion.

THE FADED WIFE.

Her Glorious Reception in Spirit-life.

[The object to be attained under the heading, "The Home Circle Fraternity, the Evolution of a New Religion," is to bring out more prominently the only currency that gives prominence to an individual in Spirit-life, viz., BE GOOD, AND DO GOOD. Hence a new conception of Deity will be formulated, and a constant incentive given to live a life unspotted before all the world.]

I.

"I am fading," says the dying wife to her husband. "I could have wished to live, if only to be at your side when your time shall come, and, pillow your head upon my breast, wipe the death-damps from your brow, and usher your departing spirit into its Maker's presence, embalmed in woman's holiest prayer. But it is not to be, and I submit. Yours is the privilege of watching, through long and dreary nights, the spirit's final flight. And you shall share my last thought, and the last faint pressure of the hand, and the last feeble kiss shall be yours, and even when flesh and heart shall have failed me, my eyes shall rest on yours until glazed by death, and our spirits shall hold one last communion, until, gently fading from my view—the last of earth—you shall mingle with the first bright glimpses of the unfading glories of the better world, where partings are unknown. Well do I know the spot, my dear George, where you will lay me; often we stood by the place, and, as we watched the mellow sunset, as it glanced in quivering flashes through the leaves, and burnished the grassy mounds around us with stripes of burnished gold, each perhaps has thought that some day one of us would come alone, and whichever it might be, your name would be on the stone. But we loved the spot, and I know you will love it none the less when you see the same quiet sunlight linger and play among the grass that grows over your Mary's grave. I know you will go there, and my spirit will be with you then, and whisper among the waving branches, 'I am not lost, but gone before.'"

She faded away from the arms of her husband—vanished like a tender flower in the embrace of the cutting frost. All are struggling against fading, growing coarse and haggard in appearance. As each year has its rippling spring time, its fragrant flower-laden summer, its fruitful autumn, and desolate winter, so if life were rounded out in full perfection, each one would have a happy joyous spring time, a golden fruitful summer, be healthy and happy in the autumn years of life, and peaceful and serene during the desolate winter that follows. But such is not always the case.

II.

We have seen during our career in life many faded objects, but the most forlorn, heart-broken, desolate creature, was a faded wife! We knew her well. In her youth she was the most brilliant, fascinating girl we ever met. As artless as a child, her features tinged with a delicate roseate hue, which, when illuminated with a smile, resembled the scintillations of rays of light in a sunset cloud! Her eyes seemed to laugh, and her countenance was all aglow with the spring-time sunshine of her soul! She was the fairest of the fair! She was grand in appearance without realizing it. Her young life, beaming with conscious innocence, sparkling like the spray of a fountain, and tender, compassionate, loving, she was esteemed by all. She finally married a wealthy man,—to the outward seemingly a happy union. Finally we lost sight of her for twenty years of our life, and then we raised the curtain on a different scene: She had become the mother of seven children. The oldest, a young lady of eighteen, was the very picture of her youthful mother, only more delicate—not the freshness that characterized her, yet so much like her that for a moment we thought we were talking with her again. We inquired for the mother. She was in an adjoining room reclining in an invalid's chair! She was surrounded by wealth, by luxury, by every external appliance that could render life happy. All of her children were there, and never did I see a more beautiful cluster! They excited our highest admiration and praise. But the mother had faded! She was no longer attractive or handsome! Her hair was snowy white, her voice sounded sepulchral; her step was weak and languid, and consumption had fastened its fangs upon her. Her husband had been led astray by an artful siren. When his wife began to fade, to grow prematurely old, his love, too, vanished, and he sought companionship a large portion of the time away from home. His coldness chilled his wife, as the autumn wind does the tender plant, and she went in a decline. Alas! poor, weak human nature! As we gazed on that poor woman, I felt the shadows of death approaching, and told her that she could not live long.

"But I must live," said she. "Those children demand a mother's love and affection. I will live! I must live for them!"

Poor woman, poor faded creature, how she struggled against fate! It was a sad, sad scene. Forsaken by her husband, so far as love could go, she still yearned to live that she might exercise guardian care over her offspring. A faded wife! Indeed faded,—vanished within her children! The eldest had her youthful, sparkling vivacity, in every link, in every unfolding bud of that family circle, was a part of herself! True, she had faded, but *without the beautiful scene!* The grandeur of her soul beamed in her children. She had been true to God and Nature!

"Poor, faded wife!" petulantly murmured her husband.

Yes, she had faded, but as the sun fades from our sight, it continues to shine on other scenes, to animate other sections, and to bestow on vegetation its life-giving properties, so will that faded mother continue to live in and around her children. But gradually she failed—the emaciated form grew weaker, the voice more husky, the cough more violent, and her hope less strong, until finally prostrated helplessly on her bed, she realized she had not long to live.

The children had been told that death was

approaching. Their mother was gradually dying. The young lady whom we so much admired in former years, was just passing down—to her—the bleak, desolate pathway of death. But the children tenderly loved that faded mother. The wealth of their youthful hearts was hers—only hers—and we saw them all kneel by the side of her dying bed!

It was a grand sight,—seven children in prayer! Seven hearts beating in unison! Seven souls woven in one chain of a mother's love!

They cried as if their hearts would break; their sobs were heart-rending to hear; such a scene would seemingly melt a heart of steel, and bring tears to the eyes of a calloused wretch. That husband, who had deserted his faded wife, as he gazed upon the plaintive scene, the seven children on bended knees by the side of the bed, bent over the faded form, the arms were extended, and the dying mother whispered: "Promise me to guard, protect and care for our children."

"I surely will," he responded. "And will you, my darling wife, forgive me?" asked the repentant husband.

"Yes! Most assuredly I do!"

And those were the last words the dying wife uttered.

The next day the children, realizing that their mother had passed to spirit-life, they gathered flowers from the garden, wove them into the words, "Your Children's Tribute of Love," and they were placed on the coffin, a fitting expression of the bubbling emotions of their souls, and were carried to the grave with the remains.

III.

The ascended spirit is no longer a faded wife. Her advent into spirit-life was transcendently grand and beautiful. Her heroic life-deeds had been woven into her spirit-home, and its environments, and she found that for every sacrifice she had ever made, that she was correspondingly rewarded! The radiance of youth had returned to her. In spirit-life no one would regard her as faded!

You need not regret fading, or in the loss of beauty and strength, if the same is caused by benevolent, praiseworthy acts, or in heroic self-sacrifice for others. It pays to fade in the discharge of a sacred duty, in doing good and in alleviating the suffering of others.

When the mother fades away into her children—in devotion to them—losing health and vigor in maintaining and nourishing them, verily great shall be her reward!

Little waves of light come 95,000,000 of miles from the sun, to vanish in a flower, and impart a heaven-born fragrance for mortals to breathe. It pays to gradually fade away into humane acts and philanthropic deeds. Such a transmigration should be devoutly sought. Roger Williams' remains, it is said, nourished the roots of an apple tree, fading away into beautiful blossoms and golden fruit! Let each one, then, so shape his life as to gradually fade away into something better, holier, purer, that he may see in the future his aspiration and deeds woven into a Spiritual home, a fit residence for the unselfish soul, and an honor to the Home Circle Fraternity.

THE GRAND REALITY!

Experiences in Spirit Life of a Celebrated Dramatist.*

[Continued from last week.]

LECTURE VII.

THE EFFECTS OF DRUNKENNESS ON THE SPIRIT.

The whole head is affected by the development of the various faculties, for, as a modern writer truly observes, "the brain grows to the manner of its using;" the body also is brought under the influence of the faculties cultivated. Every one who has contemplated the human family, savage or civilized, has had this immediately made known to his senses. It is well known, too, that certain faculties can be either repressed by disuse or brought more forward by development, than others; and it is also true that the whole body is governed by the head, or by the power of the brain. If you wish to walk, your brain thinks of it before the action takes place; so that the brain is closely connected with the whole frame. In too many cases, man's system of educating the young has ignored this fact, consequently the superstitious teachers of the young have endeavored to cultivate in their pupils those faculties conducive to fear, awe, and credulity, instead of trying to develop the leading or moral faculties, from which misdirection ensues the deplorable fact that what they have been taught becomes their leading passion or habit. Habits are gathered when young, and everyone knows that no matter how trifling a habit may be, yet, if unchecked, it fastens itself upon him with such strong ties that the greatest and firmest resolution is necessary to enable its victim to cast it off. Such a habit may be called or classed as "Second Nature."

Here, then, is important teaching for all fathers and mothers responsible for the care of the faculties of the young. By cultivating that which is good and noble, and which the child shows a taste for, he will naturally develop the art of duty before utility. When once by this teaching kindness becomes a distinctive feature in his organization, it naturally presses back the vice which would otherwise become prominent, so that each development of the faculties should be viewed in a spiritual way, or from a spiritual standpoint. Behold a man's head, or a child's head, how wonderful the mechanism! It contains such hidden secrets,—such beauty,—such a wondrous assemblage of organs, that man's grandest and ablest works fall immeasurably low in the scale when compared with the power and harmony manifest in this glorious work of God.

I shall now analyze on the other side. Let us examine drunkenness, and also the state of the spirit arising from the body after its having been made a receptacle of

excessive potations. Before doing so, however, I shall take the case of those who have had, what you term here, a diseased mind, and this will be the last in the present sphere.

There is some peculiar refinement in man's organization which enables him to partially comprehend these things. But how far is he from having found the "Philosopher's stone!" How deep is it hidden from his penetration! How far away is the cause from the part where he looks, and the cure from where he seeks to find it!

Many who have investigated this subject have declared that there are people upon this earth whose brains are so greatly diseased that when they leave this world their mind will be tintured with that malady which oppressed it here, but that it will be cleansed or revived after death. I shall try and make you thoroughly understand this subject, as well as those who may read it.

A spirit that is in the body of a person who is mad—as an aberration of intellect is designated by those who are supposed to be deep in the knowledge of pathology—lies much in this manner, viz., like a watch or clock whose case is very well to look at, but whose works are not perfect. If one part or particle of this edifice of man is in the slightest degree oppressed or disarranged, the whole is impaired or deranged. Now, let us analyze madness. We will place it in three distinct classes. There is the madness originated by the overwrought brain, which, as soon as released from the body, and strength has been brought to the spirit, immediately recovers, because it was the organization that was oppressed, and not the spirit. This has been brought on by the brain having been overworked and imposed upon—much as you would take a sponge and fill it with water, gorging it out almost beyond its power of absorption. The brain has been used like a sponge filled to repletion, and it cannot possibly receive the bright impressions any longer until it has been purified and strengthened.

But there is a second class of madmen, viz., those who are born idiots; they receive it with their birth. But why do they inherit it? Where does it come from? Does it lie in the father and mother? Sometimes it does; but in what manner? Here the brain and spirit are not in perfect harmony; the organs are perfect, but the spirit can make no use of them. The older the child grows the greater becomes the deformity; the brain cannot travel with any rapidity; the lightning touches with which actions in other mortals' brains are brought to such a state of perfection fall here altogether. It is like this—The idiot's brain is soft, and devoid of elasticity, and directly the impression is placed on it, the result is very much the same as that from the pressure by your finger on a piece of dough. The impression is there, but it rests there; it cannot be conveyed through the organization. The brain might have been injured before the birth of its possessor; or, coming into the world in a state of perfection, it may have received, by various means, a certain stroke, the effects of which it could not succeed in throwing off. Now, what is the state awaiting spirits of this description after death? They require a new birth. The organs of perception are dull, and the brain must be placed in such a position that the organs, which have been so long cramped in the body, may be quickened to a more lightning speed of action. Lastly, there is the madman whose insanity has been induced by crime, or remorse preying on his mind. This is like a canker-worm eating into the whole system, which cannot be eradicated or cured while upon this earth. It is like a cancer, whose roots spread out gradually, seeking and devouring its victim's blood. What cure is there for this? None whilst in the body. It is one of the most fearful forms of madness, and yet how little understood! The victims of other phases of insanity can often be brought out of the cloud which envelops their intellects by the exercise of strong mesmeric power on the part of an operator, yet this power is still ignored by those in charge of the insane.

Now, we will take them as we see them in the spheres. I was taken by one, who had devoted a life-study to the subject of insanity, and shown a sufferer from this sad affliction, one belonging to the first class I mentioned. I noticed that a sort of cloud hung around him, and his eyes were cast down. He seemed to be oppressed with the terrible thought that his brain was no clearer than when he left the earth; and to make the attempt at the recovery of his ideas, he took up the thread of his life exactly where he first had become mystified or in a cloud. These cases are generally easily got over. In the second class instance, the organs of the body having remained so long dormant, great difficulty is experienced in bringing them to the proper light. In this case, here was one whose organs seemed helplessly obscured; the head, when looked at internally, appeared flattened, and the brain presented a similar appearance. A circle of six spirits was formed around him, and from one of the circle was conveyed a strong magnetic light upon the brain. This operation was repeated several times, and at each renewal, the light thrown upon the subject was increased in intensity, and the brain gradually assumed a lightness it had never before possessed. Now, as to the form or spiritual body of this subject, it was in just the same haggard state as the shell it had left behind, which you may have observed in similar cases is conspicuous for its high and prominent shoulders, and a lassitude lingering over the whole of the body. Wherever the deformity existed, some process was brought to bear upon it; the leader of the circle, placing his hand upon the shoulder, conveyed a quick, shooting spark of magnetism, which drew it into a more symmetrical form. This process will indicate the reason for the many cures which have been accomplished by mediums. Now here is the third and worst example, the one into whom the disease has really eaten. He was vicious. His form of madness was that of destruction, which faculty he may have possessed largely when a boy upon earth, but if that faculty had been repressed and made to give way to others, who knows what higher standard he might have reached! Then this cankerous worm could have been kept out of the system, and he would not have had to yield to those evil

passions which came within range and gained sway over him.

*"The Grand Reality," being experiences in spirit life of a celebrated dramatist, received through a trance medium and edited by Hugh Juner Brown, author of "The Holy Truth," "Rational Christianity," "The Conflict Between Authority and Reason," "The Religion of the Future," etc.

[To be continued.]

WELLS VS. BUNDY.

The Plaintiff's Counsel Makes a Statement.

Points Brought Out that it would be Well for Spiritualists to Consider.

Spiritualists, instead of being credulous, are generally inclined to be skeptical and more careful than other people in coming to a conclusion, and what particularly distinguishes them from others is that, when a fact is proved to them and positively established so that they know it, they acknowledge or admit it notwithstanding they know that the consequence will be that bigots and the great mass of Christians and others who are ignorant of the phenomena of Spiritualism, will sneer at them, ridicule them and call them fools and lunatics. I speak now of Spiritualists generally. There are some, however, who, knowing of these truths and who have courage enough to admit them, still have such a fear and dread of ridicule, and such a desire to have their orthodox friends think that they are only Spiritualists "to a certain extent," and that they admit that there is a good deal of fraud in materialization and other spirit manifestations, but which never deceives them; that they are ever ready to join in the cry of fraud when a medium is attacked, without knowing enough about the facts to know whether there was fraud or not; and they are always ready to rejoice to find the character of a medium smirched by slanderous reports, although ever so little.

How often do we find this so in the case of mediums known by them to be genuine mediums.

The case of Mrs. Wells is a fair illustration of this. I do not know of one of her slanderers who ever attended one of her seances, who doubts that she is a genuine medium. It is doubtful if there is a medium in the country who has been subjected to severer tests, and in such cases, under circumstances where fraud was absolutely impossible, forms have materialized and dematerialized in the immediate presence of men and women whose integrity, judgment and ability none would question; and the fact that she is clairvoyant and clairaudient, and accurately describes spirits, can be proved by hundreds.

And yet there are Spiritualists who know her to be a medium, and Spiritualists who do not know anything about it, who rejoice and are so anxious to have the public know that they rejoice that she did not dare to go to trial in her case against Bundy for libel, that they must write to Bundy to congratulate him for convicting a fraud, as if she had been defeated in her trial, and that Bundy had proved her a fraud and had come out victorious.

These people, if they live very long, will learn that in their anxiety to show to outsiders that they are not to be classed among credulous Spiritualists, they have shown that they do not know much about what they have been writing and talking about, and that they are doing great injustice to an excellent medium and the cause of Spiritualism.

In the suit of Wells vs. Bundy, she alleged in her complaint, that she was a materializing medium, a trance medium and a clairvoyant; that when in an unconscious or trance state, as she was informed and believed, spirits of persons who had departed this life sometimes appeared in materialized forms which were visible to persons present; and that when not in a trance state she often saw and described the spirits of persons who had departed this life and who were thus recognized by persons present.

All this Bundy in his answer denied, and there again reiterated the charge that she was a vile slanderer and has used trick cabinets and confederates. Such being the issue, it was of course necessary for Mrs. Wells to prove in the first instance that she was able to see and describe spirits, and that spirits did actually materialize and dematerialize in her presence. Without that proof she would have no case and must fail, without regard to the question of trick cabinets or confederates, and those as well as the question of trick cabinets and confederates were the issues she came to court to try. Her attorney had made Bundy's attorney a fair proposition and honorable offer to try the case before a jury of Spiritualists, twelve to be selected by each party, making twenty-four from which the twelve to try the case should be drawn by lot. It was further provided in the offer that none of the Spiritualists selected by either side should have ever attended a seance given by Mrs. Wells. This offer was peremptorily refused by Bundy's attorney, and a jury was, therefore, necessarily drawn from the regular panel. The attorney for Mrs. Wells, after the jury were sworn, challenged and interrogated each one separately, and they each and all swore that if the plaintiff should prove by unimpeachable testimony just what she claimed in her complaint, that is, that she could and did see and describe spirits of persons who had departed this life, or that spirit forms materialized and dematerialized in her presence, they would not believe it nor find a verdict according to such testimony, and two or more went so far as to swear that if it should be so proved by numbers of witnesses, and the facts should not only be undisputed but conceded by the other side, they would not believe it, but would find their verdict for the other side and against such testimony. Yet the Judge held all those jurors competent and proper jurors to hear and decide the case.

Under such circumstances what could her attorney do but refuse to try the case; and he took exceptions to the ruling of the Judge, and without consulting Mrs. Wells, informed the court that he positively declined to try the case before that jury. It must be apparent to any fair-minded person that to have done so would have been the merest farce, and all in the sacred name of justice, and therefore without any trial or evidence the complaint was dismissed, as there was nothing else to be done; yet Bundy, knowing that

there could not be a fair trial, or any trial at all, before that jury, was anxious then to proceed and take a verdict from that jury against Mrs. Wells, without regard to the evidence, knowing that the jury had decided the case without hearing any evidence at all.

Even as it is, notwithstanding there was no trial *nor any evidence of any kind* presented, he publishes a highly colored abbreviated and dramatic account of the proceedings, and sends it broadcast over the country, proclaiming it a victory over Mrs. Wells, or more especially over Mr. Newton; and his few claqueurs who follow him are cheering and congratulating him on his victory.

If they call that a victory, or if after learning the facts they still call it a victory and rejoice with Bundy that the question of the genuineness of mediumship cannot be tried in our courts, and that however much a medium may be slandered she can have no remedy in the courts, it may be well for mediums that the suit was brought, as what has followed will not only enable them to distinguish better between the friends and the enemies of mediums and mediumship, but to know what to guard against, and it will also better enable Spiritualists who are friends of mediums, and who know the importance and value of phenomenal evidence, to guard against the enemies of both, and to see to it that protection shall not much longer be denied to mediums.

It does seem that the enemies of mediumship outside and inside the ranks of Spiritualism, have recently joined their forces; but it will not avail them. Spiritualism, depending as it does more on phenomenal evidence than anything else, has come to stay.

Those twelve jurymen testified under oath that they were every one Christians,—ten Protestants and two Catholics, and the most striking exhibition, and one that revealed unmistakably Bundy's true position in this whole matter, and that he believed just as the jury did, and that he was in full sympathy and accord with them as expressed in reference to their belief, was the fact that after the adjournment of the court, he went to the jury, shook hands with them and had a hearty laugh over the farce which had been enacted in a so-called court of justice.

E. H. BENX, Atty for Plaintiff.

The following are extracts from the editorial of a New York City paper, not in sympathy with Spiritualism. Commenting upon the Wells-Bundy case as one of the most extraordinary on record, it says: "The positions assumed by the judge and jurymen are significant of the change that has come about as to alleged supernatural occurrences. It is evident that the plaintiff proposed to bring forward witnesses who had seen the things once stated in the questions. But the jury plainly declared that they could not be made to believe anything of the sort, as it was beyond human experience; and the judge evidently took the same ground. Here, then, we have a legal tribunal throwing out of court better testimony than can ever be obtained to the reality of the Christian religion and practically affirming that human testimony to supernatural events is of no value at all, because supernaturalism is beyond the bound of probability and human experience."

When Greenleaf afflicted the world with his Testimony of the Evangelists, going over it, cross-examining them, and summing up in legal shape, and concluding that it answered all legal requirements to prove a case, the Christian world was delighted, and scoffed at the heretic, saying, "There, now, what do you think of that?" * * * His witnesses were all dead; those of Mrs. Wells were alive and in court. His witnesses contradicted each other; Mrs. Wells's would have agreed as to what they saw. If Greenleaf could make out a case from the disputed testimony of dead men, written years after the events were said to have happened, and not even sworn to, subjected to all the mutations of intervening centuries and passing through the perils of translations and re-translations, guesses, hypotheses, and alleged inspiration, how much stronger would have been the case made out by Mrs. Wells! She could bring men to testify that they had actually seen these occurrences; that they had taken such precautions that the conjured shapes could not possibly be only human representations; and instead of four she could have brought dozens whose testimony was sworn to, whose reputations for veracity are good, who saw the marvelous events only the other day, who did not guess but knew by actual eyesight and contact, and who based all their hypotheses on experience.

* * * Certainly if they could believe it of a man who is said to have lived nearly nineteen hundred years ago on the evidence of four unknown persons, they ought to believe it of a woman of to-day on the evidence of dozens of honest witnesses. But the jury would have none of it. Supernaturalism, to them, was impossible and unbelievable. Yet courts not so many decades ago executed witches on a hundredth part of the testimony Mrs. Wells could adduce that she was a genuine medium. Juries then believed that women could ride through the air, could send evil spirits into animals and persons, and could not only conjure up spirits of dead men, but that the very devil himself often visited them and made unholy bargains.

Such belief was a part of the very religion held by the jurymen who now refuse to believe on direct human evidence that any dead person ever came back to this world. It is a vast and pleasing change in public opinion; but how deep it buries the Christian religion, the sole claim to acceptance of which is that it is truly supernatural!

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