

THE TRUTH SEEKER

A Monthly for Freethinkers

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The Lord's Soldier Joshua and the Sun and Moon

BY CLARENCE DARROW

BEING something of a Bible reader, I have long been interested in the Book of Joshua. It is a tale well worth reading. It seems that after the death of Moses the Lord looked around, as it were, to find some one to fill his place. Moses did not finish the work he set out to do. He traveled across the desert bound for the Holy Land. Still, on account of some failure to make good, as I recall it, he was brought to the River Jordan but was not allowed to cross and enter the Holy Land. It does seem, however, that a mighty man like Moses, who parted the waters of the Red Sea and led his cohorts through on dry land, could not have been balked by a rather inconsequential river which separated his army from "The Promised Land." But thereupon the Lord delegated a new pilot to lead the Jews across the Jordan and into the new country. In looking around over the footsore Jews who were anxious to finish their march, his (the Lord's) eye lighted on Joshua and he immediately chose him, and Joshua took up the job. The Lord instructed him what to do, for Joshua was new at this kind of work. God told Joshua that Moses was dead and he, Joshua, had been chosen to complete the job and land the Jews safely in the promised land. So Joshua sent the Ark of the Covenant in front of the army, borne by the priests, and behold, the waters parted and the river bed was dry and a high wall of water was built up on each side and they passed through in safety. The army composed of forty thousand men passed through the Jordan and landed on the other side.

Thereupon, Joshua fell on the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the parasites, and all the other "ites" and great was the slaughter thereof. Then the victorious army moved on the walled City of Jericho, and the Lord took command himself. He equipped the army of invaders with rams' horns and bade them walk around the city seven times and then blow the rams' horns, and thereupon the walls fell to the ground and great was the massacre in the captured city.

But, all of these are only children's bedtime stories. The lowly Joshua continued on his way killing right and

left. The sun was hanging low in the heavens and the job was not yet finished and night was coming on. He wanted to finish the job. Then spake Joshua to the Lord: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies."

This was not an optical illusion, for the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens for a whole day. The account is followed by a superfluous statement: "And there was no day like that before it or after it." This story plainly shows what the Lord will do for a friend.

It is useless to consider what would have happened if this absurd story were true. It would certainly have scattered the water over the earth and left the beds of the rivers and oceans dry for a time, at least. It would have destroyed all life on the planet almost in the twinkling of an eye. It would have upset the whole solar system, and perhaps would have wrecked other systems beyond. But the most important part of this story I have never seen in print, nor even heard it spoken of or thought of until a few months ago.

What was this funny God trying to do, anyhow?

Here was a toy soldier who asked him to stop the sun so that the day would be lengthened long enough to finish the fight, and, of course, God obligingly held it for twenty-four hours so that Joshua could complete the slaughter.

Intelligent people who dare to think know that a God who made the sun and earth and moon and the laws that govern them would likewise know that God would be perfectly sure he could not lengthen the day by making the sun stand still. God must have known that the earth moved around the sun and that the day and night came because the earth moved on its axis to cause day and night. God, of course, thought the sun traveled around the earth. It is so obvious to all people that it does travel around the earth that God can be forgiven for not knowing it, but if he had performed his miracle that way, he would have got the whole universe in a mess and given no extra daylight for Joshua to pursue his holy work. All of this trouble could have been avoided if only God had attended

the little red schoolhouse for a single day and there learned how the day and night really occur.

I understand that in Tennessee children are taught that the day and night are governed by the revolution of the earth on its axis, even though God, in dealing with Joshua, said that the length of the day and night was fixed by the sun in going around the earth. The next session of the Tennessee Legislature should make it a crime to teach that the length of the day is controlled by the revolution of the earth on its axis. This seemed to Joshua and God to be long enough to kill all of their enemies. How would a little thing like stopping the sun bring about this result?

God had made the sun and earth and set them in their places; he had caused them to rise and sink every morning and evening since the morning of creation. God also of course had omnipotent wisdom, and, if he did not know, then no one else could. Still, God had been so busy numbering hairs on the heads of people that he had never studied science. God had seen all these things and he likewise had hung the sun and moon and the endless stars in the sky, and he could not have done it all if he had not been possessed of infinite wisdom. On this particular occasion, he did the whole job himself, so he must have known. Yet, if the sun and moon had stood still a thousand years, it would not have made the day an hour longer. The length of the day is not measured by the antics of the day or its Maker. It is fixed by the revolution of the earth on its axis. When our part of the earth is turned to the sun, it is day; when it turns around it is in the shadow of the earth, and it is night. The school children in Tennessee know this, and I presume Mr. Bryan did. Still it seems so obvious that the sun goes around the earth that scarcely no one would find an absurdity in the story of Joshua gaining twenty-four hours by stopping the sun. God must have known all of this; he created things only a short time before but he seemed to have forgotten all about his act.

So Joshua turned out to be a mighty man in a wonderful age. His exploits were so great that he was given a whole book of the Bible to himself to record the great deeds he was able to perform by the help of the Lord. Joshua himself says that no such deeds were ever done on earth before or since, and surely his juggling with the sun and moon are easily the greatest acts of a most colorful warrior in a remarkable age.

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THE fools are always in the majority, and so provide the most promising material for the knaves. And most fools are so wedded to their folly that they form an almost invincible bodyguard for those who live upon their foolishness.—*Chapman Cohen.*

* * * *

God being everywhere, why should anyone need help to "find" him?

The Growing Menace of Religious Officials

WE are getting too much religion in our government. Our officials are either becoming too religious or they are the creatures of religious pressure groups.

When religion becomes a prominent part of our government, retrogression inevitably follows. And when the officials elected are more religious than intelligent, we are menaced by a serious reactionary rule. Instead of these men holding government positions, they should be deacons of a church.

Within the past decade we have seen the observance of religious holidays fast becoming an epidemic. "Holy" Thursday and "Good" Friday are not only entering our schools as holidays, but the legislatures, in several states, have considered special bills making these days legal holidays.

When we begin to make Good Friday a legal holiday, then we are liable to get the whole calendar of saints imposed upon us. If this comes, as it now exists in some European countries, almost every day will be celebrated for some religious festival.

Columbus Day, in New York State particularly, is monopolized by the Knights of Columbus for their particular benefit. If October 12th is to be a day set aside to honor Columbus, then the public schools of the state should be open so that particular exercises should be held to acquaint our children with the achievements of Columbus, so they may be encouraged and inspired to new and daring feats in the field of exploration. Instead, the schools are closed and we witness parades by members of the Knights of Columbus, whose only understanding and relationship with the ideas of the great discoverer consists in the appropriation of his name for Catholic propaganda.

There are men sitting as magistrates in our courts in New York who refuse to hold Court on Saturdays because it is their Sabbath.

An assistant federal district-attorney, not long ago, refused to return to his office in New York, after having been sent upon a special and important mission for evidence, because it necessitated his traveling on Saturday!

If we had enough orthodox Mohammedans elected to office, then Friday might become the sacred day of the week.

Recently, a liberal divorce bill was defeated in the New York State Legislature because a majority of the members of a particular party refused to vote for a bill that was contrary to their religious belief!

I say that any man who puts his religious belief above his sworn political duty is unworthy to hold office under the Constitution of this country, and should be impeached for violation of his oath of office.

We have got to go back to the basic principle of the Constitution if we are to retain our priceless heritage of religious freedom. That means we have got to go back to both principle and example of Thomas Jefferson when he

refused to issue a Thanksgiving Day proclamation. He said:

"I consider the Government of the United States as interdicted by the Constitution from meddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, disciplines, or exercises. But it is only proposed that I should recommend, not prescribe a day of fasting and praying. That is, I should indirectly assume to the United States an authority over religious exercises, which the Constitution has directly precluded them from. Every one must act according to the dictates of his reason, and mine tells me that civil powers alone have been given to the President, and no authority to direct the religious exercises of his constituents."

It may be a difficult task, but at least let us make an effort to acquaint our officials not only with the ideals and principles of Thomas Jefferson, but also with the fact that he was once President of the United States.

JOSEPH LEWIS.

* * *

Not in the Bible

HAD the following story been in the Bible, many of the terrible chapters in history would never have been written.

After King Solomon fell asleep, the Jewish state was split into two hostile camps. Political and personal antipathies of the ring-leaders of the opposing clans led to repeated bloody contests as well as, at times, to cowardly assassinations. Both the deity and his rabbis played important roles in fanning the family feud between Jerusalem and Samaria.

In those days there lived in the latter city a Hebrew of considerable reputation for piety. Joshua was his name. Of course not the famous warrior of the same name, at whose approach ancient walls bowed so low to the ground that they could not rise again, and at whose command rivers paused, not knowing which way to flow. The Joshua of this tale was not yet born when his celebrated namesake, shouting at the sun, some ninety-three millions of miles away, was distinctly heard and on the instant obeyed by that august body. Only once was the sun ever arrested. And it was a Jew who did it. But in the opinion of the present writer, the later Joshua's behavior in a most trying situation was so original as to throw all the other miracle-working Hebrews into well-deserved oblivion.

It happened that Jehovah, one of the parties to the quarrel between Judah and Israel, took a violent dislike to an agitator in the camp of Samaria, named Shallam, of the tribe of Reuben, and desired his death. Not wishing to do the deed himself, he looked about for some one to do it for him. On a Friday evening just as the sabbath lamps started blinking, Jehovah accosted his servant Joshua as the latter was quietly wending his way to the temple. Recognizing the God of Sinai, Joshua fell upon his face in the prescribed Biblical manner. "Rise," commanded the

deity as he reached and lifted the prostrate Hebrew to his feet. "Thou hast found favor in my sight, for I have chosen thee to avenge thy God. Shallam of the tribe of Reuben must die by thy hand." But this time Jehovah had tackled the wrong man

"We have a saying," replied Joshua, "never to ask another to do for us that which we can do so much better ourselves. If thou desirest the death of Shallam thou canst do the job more neatly and with greater safety to thyself than can I. Thou gavest life and thou canst take it away. I can not give life and have not the right to take it away." Observing the impression he had made on Jehovah, the pious Hebrew hurried to the temple to thank God he had resisted a great temptation.

Would there have been any Christian and Jewish massacres had it been left to the deity to do the killing?

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

* * *

The Church Ingersoll Might Have Joined

ON March 24, 1935, there died in Kalamazoo, Mich., at the age of 77, Dr. Caroline Bartlett Crane. She was one of the outstanding figures among Michigan women, a writer, minister, lecturer and sociologist, formerly a school teacher, newspaper reporter and editor. She first went to Kalamazoo in 1889 as minister of the Unitarian church after a pastorate at Sioux Falls, S. D.

In 1896 Mrs. Crane, then Miss Bartlett, was minister of the independent People's Church in Kalamazoo when Col. Robert G. Ingersoll came to that city to deliver a lecture in the evening. During the afternoon Colonel Ingersoll visited the People's Church, which was more like a clubhouse than a church, with reception rooms, libraries, dining room, kitchen, etc. There was no theological creed to believe for membership, only a statement of purpose for right living. Ingersoll was so pleased to find such a church that he interrupted his lecture on "Lincoln" that evening to tell of his visit there. He said: "It is the grandest thing in your state, if not in the whole United States. If there were a similar church near my home I would join it, if its members would permit me." This caused a sensation all over the country, and was hailed by orthodox churches as indicating Ingersoll's conversion to Christianity. Of course it was no such thing. In a letter to the editor of THE TRUTH SEEKER, Ingersoll wrote: "This church has nothing to do with the supernatural, or miraculous. It is for the good of people in this world—to increase happiness this side of the tomb." It was truly an extraordinary venture for a church in those days, especially for a woman, and great credit must go to Dr. Crane for pioneering.

All of this leads one to the conviction that Ingersoll would be greatly interested in the modern religious movement known as Humanism. The People's Church of Kalamazoo, although completely liberal in its membership, did include individuals of varying degrees of orthodoxy and

Dr. Crane definitely stated she did not endorse Ingersoll's theological views. On the other hand, modern Humanism is a religion decidedly agnostic, and there is little doubt that Colonel Ingersoll if living today would be a member of a Humanist group.

SHERMAN D. WAKEFIELD.

* * * *

He Sits

IN July, 1935, a British bishop (Arthur Cayley Headlam) wrote from his palace to the London *Times* journal, and stated the duty of Christians in face of the problems of today: "It is not that we must adapt Christianity to the modern world, but that we must try to adapt the modern world to Christianity." And the Palace man said this Christian faith was properly set out in the Nicene Creed, which tells of Creation, Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and then says that Jesus-God ascended into heaven, and "sits on the right hand of the Father." I, the undersigned, not being a Christian, am immensely puzzled by this statement: "He sits," for it means he has been sitting on that chair from the year 29 to the year 1935.

Brutal men rape women. Jesus sits.

Soldiers cut up children. He sits.

Crusaders massacre Moslems. He sits.

Inquisitors burn heretics. He sits.

Thousands of women, often old and helpless, are burned as witches. He sits.

Earnest Christians invade America and slay thousands of Mexicans and Peruvians. He sits.

Spanish Christians rob Holland and slaughter men, women and children. He sits.

British, French and Americans tear Negroes from Africa and enslave them. He sits.

Cromwell's soldiers ship 50,000 Irish boys and girls into slavery in the West Indies. He sits.

In the Chinese Tai-Ling Rebellion time 10,000,000 people lose their lives. He sits.

Under European oppression, nearly 40,000,000 Congo people lose their lives. He sits.

In the World War and its resultant sickness 23,000,000 cruelly die. He sits.

Men, women, children are slaughtered by flood, earthquake, famine, leprosy, malaria, sleeping-sickness, cancer. He sits.

To ward off the sorrows and boredom of life millions of folk, East and West, swallow drugs. He sits.

Yes, dear Arthur Cayley Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester, your Nicene Creed, with a devil-wink of its orthodox eye, assures us: "Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father."

And on the left hand stands the Palace of the Society for the Adaptation of the Modern World to Christianity.

FREDERICK J. GOULD.

Armored, Woodfield Avenue, Ealing, London.

Freethinker the Winner

RADIO STATION WOR invited listeners-in to elect by vote the winner of the debate on Mexico, July 7, between Joseph Lewis, President of the Freethinkers of America, and John F. Boylan, member of Congress from New York (August T. S., p. 89). Secretary Charles Strohmeier of the Freethinkers writes under date of July 15:

"We are pleased to inform you that Mr. Joseph Lewis won the debate by two to one."

It was an earned victory. Mr. Lewis is a good advocate. He prepared the better speech and delivered it in the better manner.

As for the question presented, "Is the present attitude of Mexico toward the Catholic Church justified?" the answer depends on what the attitude is. However, Mexico, which is accused of "fighting God," was for a time cast into the shade by the godists of Ireland, Catholic and Protestant, who with a fierceness foreign to our southern republic, have engaged in fighting each other over religion with all weapons that bigotry can give an edge to, and with destruction of life and property in many instances. The persecutor is Religion wherever found.

* * * *

Probabilities Against a Historical Jesus

IN the JUNE TRUTH SEEKER Mr. J. T. Roberts suggests that Jesus really may have lived, but only as an itinerant teacher and preacher of mystical concepts.

It is quite natural for even a Freethinker to accept the idea that possibly such a man lived simply as a preacher, and when one considers what a stupendous and ancient organization the Christian church is, it is hard to imagine the central figure to be only a myth, and yet modern criticism of religion has made it clear to any unbiased mind that Jesus Christ is a pure myth and nothing else.

Karl Voller, professor of Oriental Literature in Jena University, said: "There is absolutely no decisive arguments that can be brought forward of the historicity of Jesus." This is exactly what many other students of the subject have said.

Jesus stands in the same place in history as Osiris, Attis, Mithra, Krishna and a host of other mythological savior-gods.

The similarity of Jesus to the other gods is really remarkable.

Paul knew nothing of an historical Jesus. Arthur Drews in the "Christ Myth" says: "The very man from whom we derive the first written testimony as to Christianity, this Paul knew absolutely nothing of Jesus as a historical personage."

Not the teacher, but the miracle worker, what is important to Paul is the crucified son of God.

He admits that he never saw Jesus in the flesh; his Jesus is without date, home, parents, doctrine, or named disciples; a Jesus alleged to have been crucified without mention of place or time, "risen again" at no specified place or time.

The epistles never speak of disciples; they speak of apostles, never alleging or suggesting that these apostles were taught by "the Lord"; they tell only of a going cult, which shows that the sect at Jerusalem had existed there for some considerable time before the period that is attributed to Jesus.

To the earlier believer the Messiah was merely a name.

The formation and development of what later became Christianity began long before the Christian period.

Christianity was a synthetic creation; the Messiah idea was taken by the Jews from Babylon, whose savior-gods probably

gave the Jews the idea which hundred of years later developed into Jesus Christ.

There is no date when the gospels were written. They began to be quoted about 110, our era. It has never been claimed that they were written in Hebrew.

There is nothing to show that the gospels were written by the writers by whom we know them. They were compiled by unknown men, probably in Alexandria.

The gospels are not historical documents; they are religious creed books; their purpose was to awaken belief in Jesus as the Messiah. To strengthen and defend that belief against attacks, as creeds, they confine themselves to recounting such words and events as have any significance for the faith.

We may say about Jesus what J. M. Robertson said about Buddha: "No Buddha made the Buddhists—the Buddhists made the Buddha."

This subject is far too large to be treated in a short sketch like this. To those who would like to study the mythology of Jesus. I recommend "The Christ Myth," by Arthur Drews, and "Pagan Christs," by J. M. Robertson.—J. JACOBS, Montreal, Can.

* * *

"Out of the Night"

It is, of course, not quite right to call Henley's lines "un-identified." As you say, they need no signature. They were written by a very genuine poet.

William Ernest Henley was born in Gloucester, England, in 1849. He attended the local grammar school whose master at that time was also a poet: Thomas E. Brown, Manxman and humorist. Those who judge Brown by the ridiculous rubbish of his which is always quoted in Anthologies ("No God in Gardens") are indeed to be pitied. T. E. Brown wrote the most intensely satirical bit of blasphemy ever written by a Christian, called "Sunset on Dartmoor." I have often read it as an atheistic argument at my meetings; it is as full of poetry as it is of iconoclasm.

Henley's poem "Out of the Night" does not emphasize the determinist position; Henley may have disbelieved in determinism, and anyway there are many Freethinkers who misunderstand that scientific truth.

The poem is certainly not Christian, nor can it be called in any real sense, optimistic. The last two lines convey a suggestion that man has a free-will, but I am quite sure that this was not what Henley was thinking about.

As a child Henley showed indications of tuberculosis. One of his feet had to be amputated. He began his literary life in a hospital bed. One of his finest volumes is a series of poems called "In Hospital." The "Out of the Night" poem was in a series called "Echoes" published with the "In Hospital" poems and probably written at the same time.

Henley became a great power in England as editor of the *National Observer* as well as a poet whose work has often been compared to that of H. Heine.

I admire both Henley and Brown far too much to defend either of them—they were men, they wrote gloriously and both deserve to be named with Shelley, Keats and Thompson (B.V.).

Henley is said to have been surprised at the unlooked for popularity of "Out of the Night." He was by no means satisfied about it. It was just a personal defiance; perhaps only an expression of a desire to go down fighting. Like another poet his aim may have been:—

... "At least not rotting like a weed. . . .

Not in a purely selfish cause
Nor void of righteous self-applause
To perish wept-for honour'd, known
And like a warrior overthrown."

We all learn only too soon that we are NOT "master of our fate" in any wide sense, and 1914-1918 showed us ten millions of

men with heads not only "bloody" but "bowed" in undesired, inescapable death.

It would be folly to imagine Henley simply self-deceived. He looked out of the window of his hospital and envied the stars, the birds, the rain, and the springtime while he "sickened impotent, winter at heart." It is worth while reading this sufferer who put a bold face to adversity, refused to accept or proffer theological lies for comfort. Death was to him the peace of eternal sleep. But Life?

"Life is worth living
Through every grain of it
From the foundations
To the last edge."

A consumptive cripple loving life as only a poet can love it.

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Mr. Bedborough finds two "typographicals" in the poem as printed in the July TS. A final *s* is due "punishment" and "bludgeoning," making them plural.

* * *

Questions for Lowell Thomas

"Did you ever hear of an Atheist applying the thumb-screw, the rack or the branding-iron to one who did not agree with him?

"Did you ever hear of an Atheist burning another man at the stake because of a difference of religious opinion?

"Who stoned a Catholic religious procession in Scotland—Atheists or religionists? Who murdered a number of Protestants at a celebration in Northern Ireland—Atheists or religionists?"

Joseph Lewis puts these challenging questions to Broadcaster Thomas, who, dealing with the situation in Mexico, asserted that there was "no bigot like a fanatical Atheist."

If there were no religious bigotry in the world except that displayed by Atheists, the word would disappear from human speech.

* * *

HAVING for twenty years published *The Common Herd* (Dallas, Texas) as the only Rationalist periodical in the Southwest, Editor Potts goes economic and takes up advocacy of the Singletax. Adopting *Singletaxer* for *The Common Herd's* middle name, as it were, Mr. Potts urges at the close of his fine front-page poem:

This is the only remedy
For hard times and for war:
First free the land by Singletax,
Take all ground rent by law.

Dallas is a Fundamentalist region. Last year, to stir up interest in science, Mr. Potts went about among the citizens putting the inquiry: "Which way does the moon go, with the earth or in the opposite direction?" He wasn't sure himself, but had a hunch that the moon tagged the earth. The local press was found hostile to a discussion of the problem. The man on the street was cagy and detected in the inquiry one of these catch questions. The Fundamentalists smoked evolution and the globular hypothesis. Some held the earth was flat "like we read in the Bible." The Singletax is a mild heresy. It is an exclusive doctrine, for if you believe in it you may dismiss for later and leisurely consideration all other principles of humanity, whether political, economical, religious or moral. It is with regret, however, that we note the submergence of the only Rationalist publication in the Southwest.

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The Subscriber Does His Part

IN the June number the Editor, having just returned to THE TRUTH SEEKER about a thousand dollars of conscience money (out of the amount paid for his work during the preceding year), pointed out that two anniversaries were just ahead. One of these was the sixty-second year of the Monthly, begun in September, 1873; the other, the sixtieth anniversary of the editor's service with this publication, dating from November, 1875. In a letter to subscribers we proposed, with their help, to put the paper past these two milestones. The following list of contributions to the Sustaining Fund during the month of July shows that they are doing their part: From Charles Fliegel, \$1; P. S. Tooker, \$1; E. C. Brooks, \$2; W. S. Prince, \$25; L. Kopshinski, \$1; R. L. Hardy, \$1; H. W. Williams, \$4; Thomas De Mott, \$1; L. H. Uhl, \$3.75; W. T. Hall, \$1; George Hart, \$10; J. S. Boling, \$1; W. W. Evans, \$1.40; H. C. Ballew, 85 cents; C. H. Eshleman, \$2; E. D. Jones, \$5; P. Kennedy, \$1; E. Cartwright, M. D., \$1; J. F. McQuade, \$1; W. H. Barnwell, \$1.50; S. A. Imhof, \$6.35; J. B. Wright, M. D., \$7.85; Dr. W. H. May, \$1; Rufus McLellan, \$2; P. Erhler, \$1; Ed. Reydin, \$50; Mrs. Bertha Bilek, \$4; L. Newbold, \$1.35; J. W. Craig, M. D., \$1. Total, \$138.75.

The contributions for June were the largest thus far for the year, and July is \$30 ahead of June. The gain, we hope, reflects an improvement in what are called material conditions among our friends, whose spiritual condition has never caused us any anxiety. One of our dollar contributors regrets that he did not give fifty when he could easily have done so; which may prompt those who have it now to take thought. Within the past two or three years well-wishers of THE TRUTH SEEKER have named it for moderate sums in their wills, but nothing has been realized from such bequests, which are not large enough to warrant defense of the wills against objections

of attorneys for heirs at law and creditors of the estates. A good friend named us for \$500 to be invested and the interest applied to placing Freethought books in libraries. We could hardly take the responsibility of investing trust money, even if the point were not raised that THE TRUTH SEEKER never was incorporated to administer trust funds. The testators mean well; we take the will for the deed; but we should suppose that where a chance for miscarriage exists, they would prefer to see their names and modest bequests in this column while living.

We welcome Clarence Darrow as a literary contributor this month in what is perhaps his first extended article written for THE TRUTH SEEKER. His leisure has enabled him to give attention to biblical events that present explorations in Bible lands have recalled. M. M. Mangasarian has returned, too, with a thoughtful consideration of a lesson not found in the Bible. Greetings to the veterans.

In the list of donations this month we see the name of a son of one of the most persistently generous supporters this publication has had for fifty years. A son or daughter, thus approving and aiding the work of the elders is one of the most agreeable sights, and we are glad to say it isn't the rarest among Freethinkers.

Not an adept at framing individual letters of acknowledgment, the editor uses this space to say thanks to all jointly and severally. In his relations with TRUTH SEEKER readers and writers, he has not known disappointment.

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Bible Treasures in a Bible Land

HISTORIANS say that Ethiopia (Abyssinia), now taking measures to protect itself from invasion by the Italian army of Mussolini, was converted to Christianity early in the fourth century, which would be the year three hundred and something, perhaps prior to the conversion of Constantine of Rome, the first Christian emperor.

That is not Ethiopia's only claim to distinction, either, for its kings are descended from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba as truly as the Pope of Rome is the successor of the Apostle Peter.

Abyssinia is more correctly called Ethiopia, the biblical name for which was Cush; and Cush was the son of Ham, who was the son of Noah and supposed to be colored: he is the progenitor of the Negro race, and Moses, who married a Cushite woman, may be the grandfather of all the mulattos. Genealogy, or ethnology, is a difficult subject, as Hitler finds it in pursuit of Aryans. Negroes in Harlem, New York, accept Ethiopia as their fatherland and are eager to enlist and march behind Emperor Haile Selassie, king of kings and Lion of Judah.

We note that Emperor Haile Selassie, "anticipating an Italian invasion, has ordered the country's valuable crown jewels and ecclesiastical treasures, namely the original ten commandments and the ark of the covenant, removed to the mountains for safekeeping."

Now the ark of the covenant, or ark of Jehovah, is a handy portable sanctuary invented by the Jews—a very sacred object. All Bible readers are aware of what happened to Uzzah 1042 B. C. for steadying it on the cart when the oxen shook it. See 2 Sam. 6:6, 7. The colored chauffeur who takes the ark into the Abyssinian mountains out of reach of the Philistine Mussolini will need to watch his step.

The second of the ecclesiastical treasures—to wit, the tablets of the law received by Moses from Jehovah on Mount Sinai—should also be safely concealed. They are the Ten Commandments, 2d Ed. (Ex. 34:1). Of the first edition it is written (Ex. 32:19) that “Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands and brake them beneath the mount.”

These tables are more important than the potsherds found by Sir Charles Marston with the writing of some ancient scribe on them, as he believes, for they are “written with the finger of God,” as verse 18 of Exodus 31 solemnly declares.

The Catholic church shows a pretty good line of ecclesiastical treasures, including duplicate relics of Jesus and spare parts of his grandmother (over which novenas have been held from New Orleans to Montreal), but no originals anywhere near so impressive and so well authenticated as Haile Selassie’s Ark of the Covenant and stone tables in God’s handwriting. It would be like Mussolini, if he found the tablets, to sign his own name to them, and to load the ark with sandwiches for his troops.

According to the Vatican City official *Observer* newspaper, the pope is not an interested party to the Italian-Ethiopian hostilities, but his neutrality may be feigned; for as a collector of ecclesiastical curios he can hardly contemplate with indifference the bus or ark that God used to ride in, or the tablets containing the Decalogue handed down from Sinai in God’s handwriting.

The skepticism naturally existing as to the authenticity of Haile Selassie’s biblical treasures should be confined to Infidels who accept little of the Word, whether about the Almighty riding on a cart drawn by oxen or his scratching down laws on a slab of rock. To the faithful, however, who rejoice in the ark and the covenant—belief in these and in their preservation to this day in their original form should present no difficulties whatever. It is as likely that the gadgets exist now as that they ever did.

* * * *

THE Catholic church has bitten off a fresh piece of graft in New York city. This consists of free buses run at public expense to carry children to parochial schools. Governor Lehman vetoed a bill passed at the last legislative session that would have provided such service throughout the state. So this metropolis is practicing what would be unlawful in the state and revolutionary in the nation.

Dutch Elm and Poetry Blight

THE sacred tree of Larchmont, N. Y., beneath whose umbrageous shade legend says Joyce Kilmer wrote his pietistic poem on “Trees,” is doomed by the doctors who attempt to control the Dutch elm disease that, doing the will of God, smote it a year ago.

The poem written by Joyce while under the spell of this elm is Sunday-school verse of an inferior grade, and affirms that “only God can make a tree.” It omits to point out what God can do to a tree as illustrated by the tree-plagues which he sends. A few years ago it was the chestnut; now the elm; and to effect the decease of both he “prepared a worm,” see Jonah four and seven. It might be thought that in killing the elms he would pass by the individual one that inspired Kilmer’s poetry. We should spare the tree and prepare a worm for the poem.

God spares nothing under any consideration whatever. In his total indifference he did not even deflect the bullet with Joyce Kilmer’s number on it; he only did a little magic and made a nickel button look like a gold one.*

The death of the Larchmont elm provides the occasion for us to recall that a few years ago an Ohio man named Davey, who had set up as a tree doctor, got on the air with promises to extend by his method the lives of fruit and shade trees. He seemed to be in partnership with God in the business, and besides speaking highly of the other member of the firm, used Kilmer’s verse every time for a piety ending. This was ground enough for suspicion, but we employed one of Davey’s tree-skinners to treat (expensively but ineffectually) an ailing apple in the backyard, and one of his agents to spray. And then no sooner was the ailing tree doctored than God prepared a great wind that blew down upon it a century-old giant among trees that sheared off half its limbs. In correspondence with Mr. Davey, we inquired what he thought about gods and trees in view of these facts, but he dodged the issue by replying it was true that “Nature” often destroyed in a moment what it had taken a century to produce. He gave God the praise and made nature the “goat.” As a substitute for Kilmer’s verse, which we held he ought in honesty to withdraw, the following was proposed:

We graft the apple-tree when young
And with each season dig and dung;†
In Autumn, mulch; in Springtime, spray
To chase the insect pests away;
Then, from the bark to oust the worm,
We make incisions cunniform,
While ’gainst returning parasite
We paint the place with daveyite.

*In the time of the World War, the American family was allowed to display a “silver” badge for every member at the front and “gold” ones for those who had fallen. Kilmer’s family made the pretense, publicly, that when Joyce was killed his silver button turned to gold overnight.

†Luke 13:8.

We bud; we thin the fruit in June;
 We hire the Tree Expert to prune.
 These deeds are done by you and me,
 And only God will smash the tree.

The pietistic broadcasts of Davey have ceased. Kilmer's verses are now sung, but are not catchy enough to inspire anyone to whistle them. They are a libel on trees, and in the case of the Larchmont elm have the appearance of a blight. Meanwhile on our place, The Hop Off, stands unaffected by Dutch or Kilmer disease an elm ancient as the hills and big enough for an airplane to light in.

* * * *

The Philosophy of Going Native

THE living without work, on relief, and declining offered jobs, now prevalent and causing remark, is not a new condition. Rather it appears to be a return to the natural state of man, who took up the habits of labor only under compulsion. As is well known, the "natural" man loafed when not moved to exertion by the necessity of feeding or defending himself or capturing a woman to wait upon him.

Working is an acquired habit not easy to retain when circumstances admit of its being abandoned by reverting to nature. The theory is probably sound that the first laborers were slaves, if we overlook the wives. In the present resumption of idleness the women seem to hold their jobs or find them after the men give up and go native, which is a return to the primitive.

Correspondents of the press, investigating conditions, find even the non-destitute living on relief funds and rejecting offers of employment, the way to do so respectably being opened in the name of social justice.

In Southern New Jersey, where a bumper crop of raspberries was reported, July 1, to be rotting on the vines, the relievers refused to gather the fruit because their earnings would be less than the dole. Mary A. Sanborn of Pennsylvania writes to the *New York Times* that while it is human to be lazy and shiftless, "what is needed is not a lift but a kick." Gen. Hugh Johnson declares that "a man on relief should be made to take a job in private industry, if he can get one, regardless of what the job pays." The government has no trouble in finding hands. There are at this writing 712,112 government workers, and the monthly payroll is \$108,300,000.

His job may not again appear attractive to one who has lived for a few years on relief; and if men shall be drafted into industry as they are into the army, that part of history will be repeated when work was done under compulsion. The problem of supporting the unemployed will be succeeded by the problem how to induce them to support themselves by working regularly.

The toiler and producer for generations has borne on his shoulders the privileged class who never did a stroke of work or produced anything. If positions have been re-

versed and the privileged class has the toiler on its hands, this only shows that the world goes round; the fellows who are neither at the top nor bottom being squeezed as always.

A newsweekly of large circulation, saying that "it is not hard to get a job," cites the experience of a youth who advertised in an agricultural paper: "Clean American boy anxious to work outdoors for room and board and \$10 a month," and received 250 replies. But there is more to the story, for only the advertiser and another boy accepted the situations offered, and when the replies were placed before a large number of the unemployed receiving public relief the proffered places were declined unanimously. For men who not long since may have earned \$10 a day the sacrifice was too great, even with lost self-reliance restored. The boys, with no background of anything better, will work for what they can get and inherit the earth.

Younger men and women, born since the beginning of the war, find less fault in the present state of affairs than their parents do. A man in the fifties of his age is scornful of what his son, in the white collar class, taking the best he can get, is earning, and of the general attitude of the young toward life. But the boy does not share the parent's discontent with smaller wages nor with the girls appearing on the streets in shorts and handkerchiefs. His reflexes are differently conditioned—if anybody knows that one. He and his girl didn't make the depression. If he is entitled to a grouch, it is against his elders who have created the conditions in which he is born. Not the clean American boy "anxious to work outdoors for room and board and \$10 a month," but the man on relief or on strike, may be the one who misses the Way Out. One feels no loss in the end for doing a fair day's work, when something attempted, something done, has earned a night's repose.

But we see by the Bible that work is the penalty of lost innocence. That member of the leisure or priestly class who wrote the third chapter of Genesis could not reconcile the necessity that a man should work for a living with the existence of a benevolent deity. He was convinced that the race must have committed a serious offense at the beginning of its history, or the deity would never have pronounced the curse of labor on mankind. We have his conclusion about it in that chapter. The first couple, male and female—at the instance of the woman, of course—proceeded to acquaint themselves with the facts of life. Moreover, contrary to a law which the New York legislature would be inspired to pass sometime, they were nude and not ashamed. Followed the curse and condemnation: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. Root, hog, or die." Now by the providence of an ingenious deity and the interpreters of his ways, certain minor consequences of the indiscretion of Adam and Eve—for instance, all hands going to hell—have been moderated and in a measure escaped by the few through the new deal inaugurated 4,004 years later, but not the curse that man must work.

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE House of Representatives at Washington "heard a demand that the State Department protest religious persecution in Germany." But why in Germany? Hitler is a piece of cheese drawn across the trail of the Christian God, who in all places and at all times, they say, visits the iniquity of fathers upon children and sends multitudes to hell everlastingly for their religious belief. Whether by Fuehrer Hitler of the third reich or Fuehrer Jehovah of the original himmel reich, the molesting of any person on account of his religious belief is **an act not to be tolerated**; and it looks twice as bad in a god as it does in a man. Thus, while maintaining their purgatory and their hell for heretics, the Catholics who protest persecution in Germany or Mexico do not come into court with clean minds.

Freethinkers can have no part or parcel with strong-arm methods of combating errors of belief. But when the church arrogates to itself jurisdiction in political and social affairs, or in morals, education, or eugenics, to which religion is not legitimately related, and advocates laws accordingly, it is virtually appealing to force, taking up the sword, or the club, and thereby loses its appeal to the principles of religious liberty. America has not yet reached the point of handling the church after the fashion of Russia, Germany and Mexico, but the Catholic church is challenging and inviting recourse to those methods.

* * * *

THE inquiry, "Are there any of the original manuscripts in the Bible in existence?" is answered by the Jersey City *Journal*:

There are no actual original copies of the Bible, either the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament, or the New Testament. The American Bible Society says that while the three most important and complete copies of manuscripts of the Bible are the Vaticanus (4th century), Sinaiticus (4th century), and the Alexandrinus (5th century), there have been since these were discovered, numberless fragments of early copies of the Bible brought to light until there are now several thousand fragments of the Greek, the Hebrew, or the two combined, which are worthy of a serious consideration in a study of the original language.

The dates "4th century" and "5th century" for the Sinaitic, Vatican and Alexandrine manuscripts are guesses. The oldest Bible of known age is dated 916, and that is not a "certified copy." Of the "fragments," which of them belonged in the Bible was settled by a Catholic council (Trent) and the pope in 1563-4, with the warning: "and if anyone does industriously condemn them, let him be Anathema." On that decision and curse rests the authenticity of the Bible as the word of God.

* * * *

"I wish," remarks the Rev. I. M. Hargett, preaching at a Methodist camp meeting in Des Plaines, Ill., "that the President would not make such a pleasure day of Sunday and, instead of political pow-wows, fishing trips and sail-boat rides, would attend church and set a good example for the nation's youth." Grover Cleveland used to go fishing on Sunday in the Chesapeake, and he set a "bad"

example for the nation's youth by carrying his catch through the streets of Washington on the Christian sabbath. There goes about the doubtful joke that when Roosevelt fishes in that historic bay, his boat is convoyed and quite surrounded by others carrying secret service men, while a considerable flotilla follows it. Asked "Why all the parade?" one of the guards replied they were taking precautions in case the Chief started walking on the water.

* * * *

A MAN who takes a Catholic woman to wife knows, or ought to, that the children will belong to her and that she may condemn them to her own religion. In one of our courts a Jew and his Catholic wife cannot agree on this point, and the judge, Supreme Court Justice Meier Steinbrink in Brooklyn, calls a rabbi and a priest into consultation. Some of our judges, as in this case, seem not to understand that religion is outside their jurisdiction. If the court acts at all, it should do so to protect the child from pious harpies and kidnapers of whatever denomination who are lurking to seize its mind.

* * * *

LONG ago E. M. Macdonald, for nearly thirty years editor of THE TRUTH SEEKER, wrote that he did not agree with a correspondent's ideas but would fight for his right to express them. Later appeared the declaration, attributed to Voltaire, and quoted till this day:

"I disagree with every word you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

The editor of the *Open Road*, Bruce Calvert, had reproduced the quotation, signed Voltaire, half a hundred times or more when Dr. W. J. Robinson, editor of the *Critic and Guide*, denied its authenticity and challenged him to prove it on a bet. Mr. Calvert's correspondents rallied, and more than one gave him the reference: "Voltaire in Letters," by S. G. Tallentyre (pseud. for Evelyn Beatrice Hall), G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919, page 65. But it appears that there are correspondents who do not know in what the verification of a quotation consists, for Dr. Robinson, paying no bets, points out that Tallentyre submitted the locution only as an "essentially Voltairean principle," with no reference to an original source. So the fact that the saying occurs in Tallentyre is no more significant than its appearance in the *Open Road* and fifty other publications. We have been instrumental in sending abroad (to the *Literary Guide*) an intimation that the matter was settled, which is now moderated, since we were led astray by *Open Road* verifiers. In that other journal, too, we have written that "the Voltaire variant seems to be a comparatively recent find." Harry Weinberger of New York, a well known attorney for the defense who has appeared for Freethinkers, has "not been able to find that the famous quote credited to Voltaire was used before 1907." But if reliance may be placed on memory, the quote or its equivalent was used editorially earlier than that in THE TRUTH SEEKER, probably before 1904.

OCCURRENCES AND OPINIONS

HEREAFTER the Rev. Edward Aloysius Duff will sit at a desk in Washington and direct the "spiritual welfare" of 85,000 officers and men belonging to the United States Navy. He is the first Catholic priest to be made head chaplain of the navy, which is a fine graft, and intended to be such.

AFTER Director of Public Safety Roegner of Passaic, N. J., had ordered policemen and firemen to church every Sunday, the following appeared in a New York daily:

A *Post* reporter stopped a Passaic policeman today and asked him if he attended church regularly. "Listen, son," he said, "I'm a cop, not a Boy Scout."

"Do I drink? Well, are you buyin'?"

ATTACKS on the moving picture industry and the men engaged in it provoked a libel suit against America's oldest religious paper, the *Churchman*, and its editor, the Rev. Guy Emery Shipley, in which the paper and the editor were the losers, and judgment for \$10,200 must be paid. The worms who turned are Will H. Hays, Adolph Zukor, and other film producers. Editor Shipley, not having \$10,200, is taking up a collection.

THERE were commemorative exercises in Dayton, Tenn., July 26, it being the tenth anniversary of the "monkey" trial, in honor of William Jennings Bryan, chief prosecutor of a teacher named Scopes, whom he convicted of inculcating the doctrine of evolution. The chief eulogist of the "Great Commoner" was Col. Patrick H. Callahan, who twenty years ago was Supreme Director of the Order Knights of Columbus.

THE headline runs: "Church and State Honor New Bishop." It was the consecration of Thomas Henry McLaughlin in Newark, New Jersey, and the politicians present, including Mayor Ellenstein, almost outnumbered the man-milliners who took part in the ludicrous performance. The ceremonies were described as "centuries old." The Catholic mind still dwells religiously in the age when the rites were invented amidst pagan scenes and obscene Eleusinian mysteries.

RAY LONG, author and editor, lately of the *Cosmopolitan*, earned a great deal of money but gave it away. Broke, he killed himself at his home in Beverley Hills, California, early in July. His good friend Rupert Hughes spoke at his funeral, saying: "The world is full of those who wish to take from those who have; but Ray took only a few crumbs from the cake he passed on to others. It breaks my heart when I think of those last tragic moments when the thought came to him that he could best serve his friends by removing himself from among them."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, being petitioned to cause "a survey of religious oppression in Mexico" to be made, wrote back that "*the American people and the government believe in freedom of religious worship not only in the United States but also in all other countries.*"

There are states in this country, however, where the sturdiest advocates of freedom of religious worship cannot testify in courts. Should the President go as far as the petitioners pray, the Mexican government might remind him of this fact.

DAVID RUBIN, who died recently at about the age of 55, had been associated with Freethought activities in New York from his youth up. Some forty years ago, as a lad without funds except carfare given him by his mother, he bought Paine's "Age of Reason" on installments from E. M. Macdonald at 28 Lafayette Place, and began his reading of *THE TRUTH SEEKER* which was

continued throughout his life. A 1918 item in "Fifty Years of Freethought" says: "Credit for keeping the New York Secular Society alive when its active members were off to the wars belongs to David Rubin, who accepted the presidency and took the chair at the meetings at 131 West 125th Street." He did his part.

WITH interest we observed the moral evolution taking place in Russia, where marriage now tends toward permanency and respectability. "The easy divorce," says a dispatch, "has been subjected to official frowns; the importance of family ties and family love are emphasized in the government press; children are told to heed what their parents tell them; in general, there is more emphasis on the individual as a separate personality." Lately mixed bathing has been condemned in the name of modesty, or the "dignity of a Soviet citizen," by the official Moscow newspaper. But modesty is not a virtue singular to Soviet Russia. We read, too, of an official in Yonkers, N. Y., who has forgone all his summer holidays abroad to see that no girl in shorts enters the town on a week-end. Modesty is that high light whereby the world is saved.

THE publishing, for identification, of two poems, "Invictus" and "Opportunity," by Henley and Ingalls respectively, has brought us more correspondence than we can handle, with several responses worthy to be called articles. Author Joseph Wheelless reacted first to "Opportunity," which is "by the late U. S. Senator John James Ingalls of Kansas," and of which Mr. Wheelless possesses an autographed copy. Four-A Charles Smith immediately followed as an identifier. Mrs. Lillian Wenstrand of Brooklyn writes: "It is a forceful piece of poetry, but I, personally, do not subscribe to the notion that Opportunity 'knocks unbidden' once and 'returns no more.'" Dr. J. W. Craig of Oklahoma gives us a short sketch of Senator Ingalls (1833-1900), telling a great deal about him in few words, and incloses a dollar to grease the press. His letter is on file for further reference.

ONE day's news told of disorders, rioting and fighting between Protestants and Catholics in the north part of Ireland which does not belong to the Free State and where Protestants are the vast majority, while in the Free State, predominantly Catholic, peace prevailed and the Protestant minority were unmolested. A day later Free State Catholics were the aggressors. A mob parading the principal streets of Limerick "smashed the windows of large business houses owned by Protestants, and of Trinity Protestant church, of the homes of two Protestant clergymen and the Protestant Young Men's Hall and the Diocesan Hall." A Catholic priest, pronouncing these acts "a grave sin against charity," added that "to think that the outrages were perpetrated in the name of Catholicity was shocking and disgusting." He could not add, however, that the "outrages" were surprising. They are hardly news after all.

DR. WILL DURANT promises to become a nineteenth century Buckle. Henry Thomas Buckle (1821-1862) projected a History of Civilization, beginning with civilization in England, which has made him famous to this day. Dying at 40, he completed but two volumes. Durant, who a few years ago wrote a best-selling story of Philosophy, was educated to be a Catholic and studied two years for the priesthood in 1909-11. At the present time the reviewers are busy with the first volume of his new "Story of Civilization," a volume of 1,000 pages, with four more to come. He is 50 this year and expects to complete the work at 70. He long since parted with his religion. In the 'teens of this century he was a radical among radicals, and his associates, not perceiving in him then, perchance, the powers and potencies of

a Doctor of Philosophy, addressed him as Billy. With matured and unprejudiced mind, Dr. Durant is liable to confirm the opinion of Buckle, that moral and religious sentiments, though esteemed to be lovely, have played but a negligible or negative part in the progress of civilization.

THE Pittsburgh (Pa.) Rationalist Society observed the Ingersoll birthday, August 11, by holding a picnic at A. G. Smith's farm in Mt. Lebanon.

Letters to the Editor

Atheists Good People When Found

I may be in Mexico City next winter for a few days and if you have the names of a couple of real Atheists on your list, who live in Mexico City, will you forward them to me so that I may correspond with them and if possible arrange a lecture. [We have no subscribers in Mexico.—Ed.]

Several years ago you sent me the name of George Ross, in Edinburgh, Scotland, who was at that time president of the Rationalist Society in that city. He was one of the finest men I have ever met and we have kept up a correspondence ever since. I find the real Atheist one of the highest types of human beings and one whose morals and ethics are so far above that of the Christian system that there is no comparison. Best wishes.—DR. J. D. TAYLOR, Orleans, Mass.

Tribute to the Late Olaus Jeldness of Washington

Mr. W. H. Abel, a subscriber to your paper—a prominent lawyer and a friend of mine for many years—sent me a copy of your issue of July, 1935, in which reference is made to the passing of our lamented friend Olaus Jeldness.

I note that you make reference to the observations made by myself, and I take pleasure in enclosing you herewith a copy of them, as published in the mining newspaper of this section.

The circumstance that Mr. Jeldness was a long-time reader of your paper, as well as an occasional contributor, is certainly a worthy endorsement of your publication.—JOSEPH MCCARTHY, Spokane, Wash.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—We have read Mr. McCarthy's worthy address more than once, and as one who enjoyed the friendship of Mr. Jeldness for two score years or more, we thank the author, while regretting the limitations of space that prevent our publishing the tribute entire.

Without Loss of Time

I must send Mr. W. S. Bryan some greeting before it is too late. He is a dandy. I appreciate your work more than words can express.—THOS. DEMOTT, Alta, Can.

A Poem Inquired For

Somewhere, in one of your issues, I think, I saw the poem beginning:

"Sick and tired of life, I shout.
'What in hell is it all about?'
Round and round in a circle I go—
Nothing is certain, naught can I know."
—F. G. HAWKINS, Mississippi.

Geography at Fault

Listen. British Guiana is not on the "African West Coast" (p. 95); that's Guinea. Guiana (British, French, etc.) is Eastern (N. E.) coast of South America.—WHEELS, New York.
(The address given by the correspondent alluded to was Hoptown, West Coast, Berbice, British Guiana. "African" was a geographical error.—ED. T. S.)

Speaking Diffidently, as a New Timer

I can't say I am enthusiastic about any change in T. S., although I suppose it is all right. I like the paper as it is, and was. Perhaps I take the attitude of an old-timer when I am not one really, being only a young squirt of merely twelve years' association with THE TRUTH SEEKER; so what I say can't carry much weight.—CLARENCE KEYSER, Montana.

FIFTY YEARS OF FREETHOUGHT, Vol. I., 544 pp., with THE TRUTH SEEKER, \$1.25.

When Time Hangs Heavy

I am 76 and have had many of the vicissitudes in life that our friend the Editor has had. I took THE TRUTH SEEKER weekly for 30 years, and find the Monthly a long time between drinks. Send me Rupert Hughes' "Why I Quit Going to Church."
—FRANK E. THATCHER, Michigan.

Consign Them to the Birds

Your Mississippi correspondent, the late Bob Lyle, once sent you some clever verses on the absurdity of the foreign missionary racket, in which he advised them to let the heathen go and save themselves. Here is another blow to them:

If I were a cassowary,
And lived in Tim-buk-tu,
I'd eat the missionary,
Skin and bone and hymn-book, too."
MRS. S. A. PENFIELD, New York.

THE SANCTIFIED GO-GETTER

The Christian robs the honey bees,
Denudes the forest of its trees,
Deprives the silk worms of their silk,
Deprives old Bossy of her milk;
Regardless how the cow may feel,
Converts her offspring into veal.
He even steals old Biddy's eggs,
And amputates the frog's hind legs.
He runs the Indians off the land,
Trades rum upon the coral strand,
Enslaves the helpless African
While prating of Christ's love to man;
Then hopes, when safe beneath the sod,
He may find "fellowship with God."

JAYEMSEE.

The Letter Box

ANONYMOUS, New York.—As an "Old Subscriber" you may have surmised that without a correspondent's address we cannot publish his statements.

P. J., Manchester, England.—If authors proposing to send us their manuscripts for publication on a royalty basis get but a delayed reply, they may infer we are obliged to decline, with thanks for remembering us.

WILTON JOHNSON, Des Moines, Ia.—For verification of "Sixteen Crucified Saviors," compare "Pagan Christs," Robertson; "The Christ Myth," Drews; "Source of the Christ Myth," Remsburg, etc. The literature is large.

RUFUS McLELLAN, Massachusetts.—Aged Freethinkers seldom lose interest, and there is comfort in knowing that although you are 95 Sept. 11 next, you are still "glad when the paper comes." Your three years' subscription evinces a hopeful outlook.

INNE RUS, Los Angeles.—There was a time when Edison amused himself with the evidence of a Supreme Intelligence, hence what your leading evening newspaper printed from "an old magazine" may be something like what Edison told somebody. The inventor intimated he was an Agnostic, not an Atheist.

LEWIS F. NEWBOLD, Nebraska.—We have not at hand the original murder indictments against Constantine the Great, first Christian emperor. In a footnote to Gibbon's "History of Christianity," is the following summarized statement:

"The Rev. Robert Taylor thus methodically arranges Constantine's slaughter bill:

	A. D.
Maximian—His wife's father	310
Bassianus—His brother-in-law	314
Licinianus—His nephew	319
Fausta—His wife	320
Sopater—His former friend	321
Licinius—His brother-in-law	325
Crispus—His son	326

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