

## Communications.

### Elmina Abroad.—Familiar Letters.

#### I.

Not having been out of the sight of the smoke of our chimney at Snowville for years and years, it seems so like a fairy dream to be roaming about over the glad and beautiful earth and seeing not only the lovely handiwork of dear old Mother Nature, but the improvements and additions made by the hand of man which are everywhere speaking of a creative skill and ingenuity far surpassing that of any god he has ever created.

I think some of my readers would have smiled at the "turn-out" which conveyed me the twelve miles from Snowville to Christiansburg. Finding it impossible to obtain a horse during the busy ploughing season, I was compelled to ride in a large lumber wagon loaded with plows and plow-points (shares); and the first experience was the balking of one horse in the middle of the ford as we crossed the river. He was persuaded to go on, but made a second and worse balk coming up the steep bank on the far side, and fearing to be upset among the iron-ware, I jumped out and walked till the horse sobered down. Half way to town the wagon stuck fast in a mud hole and we all had to alight, and as I was stepping on the rubber (a big block of wood that rubs the wheel and locks it to go down hills) to get in again, the horses started and threw me down in the mud, plastering my dress and one hand pretty well with the sacred soil of old Virginia; but as I only wore nature's gloves the hand was soon cleansed and the rest of the mud rubbed off when dry.

Just ahead of us on the road was the United States mail. The bag was thrown across a small mule, and on the top of it sat a small boy probably twelve years old, judging by his looks. Every now and then he would jump off and get a club from the road-side and beat the mule, driving it along as one would a refractory pig, and it really was not much larger than a big pig. I asked if he was not afraid the mule would run away with the mail. "If he does I'll get somebody to catch him," was the response. By dint of hurrying the driver I arrived in Christiansburg in time to catch the train, and was soon aboard. It was a keen, frosty morning; quite solid ice had frozen during the night, "killing all the fruit," though probably, like the famous cattle of holy writ, it will much of it be left to be killed over and over again. It was pleasant to sit in the cars and see the lovely landscape go by. Beautiful meadow lands covered with the greenest of grass and grain, rugged hill-sides dotted with evergreens interspersed with large bushes of red bud, whose pink flowers are now out in all their glory. The dog-wood roses, too, showed their white bloom among the dry brown stems of leafless trees. Orchards were pink with peach and apple blooms, and cherry-trees gave promise of a large fruitage; while the Lord's cattle on a thousand hills and his black and white children, some busy at their various avocations, and others standing watching the steam-horse and his train, added variety to the shifting, changing scene. Inside the cars was the usual traveling crowd of men, women, and children; book and paper pedlers, etc. One of these had a collection of Infidel publications, and a passenger bought a volume of selections from Ingersoll's sayings and commenced reading them in a loud, clear voice to his seat-mate. Every sentence made its mark. The reader seemed to be a Universalist or a Theodore Parker man. His companion was pious, but they appeared to relish most of the sentiments of the great orator, but could not fairly understand whether he was a believer in a real God and in a future life or not. Several ladies sitting near me were terribly shocked, and called the book blasphemous, and one said, "Such books should be burnt." I said, "You cannot destroy the truth by burning it." "That's a fact," said one. It was certainly a sign of progress to see Infidel literature publicly sold and read aloud on a train of cars this far south. The last I saw of the reader he was searching the holy book (which he took down from the rack) for the 109th psalm, and as it's getting hungry-time I'll search for my breakfast.

#### II.

I have seen so much in the four days I have been here that my head feels like a kaleidoscope of shifting, changing views. Been through the Capitol and seen the Senate and House in session, and the big magnates making our laws and deciding important issues by yeas and nays. Have been through parks, gardens, and greeneries, and seen all the wonderful, strange, and beautiful exotics growing in the moist, warm air of the hot-houses. Have been to museums and seen the stuffed skins of all manner of birds and animals, and the bones of others, and so many curiosities that the eye and brain refused to take them all in; attended an excellent lecture on anthropology, that not only had no G-ism in it, but was directly Infidel or Materialistic in all its leanings, though no overt reflections were made against "our holy religion," and what was best of all, the lecture was well appreciated and cheered by the audience, which was a large one.

I have been to see a medium, too (Mrs. French), who told me many wonderful things that I cannot understand how she divined. Mentioned the names of ever so many of my dead friends and relatives; described them, and told the relationship and mentioned some I had myself forgotten, but recalled as she reminded me of them. One Charles Bird came. I said I had never known him, but she still insisted I had. I said I had lost a relative called Charles, but no Bird. "It is Bird," said she. "I see it here." My cousin laughed then, and said, "Oh, it's a duck, a Drake." Then the medium shook hands with me heartily, as if the spirit was glad to be recognized. It was my father's brother, Charles Drake. When cousin E. (who went along with me), asked the medium what I did at home, she looked a long time and said, "I see piles of scratch papers, many talk-sheets, and pick-ups," meaning, in her broken Indian (for her's is Indian mediumship), that I wrote on sheets of paper for the newspapers, and the types printed it, as she made motions of type setting. When we had first started, I proposed to go in and not speak for a while, but let my cousin do the talking, as I wanted a test. I was born with a portion of the roof of my mouth and palate gone, therefore have an impediment in my speech. So my cousin told her I had a natural defect, and she was to find out what it was. She took my hand, and in two minutes passed her other hand up the sides of my throat and described it (the malformation and my mode of talking), better than I could have done. My cousin was as eager for the test as I, and was as well satisfied with the result. I had a full hour's sitting, but I only mention these few items to show that the wonders are not all humbug; and even if I fail to believe that the dead live, I think the phenomena well worth our investigation as a new phase of the powers of humanity.

#### III.

One evening a lady came here, and we had a sitting around a stand for raps, she being mediumistic and a firm believer.

But though we sat two hours, only a few faint raps came, and those usually in response to the mention of Guiteau's name. On Sunday we went to Oak Hill cemetery and saw that large and beautiful city of the dead. It was a pleasant resting place for the silent and sleeping ones. The grounds tastefully laid out, grand monuments, plain, simple head-stones, a profusion of flowers, vines, and shrubbery, and stately trees looked calmly down on all. In the afternoon we went to a fashionable Catholic church to "vespers." To one to whom like myself it is all new, it was a beautiful and curious show. All the lighted candles, the gold and glitter, the solemn, sweet music, chants, and elevating the host and bowing to it whenever any one passed in front of it was interesting, and if seen but once is really beautiful so long as one keeps back the thoughts of the gross superstitions and powerful machinery of the institution. The attendance was very large, and the congregation appeared as intelligent and refined as any I have seen, though it is supposed to be mostly composed of "servant girls," and such classes.

In the evening we attended a spiritual meeting in a large hall. The audience was tolerably large, and seemed to be composed of a thinking, serious, and reflective body of people. The speaker was a Mr. White. The lecture was flowery and rather wordy, on "Inspiration." Not argumentative, so I did not feel greatly interested. After we got home a Mr. L. called. A large, portly man, pretty well along in years, finely educated, and once a strong Materialist, believing death ended all, and still antichristian and anti-theological, but has long been converted to Spiritualism, though he has to attend seances and obtain new tests continually to keep his skeptical nature in subjection to the new ism.

On Monday had a sitting with another medium, but very little, if any, satisfaction. Had she not been vouched for by those who knew her well, I should say all she told was mere guess-work, and wrong guesses nine times in ten. I must confess that, being almost constantly in the society of Spiritualists, and hearing of the very rough usage some of them have received at the hands of the invisible, has one or two nights made me almost "creepy" about going to bed way up in the third story all by myself. Just as children listened, open-mouthed, to ghost stories, and then go in a crowd to bed and cover up head and ears, so did I almost feel; not at all convinced or believing, only imagining I know not what. The lingering remains of superstitious notions will cling to us despite philosophy, reason, and common sense.

Washington, D. C., April, 1882.

### California Letter.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TRUTH SEEKER, Sir: Since my return from the North I have been lecturing in Sacramento every Sunday, with the exception of four lectures in Stockton and four in Modesto, at both of which places the friends of Freethought held a Paine memorial meeting, which, in point of attendance and interest, speaks well for the growing interest among our people for the cause of truth.

I am at present speaking in Sac City to large audiences, and will remain here until our old chief, D. M. Bennett, reaches here on his way East. I can't afford to miss seeing him, and grasp the hand of a man who dares to speak the truth, for he is one of my kind.

As one of the results of our labor here this winter, the friends have organized a Liberal Union, with about one hundred members on the roll, with a splendid board of officers—with S. S. Hall as president; J. D. Byers, vice, and S. J. Martin, secretary.

We have received circulars from Byron Adonis, issued by Liberal League 190, of San Francisco, in relation to a reception to be tendered to Mr. Bennett in San Francisco on his arrival in that city.

The Liberal Union of Sacramento have also taken steps, by the appointment of an efficient committee, to do the same thing in Sacramento.

We propose to make his heart glad, and send him to his home and friends stronger than ever to contend against bigotry and superstition, and I hope similar ovations will be given with a hearty good-will all along the line of his travel to New York.

Let us honor the man who, from principle, submitted himself to pass through the fires of persecution to attain and preserve for us a larger freedom; and, in the language of our circular, let us keep the fires of liberty burning all along the line.

Last Sunday we spoke to at least four hundred people on the demands of Liberalism, and presented the claims of THE TRUTH SEEKER, for which I hope to send you a number of names soon—at least as soon as the reception is over; now we are all busy getting things in readiness for that event, and I am quite sure that Mr. Bennett's presence here will add to THE TRUTH SEEKER'S list of subscribers.

Of course you are aware that there are a great many Liberal people who do not take any Liberal paper, and do not know to this day that we have a just cause for which to contend, and that our honored leader, D. M. Bennett, has been in prison at the hands of Christian devils, and that he is now on his way around the world.

I speak advisedly when I say that at least two hundred of my audience, on the occasion above alluded to, had never heard of D. M. Bennett, and had never seen THE TRUTH SEEKER.

Ponderous bodies move slowly, and so does the cause of Liberalism, and yet, thank heaven and the workers for truth, the heaven is at work in the minds of the people.

We want more live men and women speakers on the rostrum, to expound Liberalism and exhort the people to concert of action.

If Liberalism means that every person shall have a little hobby of their own, and each stand apart from his fellow, then our cause is a forlorn hope, as against the well-organized and well-trained forces of the enemies of Freethought and free religion. Individuality and selfhood—to be able to stand alone—is a grand thing, but transcendently grand and precious is it to be able to join hands for work in a good cause.

Liberalism is not simply negations; no, not that. A fool can deny, but earnest and sincere Liberals will discover that Liberalism has a positive side, and while she denies the system and methods of Christianity to save the soul, she stoutly affirms in favor of natural development in harmony with the laws of nature. It is not enough to deny the truth of the Bible; we must affirm something in its stead and help the people out of superstition by truth. Church people are alive and stand together, and pull together for what they deem their cause. Our cause is to us a better, broader, and higher cause. Let us do at least as much as Christians do for our sacred cause. But how can we do this unless we place ourselves in proper relations to the cause of truth? And to do this we need to sustain the Liberal press, as well as to study books, for this is our only means of knowing what is going on in the Liberal field.

I wish I could say something to inspire every Liberal to take

a Liberal paper, and thereby come into sympathy with the cause at large by coming into sympathy with each other. The hearts of Liberals are in the right place, and we only need to bring them into closer relations with each other to find them beating in unison to the grand march of human freedom.

Now you know that I promised that my letter should not be as long as the last, and will close by saying to the Liberals of Oregon, Washington Territory, and British Columbia, whose letters are constantly coming to hand, that I have not forgotten them, and hope to see them soon. And further let me say I have just issued a volume of Freethought poems, handsomely bound, Radical, and spicy, to help spread the light. Price, single copy, 75 cents, sent by mail, and \$7 per dozen. So in the mean time, to whet the appetite, send to San Jose, Cal., for a dozen of my books, and while you will get more than your money's worth, you will at the same time spread the light.

With many good wishes for THE TRUTH SEEKER and its noble workers, I am,  
Yours for all truth,  
Dr. J. L. YORK.

### The Death of Mr. Darwin.

Charles Robert Darwin, the famous savant, died on the 20th at his residence, Down House, near Orpington, England. He had been ill for some days, but was supposed to be recovering. He did not rally from a relapse he experienced on Tuesday.

Mr. Darwin had been suffering for some time from weakness of the heart, but continued to work to the last. He was taken ill on Tuesday night with pains in the chest, faintness, and nausea. The nausea lasted more or less during Wednesday, and culminated in death in the afternoon. Mr. Darwin remained fully conscious until within a quarter of an hour of his death.

Mr. Darwin was born in Shrewsbury, England, Feb. 12, 1809. His father was Dr. Robert Waring Darwin, a physician and the son of Dr. Erasmus Darwin, the poet, philosopher, and physician. Mr. Darwin's mother was a daughter of Josiah Wedgwood, the modern founder of the English pottery manufacture. He graduated from Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1831. He accompanied the ship Beagle in her scientific circumnavigation of the world in the same year. He was the naturalist of the expedition, and served without salary, and partly at his own expense. On his return to England he published a journal of the voyage. He afterward prosecuted his scientific investigations in England. He published "The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs," 1842; "Geological Observations on Volcanic Islands," 1844; "Geological Observations in South America," 1846, and in 1851, 1853, and 1859 a "Monograph of the Family Cirripedia" and "Fossil Species." His "Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection," published in 1859, was translated into many European languages, and gave rise to much controversy. In 1862 he published a work on the "Fertilization of Orchids," and in 1868 on the "Variation of Animals and Plants Under Domestication." In 1871 he gave to the world his treatise on the "Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex." He has since published many separate papers, notably on "The Geology of the Falkland Islands," "The Formation of Vegetable Mold Through the Action of Worms," "On the Expression of the Emotions in Men and Animals," and on "Volcanic Phenomena," and "The Distribution of Erratic Boulders," both the latter relating to South America. He received the Copley and the royal medals from the Royal Society, and the Wollaston Palladian medal from the Geological Society. He was elected a member of various English and foreign bodies, was made a Knight of the Order "Pour la Merite" by the Prussian government, a corresponding member of the Academy of Vienna, 1871, and had conferred upon him the degree M. D. by the University of Leyden in 1875, and the degree LL. D. by the University of Cambridge in 1877. In the following year he was elected a corresponding member of the French Academy of Sciences. He married his cousin, Miss Emma Wedgwood, in 1831, and leaves several children.

From the New York Sun of April 21st.

Mr. Darwin, the naturalist, who died yesterday, has left to the world a shining name and scientific treasures of inestimable value. His life, for over half a century, has been full of great work, out of which have grown fertile theories, reaching into all the fields of science and over the whole realm of nature.

It has been a life of continuous activity and productiveness from the opening of his manhood until his death, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. When a youth of twenty two he was regarded as qualified to undertake the duties of naturalist for the exploring expedition around the world that was under the command of Captain Fitzroy; and the volume in which he gave the account of his discoveries upon the voyage showed how well he had been equipped and qualified for the work. He continued the pursuit of his studies during subsequent years, observing the phenomena of nature and life with a precision and comprehensiveness that had never been surpassed by any other naturalist, and finding in them suggestions that were at once revolutionary and constructive. Books of geological and zoological research proceeded from his pen, and his scientific peers began to recognize him as a genius in natural history.

When ripe in knowledge, mature of mind, and master of the situation, he delivered the book which established him in the foremost rank, brought him world-wide fame, was turned into all the languages of civilization, provoked a whirlwind of criticism from scientists as well as theologians, and was fortified by the support of many of the most eminent naturalists of Europe, "The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection." From that time onward mankind has heard of "Darwinism," and the battle has been waged around it in a way that gives sufficient proof of its tremendous importance to the species with whose origin it deals.

Twelve years after the appearance of this book, he furnished another that is complementary to it, "The Descent of Man," and down to the close of his life he adhered to the hypothesis which was the crown of all his research.

Mr. Darwin was a voluminous author. Besides his chief work here named, he published not a few others of importance in special branches of investigation; and it was but last year that he expanded one of his earlier papers into a book of astonishing interest, entitled, "The Formation of Vegetable Mold Through the Action of Worms."

Mr. Darwin has been luckier than some of the other creative minds of science, in that he lived to see the hypothesis through which he is most familiarly known widely accepted by the men who are capable of properly judging it, and in that foes as well as friends have always awarded him the highest praise as an original and profound investigator of the phenomena of nature.

The death of Mr. Darwin at this time has deprived us of the opportunity we were about to enjoy of seeing him here in the United States. He had announced his intention of paying a prolonged visit to this country during the approaching sum-

mer. Death took him before he had carried out all his plans, but not till after he had made contributions to knowledge equaled by those of few men since the days of Aristotle.

**A Live League.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TRUTH SEEKER, Sir: Every available inch of space, standing or sitting-room, was utilized at the regular meeting of the Chicago Liberal League on Sunday evening, April 16th, and the ante-rooms were packed with an eager but disappointed throng. Though the capacity of our meeting-place (holding several hundred) is more than tested every Sunday evening, a larger number than usual failed to gain entrance. After preliminary business and musical performance by our quartet, President Magie formally introduced the speaker of the evening, Mrs. H. S. Lake, who gave us one of the most brilliant, bold, and earnest lectures it has been our fortunate lot to hear. A number of pugnacious Christians are always anxious to obtain the floor and antagonize anything presented by our Radical friends. Nevertheless, even these paid their tribute to the ability and impassioned eloquence with which our gallant moral hero brought her artillery of argument to bear upon their faintly-defended fortresses, and sent destruction and demoralization among the enemies of universal mental liberty. Her theme was, "The Mission of Liberalism," and but a faint idea of her effort can be gained by the following synopsis:

The National Liberal League was organized in Philadelphia in the centennial year. Its object was to amend the Constitution and to repeal all laws bearing oppressively upon antichristians. It became evident, however, ere long, that immediate political action could not be made to succeed, and that the work of the auxiliary Leagues must be devoted to the preparatory one of developing among the people an intelligent meaning of the word Liberalism, and a consecration to the purpose of bringing about a triumph of its principles.

Mental changes are effected by much the same process as are physical changes. To develop a Christian into an Infidel is oftentimes a long and tedious task. But the work of the teacher of the new dispensation must not stop here; for, after the rejection of Christianity, people divide up into different classes, such as Atheists, Agnostics, Deists, Materialists, Spiritualists, Positivists, Secularists, etc. Defining these different classes, and paying a glowing tribute to the president of the Liberal League, T. B. Wakeman, as a representative of the Positive philosophy, the speaker continued: It is the mission of Liberalism to fuse these different elements into one general mass, which shall appropriately be called a Liberal League.

For fifteen hundred years the human race has imbibed from the mother's breast the religion of believe or be damned. Throughout the centuries have scientists and philosophers striven under the displeasure of the church to evolve more correct ideas of God, heaven, hell, duty, rewards and punishments, etc. To give these struggling ideas a chance to grow and flourish is the mission of Liberalism. The God of blood and sacrifice, of curses and vengeance, of frowns and fury, is to come down out of heaven, and there is to be shown instead infinite space studded with stars and alight with suns, changing, perfecting, dying, as eons unroll from the bosom of eternity.

Instead of the kingdom and the throne, the lamb and the river of life, we are to learn to think, and to say the republic, the court of justice, man, and the development of his life. Instead of looking up into heaven for manna, the best principles of agriculture are to be taught, and that land is for all the people. Instead of depending upon God to convert sinners, we are to learn the law for propagating saints; instead of relying upon the efficacy of the atonement, man is to atone himself for every injury he may inflict upon a fellow; instead of working for a heaven in the skies, he is to labor to build one here below.

Wherever the mission of Liberalism is effected, there believers in gods many and gods few, in no gods, false gods and true gods, gods of reason and gods of revelation, harmonize and fraternize, knowing that these thoughts and expressions are simply the indications of the ideal aspirations of the race and the degree of humanity's dissatisfaction with itself.

Whenever the mission of Liberalism is accomplished, we shall not find the coarse condemnation of the law and the black look of the pharisee toward those whose views of domestic life are heterodox, like, perhaps, the neighbor's religion. It will be seen by those who are capable of comprehending the meaning of Liberalism that polyandry and polygamy, monogamy and celibacy, loves many or few, life love or love for a day, love true and love false, are all the expressions only of the affectional want of human kind, and the vain endeavor of the sexual instinct to evolve higher from lower conditions.

"Truth is colored by the medium through which we view it." No two see life from exactly the same standpoint; and while Catholic pneumonia and Protestant pneumonia are, as Felix Adler so quaintly puts it, exactly alike, the mental changes and heart-needs of people differ so widely as to make no rule of treatment for this part of the being possible for the doctors of divinity or the doctors of law.

All that can be done with the religious sentiment, the sexual instinct, or the political aspiration, is to give it more room and more information.

The morning of humanity is breaking. Are you up to behold its splendor and inhale its atmosphere? Are you ready to share with me the toil and the trial, the glory and the success, the defeat and the delight of developing new aspirations in human minds, of freeing the young from fear, and furnishing the old with faith born of reason? If you are so ready, if you can so grow, give your name, your interest, and your support to the National Liberal League.

Chicago, Ill., April 18th. E. A. STEVENS, Sec. Chicago L. L.

**Another.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TRUTH SEEKER, Sir: The Liberal League of Pittsburgh is neither dead nor sleeping, B. F. Underwood to the contrary notwithstanding. So far from being defunct it is that it manages to stir up mightily the two hundred churches of Pittsburgh and Allegheny City, and keep their dear pastors continually on the ragged edge of fear, lest, like Othello, they may wake up some fine morning and find their occupation gone. Desperation seems to have made them reckless, and they are willing to adopt any measures that may give promise of enabling them to "sear the hydra heads of heresy." They put forward their ablest and most unscrupulous men, employ misrepresentation, detraction, slander, falsehood, and intrigue. The press is almost entirely under their control; but, not satisfied with this, they have inaugurated a series of Thursday morning lectures, under the auspices of the "Christian Evidence Society," of which more anon.

The anti-Infidel panic has extended to Mount Washington—one of the suburbs of the smoky city—and the faithful sentinels on the watch-towers of that earthly Zion have "poled their issues," and are holding union services, at which Infidels are roundly abused, without any reference to accuracy of statement, while common sense has taken the road,

An' off an up to Cowgate.

But it would appear that these very zealous gentlemen have overdone the business, forgetful of the shabby treatment of Uzzah, who was a little too zealous in a good (?) cause; in proof of which I clip a couple of items from the daily papers of Pittsburgh:

From The Leader.

The M. E. and Baptist congregations of Mount Washington held union services in the Mount Washington Baptist church last night, when Rev. Williams, pastor of the M. E. church, was to preach the sermon. The Baptist pastor, after stating to the assemblage that Rev. Williams was about to address them, sat down. Mr. Williams arose and was about to state his text, when he fell in an apoplectic paroxysm. Drs. Wilson and Potts were called, and relieved the unconscious man of some blood, which brought him to. He was removed to his home and this morning was greatly improved, though still confined to his bed.

From The Times.

About eight o'clock last evening Rev. Gustavus Backert, formerly pastor of the Mount Washington Lutheran church, but now a supply pastor, was attacked by a fainting fit while sitting on a chair in Charles Merz's saloon, No. 15 Carson street, South Side, and in falling struck his head against a stove and out several deep gashes in his head. His injuries are not serious. When they were dressed none of his friends would assist him to his home. He will, probably, be disqualified for life.

Can it be that God has at last determined to see justice done, and has espoused the cause of the much-abused Infidels? or is he only sick of the indiscriminate lying of his holy mouth-organs, and determined to put a stop to it?

Of course we Infidels are neither silly nor dishonest enough to assert that God had anything to do with it. Between apoplexy and whisky common sense can find an explanation.

But suppose this same phenomenon had occurred at the Liberal League meeting last Sunday when Dr. Audley arose to inveigh against "Prophets, Priests, and Kings;" what then?

Monday noon would have seen the religious dailies of the entire country garnished with such flaming headlines as these: "Terrible Warning to Infidels;" "The Judgment of God;" "A Blatant Blasphemer Struck Dumb," etc.

Now, it seems to me that logic and consistency would demand that if such phenomena be deemed judgments in the one case, they should be in the other. If not, why not?

Let the clergy of Pittsburgh, and especially of Mount Washington, who are so fond of prating about special providences, and distorting natural phenomena into judgments of God, display at least a show of consistency by manfully facing the music when it is their ox that is getting gored. Further, let them remember that however commendable zeal, in the defense of truth, may be, there is one thing more commendable still, and that is truth itself; and when they feel inclined to emulate the example of that illustrious Christian, Paul, who said, "If through my lie grace hath more abounded, why, then, am I accounted a sinner?" let them remember the fate of Ananias and—draw it mild. Experience has taught us to not expect either candor, courtesy, or justice from the paid advocates of an antiquated superstition—made desperate by its dying throes—but having raised on high the banner of the free in priest-ridden Pittsburgh, we will lower our arms only in death.

Yours, for liberty and light, LEAGUE.

**Divinity Endangered.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TRUTH SEEKER, Sir: Three or four months' traveling nearly cut my connection with your paper and all else on the Atlantic coast.

Returning last week to my home, there waited me an invitation to write a letter of greeting to Mr. Bennett on his arrival at San Francisco, in his passage round the globe. It was too late to comply with the request of the committee of correspondence, but let me here express my thanks for the kindly invitation, and my congratulations to our chief, and his many patrons and friends, that the long voyage has been so signally prosperous, and so wondrously rich in its experiences and observations, so industriously reported at every stage. I think no tourist nor traveler of modern times has ever accomplished so much at sight-seeing and recording and publishing as has the editor of THE TRUTH SEEKER. The first thing which meets my eye and ear on reaching home is the lively controversy now waging among the friends and supporters of the Andover, Mass., divinity school, one of the oldest, wealthiest, and most widely known institutions of the kind in America. It was founded in the year 1807, its object being, as avowed "to provide for the church a learned, orthodox, and pious ministry."

The fourth article of faculty regulations and requirements reads thus:

"Every professor in this University shall be a Master of Arts, of the Protestant reformed religion, in communion with some Christian church of the Congregational or Presbyterian denomination, and sustain the character of a discreet, sober, learned, and pious man; and shall be of sound and orthodox principles in divinity, according to that form of sound words, or system of evangelical doctrine, drawn from the scriptures, and denominated The Westminster's Assembly's Shorter Catechism.

"If, on the associate foundation, he must also be an ordained minister of the Congregational or Presbyterian denomination."

Next follows, in article fifth, "the creed," in three full octavo pages, which every professor, on the day of his inauguration into office, must "publicly make and subscribe, in the presence of the trustees of the Seminary;" and to be by him repeated in the same presence, "at the expiration of every five successive years! and no man shall be continued as president or professor in this institution, who shall not continue to approve himself to the satisfaction of the trustees; a man of sound and orthodox principles in divinity, agreeably to the system of evangelical doctrines contained in the said Westminster Shorter Catechism, and more concisely delineated in the aforesaid creed."

If, Mr. Editor, you can make room for the following extract from the creed, you will give readers an idea of what is required of a professor:

"And furthermore I do solemnly promise that I will open and explain the scriptures to my pupils with integrity and faithfulness; that I will maintain and inculcate the Christian faith, as expressed in the creed by me now repeated, together with all the other doctrines and duties of our holy religion, so far as may appertain to my office, according to the best light God shall give me, and in opposition, not only to Atheists and Infidels, but to Jews, Papists, Mohammedans, Arians, Pelagians, Antinomians, Arminians, Socinians, Swedenborgians, Unitarians, and Universalists; and to all other errors, ancient, and modern, which may be opposed to the gospel of Christ, or hazardous to the souls of men."

The controversy to which I have referred, in the institution, grows out of the appointment of a new professor, whose former preaching, it is held, does not comport with the Andover requirements.

The present professors admit that they or their predecessors have banished some things, "infant damnation" included, and "perdition of the heathen." Over their own sign manual the professors say:

"We would beg leave to remind our reviewer that what has most excited criticism in Dr. Smyth's position is a natural development of principles which the New England theology has especially cultivated, and which for more than a generation have been taught with particular emphasis from the chair of Christian theology at Andover—the universality of the Atonement, and the necessity of personal choice in order to the existence of either guilt or virtue. These principles have gained their rights only by hard conflicts. At

every stage the cry of heresy has filled the air. But they have won the day. They have banished the dogmas of guilt for Adam's sin, of infant damnation, of passive regeneration of the universal perdition of the heathen. The path of New England theology is thus strewn with concessions—concessions to an advancing knowledge of God's word—concessions to truth."

But my article grows too long. Let me just add one brief but most torrid quotation more from the Andover creed, and I close:

"The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory. . . . But the wicked will arise to shame and everlasting contempt; and with devils be plunged into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone forever and ever."

This provision of the creed is presumed to be still intact, untouched. At any rate, not "banished," as the professors say, with infant damnation. So there may be hope for Andover yet. Concord, N. H., April, 1882. PARKER PILLSBURY.

**The New Chronology.**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TRUTH SEEKER, Sir: The Brunowakeman system of chronology published in THE TRUTH SEEKER of the 1st inst. is a natural, scientific, and magnificent system. May it become universal. You see I have adopted it, because, in my opinion, it is just, reasonable, and adapted to universal ends. We cannot now apply it to the drawing of legal documents, making wills, etc., but we can apply it to social uses and in our correspondence to your splendid journal, and to all other Liberal literature. The facts and logic and historical research in Mr. Wakeman's article in support of adopting the new chronology are arranged in a masterly manner, and are convincing to every thoughtful, rational mind. For years I have heartily detested dating my letters, public and private, according to the chronology based on the advent of "our Lord," that Lord whose presence in the world has been the curse and scourge of mankind.

Since we have dethroned the man-God or the God-man, with all his superstitions, or superstitions founded on and in his name, let us forever abolish that chronology connected with the "immaculate," and which is but a record of the blood of the innocent. Freethinkers, wherever we are scattered throughout the earth, let us adopt the chronology founded in memory of the heroic Italian Freethinker Bruno, who gave his life to the cause of mental emancipation. He was basely murdered by the Christians, but his "soul goes marching on" through the eternal years. We are carrying on the sublime work he commenced, each according to his humble power, but united we shall triumph over the priestly despots who have so long enslaved poor humanity. It is only a question of time until the chains binding the slaves are broken. Speed the glorious hour of man's redemption from ignorance, bigotry, and superstition! San Francisco, 4, 7, 212. BYRON ADONIS.

**Thomas Paine.**

From the Memphis Appeal.

In the Appeal of April 16th appears a letter purporting to be written by Dr. Franklin to Thomas Paine, urging him not to publish that celebrated work against the Bible, "The Age of Reason," and advising him not to "unchain the tiger." This pious fraud has been so often exposed, I am surprised that journalists of your information and intelligence should reproduce it. Dr. Benjamin Franklin died in 1790, three years before a line of "The Age of Reason" was written. The first part of that work was written in Paris in the latter part of 1793, amid the terrors of the French Revolution, when the author was in hourly expectation of arrest and execution, and, in fact, Paine was arrested the last of December, 1793, upon the order of Robespierre, and imprisoned at Luxembourg within six hours after he had finished that great work. The second part of "The Age of Reason" was written for the most part in that prison, where the author lay nearly a year, and the whole published by Paine some time after his release. The letter which you publish, purporting to be written by Dr. Franklin, was written by a lying scribbler, Grant Thorburn, and published by the Bible Society under the title, "Don't Unchain the Tiger." Dr. Franklin was himself an Infidel, as was Jefferson, but they wrote no book against the Bible, and have therefore escaped the wrath of the priesthood, which was all reserved for the devoted head of Paine. Forgetful of his great services to the cause of American freedom, they have pursued him relentlessly with every weapon that malice and detraction could invent.

Such is the fate of all who dare question their creed. But a few years ago, when a great flood was pouring down the Mississippi, a prayer-meeting was called to avert it. For suggesting that wheel-barrows and spades in the hands of vigorous men employed in enlarging the levees would be more efficacious than prayers, the Appeal called down upon itself a torrent of wrath more fierce than the floods of the great river. Within a twelvemonth we have seen a minister, the Rev. Mr. Long, ostracized and driven from his pulpit by a conclave of bigots, because he believed that Christ died to save all mankind, and refused to believe that hell is paved with the bones of infants foreordained to be damned. But, thanks to the Infidels—Paine, Jefferson, Franklin, and others—the thumbscrew and fagot are no longer possible, and Mr. Long preaches to an overflowing house. "The gospel of Geneva is dead, and in the streaming light of the nineteenth century Calvin is nothing but the obscene owl of superstition, hooting at the midday sun of intellectual and spiritual freedom." "On the ruins of its ivy-grown cathedrals, ecclesiasticism, surprised and blinded by the breaking day, sits solemnly blinking at the light and life about it, absorbed in the recollection of the night that has passed, dreaming of new phantoms and delusions in its wished-for return, and vindictively striking its talons at any boldly assailant who incautiously approaches too near."

MINOR MERIWETHER.