

come. A monotony of happiness would be unendurable. If this kept up for a month, no doubt we should pray for a storm."

The doctor and Mrs. Furgeson were playing chess.

"You made a mistake that time, doctor," said the lady. "I shall checkmate you in a couple of moves."

"I see it now, but I didn't before. I submit. It's a blunder that can't be rectified."

"Not this time. Will you try it again?"

"I guess not. I am afraid I am too dreamy."

"There is where you missed it. Chess is mathematics, and it gives no chance for dreams."

"Life is mathematics too, and we must keep snug to it, or we fail."

"Some seem bound to fail, anyway," said the captain. "They are checkmated at birth."

"That is a hard lot,—to lose without ever having a chance to win."

"Only give me a chance, and I wouldn't lose," said Charlie.

"You feel superior to fortune now; but take care, she may lay you flat, yet," said the doctor, with a wise shake of his head.

"She might if I were single-handed," replied Charlie; "but now that I have joined forces, she must cry peace. She may make sport of one, but not of two. They are more than a match for fortune,—a man and woman."

"Who is it that brings the luck,—the man or the woman?" ask Blanche.

"The woman of course," said Charlie; "for she is the gift of fortune."

"According to that, man does not

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

From a Friend.

Mrs. R. A. Bell of Texas has written us a poem which will appear in the TORCH soon. The following was taken from her kind letter of July 20:

I am very much interested in the TORCH OF REASON and think it is a spicy little paper. I am always anxious for it to come, and the contents are devoured almost as soon as I get my hands on it. I do sincerely hope you will succeed in your great enterprise (the Liberal University). I think it a grand institution, and sincerely hope that I may live to see it a grand success. I will try and get you some subscribers. We have nothing but religion in this country. No reason or common sense at all.

I would like to live where there is no church religion, no shouting and no prayer, for I am sick of it. I want to live where we are taught to do right because it is beautiful and because it is our duty. Prayer is so harmful to the human race. I mean the belief in prayer; for there are so many who do wrong believing all will be well when they offer a prayer. That you may succeed in all your Freethought enterprises, is the wish of your sincere friend,
MRS. R. A. BELL.

LITTLE TORCHES.

By W. E. Johnson

To some people it seems a hard thing that God should require us to love him perfectly.—Nashville Christian Advocate, July 22.

To love the monstrous God of the bible is like loving a man-eating tiger. We agree with you that it is a mighty tough job.

What is the relation between religion and character?—Sunday School Times, July 24.

About the same relation that there is between a whirlwind and the ace of spades. If the world was disinfected of quack religions, character would have a better chance to develop.

Jesus did not come to bring the peace of worldly comfort, but a sword.—The Bible Reader for Aug.

And Christians have been burning heretics, hanging Quakers, torturing witches, disemboweling unbelievers and cutting each others throats ever since. We wish Jesus would come back and take his sword away.

Lying is of the devil. The definition of lying is intentional deception.—From the Methodist Protestant, and reprinted in the Richmond Christian Advocate, July 8.

Better go slow on lying, brother. The bible is the liar's text book. In I Kings, XXII, 20—23, Ezekiel, XIV, 9, and in Numbers, XIV, 30—34, God expressly confesses that he is a chronic liar. In II Thess., II, 11, Paul tells what a gay deceiver God is, and the prophet Jeremiah denounces God as a liar, see Jere., XX, 7.

Moreover, we are pleased to grant, in perpetuity, from the Treasury of the Church, that whosoever daily during the Octave of Pentecost, up to Trinity Sunday inclusive, offer again publicly or privately any prayers, according to their devotion, to the Holy Ghost, and satisfy the above conditions, shall a second time gain each of the same Indulgences. All these Indulgences we also permit to be applied to the souls in Purgatory.—From the Encyclical letter of Pope Leo XIII for Pentecost, written May 9, 1897, to the Catholics of Canada.

Working off some more of your shopworn "indulgences," are you Col. Leo, old boy? Better have a "fire sale" and get rid of your stock on hand. People are beginning to suspect that the Warden of Purgatory won't honor your requisitions, anyhow.

Fame Through Official Praying.

Rev. W. H. Milburn, the blind man eloquent chaplain of the United States Senate, is receiving a good deal of attention from the nonconformist clergy of England. The London Times gravely informs its readers that "Mr. Milburn's impromptu prayers at the opening of the sessions of the Senate have

made him famous upon two continents." How these prayers impressed the touchy and exacting personage to whom they were addressed is not stated. Jesus of whom Mr. Milburn claims to be a follower, told his disciple not to pray in public places to be seen and heard of men, but to do their praying privately. But how could a Senate chaplain become "famous upon two continents" or upon one or even in his own neighborhood, by his prayers, if he merely uttered them in his closet? What a spectacle! A great legislative body representing the states of the American Republic, employing a preacher to talk to the supposed Creator and Governor of all worlds, to tell him what is needed and to petition him to avert di-asters and to bestow favors! How much real religious feeling or sincerity even is there in this perfunctory performance, which is certainly as devoid of moral meaning and motive as it is contrary to reason and in conflict with the principles of Secular government. B.

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Life on Other Planets.

Prof. Simon Newcomb, the astronomer, thinks that the question in regard to life in other worlds than ours does not belong to astronomy and may never be solved. He says: "We cannot for a moment suppose that our own little planet is the only one throughout the whole universe on which may be found the fruits of civilization, warm firesides, friendship, the desire to penetrate the mysteries of creation. And yet, this question is not today a problem of astronomy, nor can we see any prospect that it ever will be, for the simple reason that science affords us no hope of an answer to any question that we may send through the fathomless abyss. When the spectroscope was in its infancy it was suggested that possibly some difference might be found in the rays reflected from living matter, especially from vegetation, that might enable us to distinguish them from rays reflected by matter not endowed with life. But this hope has not been realized, nor does it seem possible to realize it. The astronomer cannot afford to waste his energies on hopeless speculation about matters of which he cannot learn anything, and he therefore leaves this question of the plurality of worlds to others who are as competent to discuss it as he is. All he can tell the world is:

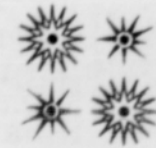
He who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied being peoples every star,
May tell why Heaven has made us as we are."

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