

We are just what our education makes us; and if we are taught to be superstitious, we shall grow up in that belief; or if we happen to get rid of it, the task is exceedingly difficult. "It is hard to straighten in the oak the crook that grew in the sapling." Until within a few years ago the ghost superstition was dying out somewhat; but it has been revived under the "Spiritual" delusion, which is doing no little mischief in that direction.

We heard the other day of an incident which goes to show the good effect of bringing up children in a rational and sensible manner, without poisoning them with superstitious folly. A little girl of nine years, living in a country town, went some distance to visit a neighbor, and, on returning home, the night being dark, lost her way and mistook the road. She wandered round until about midnight, when she arrived at a graveyard; and thinking she might reach her home by passing through that place, she boldly made the attempt to do so, went through, and finally reached her father's house between two and three o'clock in the morning. There is not one child in ten thousand, and but very few men and women, who would dare to do such a thing. We don't know but that even we, ourself, with all our disbelief (in the daytime) of ghosts and goblins, might, at "the witching hour of night when churchyards yawn," have been a trifle inclined to "whistle to keep our courage up," if placed in that position. But our little heroine was as fearless as was fighting Joe Hooker, when charging a rebel battery. Her mother said to her, "wasn't you afraid, Mary, when you were walking in the graveyard at midnight?" "Why, no," replied the child, "the dead won't hurt me." There spoke a philosopher at nine years!—a far greater curiosity than anything that Barnum had in his museum—a child growing up in a Christian community without being tainted with superstition. How did it happen? Here is the secret: The parents are Infidels, who not believing themselves in ghosts or in religion, have contrived to keep the mind of their child free from these errors. No sensible, reflecting person can deny the demoralizing effect of hobgoblin stories and superstitious tales; and if all men were Infidels, there would be none found to circulate them.—Investigator.

**Religious Controversy.**

For several years a controversy has been in progress in London, Eng., over the question of teaching religion in the Board (or public) schools. A large party composed of adherents of the Established church demand that religious instruction be given the young pupils in the schools, and a spokesman for this party has recently laid

down the proposition that "no instruction is worthy the name of education unless it rests upon religious faith, influencing character by religious motives, and regulating and restraining conduct by religious sanctions." If the church party wins in the contest, the basis of the religious instruction given is to be the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed. The contest is said to be raging now with great bitterness, and people in this country should take warning from such object lessons and carefully avoid all ground for such unhappy controversy here. Religious teaching cannot be put on a par with the teaching of arithmetic or geography.—Sentinel.

**Baptists the Original Secularists.**

The history of this denomination in the United States can be traced far back towards the first colonization of New England by the pilgrim fathers. The first Baptist churches, however, were founded by Roger Williams, in Providence, R. I., and by John Clark, in Newport, R. I., during the year 1639. Williams at first met with considerable opposition and persecution for declining to recognize the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion; but in 1644 he obtained a charter for the land which he and his followers had colonized. It is now called Rhode Island, and was among the first states to grant religious liberty. In the other colonies the persecution of the Baptists lasted many years, occasioned not altogether by their religious views, but in part by their extreme views regarding civil government. Laws were made against them in Massachusetts in 1644, and some of them were banished in 1669; they were proscribed in New York in 1662, and in Virginia in 1664, but about the beginning of the eighteenth century the authorities became more tolerant. It may be said here that the article on religious liberty to be found in the amendment of our constitution is in no small part due to the strenuous efforts of the Baptists in 1779.—American Edition, Chambers' Library of Universal Knowledge.

A recent article in the magazines represents that the religious liberty amendment of the United States constitution was occasioned by the prevalence of French skepticism, and the presence in congress of such Infidels as Jefferson; and the constitution is often styled atheistic, or godless, on account of this purely secular character. Whatever its merits or demerits on this account, the Baptists are largely in evidence therefor, whilst there are many posing as Freethinkers, who, as members of such pseudo patriotic secret societies as the Orangemen, American Mechanics, and A. P. A., are helping to fasten religious bigotry upon our free institutions.

J. P. GUILD.



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