

REFLECTED RAYS.

Free and universal discussion bears the same relation to truth that a road does to a city toward which it leads.—[William Francis Barnard.

The world owes all of its advances to the Doubting Thomases who have lived, to the men who call for proof, men who were satisfied with nothing else but proof.—[Living Issues.

Automatons in the modern pulpits have waited until reform begins to move with a wave of popularity before committing themselves. Reforms never originate in an apostate church; preachers join reform movements after the danger line has been obliterated!—[Ex.

According to the Church Gazette, the average town parson "has neither time to read nor to think, and he is often reduced to having to preach out of a full heart and an empty head." We are not so sure of the full heart. The empty head may pass unchallenged.—[Free-thinker.

If God is the author of good, he is also the author of evil. If he is entitled to our gratitude for the one, he is entitled to our hatred for the other. The same arguments which prove that God is the author of food, life and light, also prove him to be the author of poison, darkness and death.—[Shelley.

Prayer, in theory, is based on the supposition of God's personality; prayer, in practice, assumes that God is omnipotent. It supposes that he can be in all places at all times. People are praying at all hours of the day and in all quarters of the globe. To hear them all, God must be at such places at such times. To do this he must cease to be a personal being; he must cease to be God. He will then have no intelligence, no volition, for these depend on personal organization. Prayer, therefore, logically annihilates the being to whom it is addressed.—[Charles Stevenson.

A spiritist medium of New York recently overdid the matter of receiving communications from the spiritual world, but produced results as reliable as many other messages from the unseen. When John Sherman was dangerously ill on board a vessel at Kingston, Jamaica, it was reported that he had passed away. The enterprising medium, desiring to keep up to date with communications from fresh arrivals in the world of spirits, received a message from the spirit John Sherman; but it turned out that Sherman did not die, and the conclusion is inevitable that either the medium made up a humbug communication or the spirit

prevaricated concerning his identity!—[Flaming Sword.

The lynching of negroes, especially in Georgia, has moved a negro preacher, the Rev. Alexander Williams, Methodist bishop, to say as president of a Methodist conference in Jersey City that these lynchings are likely to lead to a bloody struggle. "Nothing," he declared, "but the manly resistance of the negroes themselves will stop the atrocities. In the name of the Almighty, what are we to do but fight and die?" This negro bishop utters a very natural cry from the depths. We understand it and sympathize with him. But he has forgotten his Christianity, as most Christians do when they suffer wrong. Jesus Christ told them not to resist evil, but to turn the other cheek to the smiter. No, says this indignant bishop; let us fight for our rights.—[Ex.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Foster Burrows, vicar of St. Andrew's Birmingham, has been carrying on a sort of music hall without a license. A police sergeant visited St. Andrew's Hall, which was not licensed, and found an entertainment in full swing for the benefit of the church and its work. A young woman in male attire was on the stage singing a comic song, and the program for the evening comprised three sketches, for which a first-class company was engaged. In consideration of the reverend gentleman's high and noble motives, the Bench let him off with a warning not to do it again. Had he been a Secularist, he would have caught it hot. Birmingham has two different measures for Christians and Freethinkers. "What Would Jesus Do?" is the fashionable question just now. Well, we guess he would hardly dress a woman in man's clothes and put her on a stage to sing comic songs for the benefit of his evangelical exchequer. But the Rev. Dr. Burrows is evidently of a different opinion. Perhaps he thinks that Jesus himself would dress as a woman and dance the can-can for the funds of the soul-saving business.—[Freethinker.

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