

**Where Are The Mysteries?**

BY OTTO WETTSTEIN.

"Irreligion has precisely the same intellectual mysteries that religion has."—The Rev. Dr. Frank Crane, as reported in the Tribune.

The above being hardly consistent with facts, I desire to say a few words in reply.

The basis of irreligion is science. This comprises all knowledge, every fact, truth, everything tangible and conceivable—all nature and ourselves. The naturalist seeks and finds in nature—in the potentialities of all matter constituting nature—the sole causes of all phenomena, never in the agency of a stupendous mysterious being or God. Everything is the basis of irreligion, the remainder—myth, miracle, tradition, absolutely nothing tangible—that alone is the basis of theism and religion. Whatever is, whatever exists, the sum total of all scientific facts and knowledge, is irreligion, not a solitary fact in the vast domain of nature explored by science corresponds in the least to the mystery of all mysteries upon which all religions are founded.

If we divest nature and life of the web of mystery with which it has been invested in the past by designing and ignorant men, comparatively little mystery remains. We are then at least in the possession of the A. B. C. of knowledge. We know the nature exists and, existing now, embodies the proof that in its elementary form it has always existed. Matter is force, force is matter; hence when science traces an effect to its causes it invariably finds them in the mindless, chemical and physical properties of matter, never the product of caprice or mind. It requires no brain to produce animal life in the drop of water, in the jungle, nor in the higher spheres of life. All is the necessary result of purely chemical and physical causes.

Irreligion says man is an animal—is bred and born like an animal, lives like an animal and consequently must die like an animal. The animal is the man and the man is the animal. The animal structure, every part and portion of it, is a necessity to the existence of a complete man, hence when this organism exists no more, man is no more. (The contrary implies that after death man can exist made of nothing.) This comprises the sum total of our knowledge. No mystery about it whatever if religion keeps away. Death is precisely what it appears to be, nothing more—nothing less. Let us believe in these facts, believe what we know, reject all mysteries and we have the entire truth.—[Chicago Tribune.

Are you acquainted with the merits of the Forstner auger bit?

**Overproduction of Preachers.**

The clerical profession is overcrowded. The unceasing machinery of the religious seminaries is turning out new men for the ministry every year in such numbers as to be alarming to the men already in the ministry. It is announced with a degree of authority that one-fourth of the clergy is unemployed. A Hartford (Connecticut) minister gives out some statements that are rather discouraging to young men anxious to adorn the clerical profession and yet wish to have a sufficiency of this world's necessities to keep the ambition from dying of actual starvation. He says:

"It is not possible for the theological seminaries to introduce young men into the ministry without driving out an equal number of men who are in work. There are a large number of men of the highest qualifications who can not secure a pastorate in existing conditions. The appeal for financial aid for the seminaries, on the ground that an increase of educated ministers is a necessity at the present time, is an attempt to obtain money under false pretenses. The present policy of purchasing impecunious students to fill the seminaries is an outrage on decency and justice. If men who study law or medicine must pay for the privilege, and the best men do it and honor their profession by their manliness, why should divinity offer free tuition, rooms, light and heat, and even, if that is not enough, lend or give money to destroy the manliness of the students, when many of the best workers the church has are standing idle in the market place with empty pockets and aching hearts?"

Some pretty forcible language from a clergyman regarding methods and plans pursued by churches.

The outspoken clergyman will probably succeed in having himself severely criticised and the methods and plans remain unchanged.—[Times Star (Cincinnati).

If orthodoxy be true, Ingersoll is the worst enemy it ever had, and deserved hell if any man does, still intelligent orthodox ministers are not inclined to say he is there, and most of them are trying to find some excuse for his salvation. That shows that their hearts are better than their creeds. But we think their liberality in this matter is largely due to public opinion.—[Freethought Magazine.

Laborers for the public good, especially, have to work long and patiently, often uncheered by the prospect of immediate recompense or result. The seeds they sow often lie hidden under the winter's snow, and before the spring comes, the husbandmen may have gone to his rest.—[Room At The Top.

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