

GEORGE BILLINGS WHEELER.

The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few.—St. Matthew 9:37.

This text was often preached from years ago, and the ministers construed it to mean that more evangelists were needed to spread the glad tidings of the gospel of hell and damnation. But things have changed, and the text, to apply to the present time, should read, "The laborers are plenteous, but the harvest is poor." On the other hand, the text is now very appropriate for Free-thinkers to use. Never before was the harvest of reason and common sense so "plenteous" in the sphere of religion as it is today, but the laborers are few, and that is the reason we are so much in need of Liberal Universities and other Freethought schools where young men and young women can be educated, not to preach orthodoxy, but Liberalism. We now need a thousand such "laborers" as Dr. T. B. Gregory, of the Chicago Liberal Society, to preach the truth. "The harvest is plenteous." Orthodoxy is dying. No man dare preach it today. There are but few preachers who will declare that the entire Bible is the "Word of God." None of them



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take for texts at this day such passages as the following: "And the rich man also died and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and cried to Father Abraham to 'send Lazarus with a drop of water to cool my tongue.'" "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." "Then shall he say, also, to them on his left hand, 'Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" Those were the kind of texts that were preached from when orthodoxy was a living institution. But no intelligent clergyman preaches from those texts today.

Thomas Paine declared that before the end of the nineteenth century Christianity would be a thing of the past, and his prophecy has proved true. The Christianity of his day—genuine Christianity—is dead and buried past resurrection. The world is now in need of a new gospel—the gospel of Science, which is well called the Religion of Humanity. To spread this gospel we need workers in every community, like the young man whose name stands at the head of this article, and whose good-looking portrait we herewith present to our readers.

This young man is a resident of Chicago, and is one of the most indefatigable workers for the Freethought cause we have ever known. If each of our large towns had such a worker, how our cause would prosper! He is an employe of the United States government, and during certain hours of the day and night he is engaged in that employment. And the government has no more faithful employe, but when his official work is done he does not spend his spare time in frivolous amusement, as many workingmen do, but he goes out among his fellow-citizens and tries in some way to interest them in progressive thought, in the line of advanced ideas.

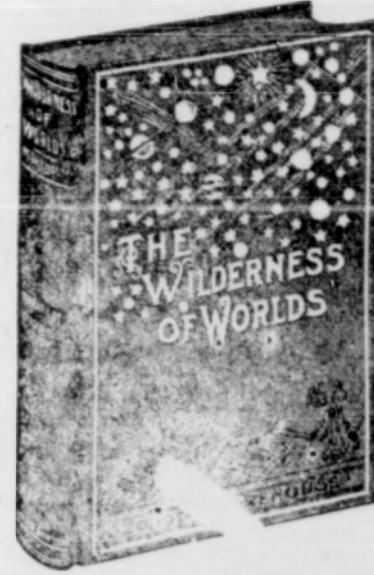
Mr. Wheeler is one of the chief supporters of the Chicago Liberal Society, one of its executive committee, and he puts in many an hour's work each week in the society's behalf. He is also a special friend of the Liberal University, and, although a poor man, depending on his daily labor for his living, he has paid for a number of shares of stock in that institution. Another thing he is much interested in, and that is in circulating Freethought literature. He has constantly with him, when off duty, a copy of most of the Liberal papers and magazines, and he urges all those people whom he meets, who are intelligent and Liberally inclined, to subscribe to one or more of them. He is also a tract distributor, not the kind prepared for the purpose of scaring the ignorant and bigoted into the church to avoid the fires of hell, but the kind that will free the mind from the cobwebs of superstition and cultivate it, so that it can enjoy the beauties of nature and fall in love with the Religion of Humanity.

We will also add that Brother Wheeler is blessed with an intelligent, good-looking wife, a little inclined to orthodoxy, and two bright, wide-awake children—a boy and a girl—whom he intends to educate at the Liberal University in Silverton, Oregon. What the Liberal cause needs just at this time is more Wheelers.—[Freethought Magazine.

In a letter to the New York Journal, the Chinese Minister to the United States, Wu Ling Fang, seems to praise Jesus for going "a little further" than Confucius in the matter of "loving one's enemies," he really leaves it open to be inferred that Confucius stopped at the right point and Jesus went beyond it. With regard to the persecutions in Christian history, he says that they fill him with horror. "We have no such records," he observes, "in China." Jews, Mohammedans and Buddhists have lived there peaceably side by side. "It is only," he adds, "when indiscreet Christian missionaries go to extremes and excite the people that they ever have any trouble." He concludes by scoring neatly for Confucianism. Confucius did not teach the doctrine of a future life. He said he didn't know what was going to take place tomorrow, and how could he know anything about a more remote future? Besides, it was men's duty to do their best today, with no thought of reward. "That," says the Chinese Minister, "seems to me the higher view."—[Ex.

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