

Spookism Versus Business.

Perhaps the strangest part of this spook business is the fact that commonsense business men, who have never known and would not for a minute believe in any such thing in connection with their business; who, in fact, know as certainly as they know anything that the universality and immutability of natural law is a postulate not only in accordance with all experience, but one which could not be violated without throwing into inextricable confusion the whole business of human society,—that such men can be made to believe the very reverse of this when they get into the hands of men and women who are almost invariably vulgar, uneducated, cunning and grasping charlatans. For what does the spiritualist claim amount to? Simply an assertion that work can be done without the expenditure of force; that substance can be created and again annihilated, or "dematerialized"; that bodiless "spirits" can make sounds that we know require vocal organs, and other organs to set those vocal organs in motion; and a general reversal of all our present day scientific notions. And we are asked to explain the tricks or "investigate" the stories supposed to substantiate these things, under pain, if we refuse to do so, of being condemned as one who does not desire "truth!" Verily, we are in a strange world—or we are in a strange epoch of its evolution. Truth! No, Secularists have nothing to gain by suppressing truth. Truth is what we are "after" certainly; but not wild-goose spook stories.—Secular Thought.

No Prayer.

BY H. M. TABER.

Miss Susan H. Wixon, of Fall River, delivered an admirable address on the subject: "Will the coming woman go to church?" Her conclusions were that the "coming woman" would not go to church, because (when the coming woman came) there would be no church to go to, that is, to any church where they read the Bible indiscriminately, sing praises to the "unknown quantity" called the Trinity, or pray to an impossible Deity. So we may assume that the coming woman will not pray and for similar reasons, viz., that there will be no church to go to where prayers are requisite. We may likewise ask the question: Will the coming man pray? Assuredly not, if the coming woman don't pray. Intelligent, reflecting beings have been "Taught by millenniums of barren prayer" its utter uselessness.

Rev. Minot J. Savage asks: "Will they pray in the church of the future?" and adds: "The only thing in the prayer of the past that any new theory of the universe threatens to outgrow and leave behind is that which all noble men and women ought to get rid of. We have outgrown that conception of prayer that supposes that we, petty, ignorant, petulant changing children, have power to interfere with the universe."

Let us learn wisdom from the heathen (so-called and subscribe to the sentiment of the Japanese (shinto) poet, Michizane:

"Only if our inner heart is in harmony with the true way
The gods will protect us, even though we do not pray."

—Faith or Fact.

An Unverified Uprising of Citizens.

The ascension is not mentioned by Mathew, Mark, and John. Luke says simply that Jesus, in blessing his disciples at Bethany, was parted from them and carried up into heaven, and in the Acts of the Apostles it is asserted that "he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight."

This miraculous disappearance was not any more wonderful than his miraculous appearing and disappearing at his several meetings with his disciples; but, if such a thing had really happened, it would not only have been noted down with minuteness by all the lookers-on, but it would have been known and commented upon by outsiders.

The question of immortality is one of equal interest to the whole race, and the chief priests and the Roman governor would have been as glad as anyone else to be assured that a man had really risen from the dead. Just here comes in the testimony of Mathew's gospel, that "many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many."

Whatever degree of prejudice might have prevented the enemies of Jesus from believing in such assertions respecting him, there was nothing to hinder the recognition of that company of resuscitated citizens, and the promulgation of the glad tidings of their continued existence.

Such an event would have been heralded over the whole known world, and could never have been forgotten by secular history. Yet, beyond that daring assertion of Mathew, there is not a word in any record, and the phenomenon appears to have left no trace among the witnesses.—From "The Christ Myth," by Elizabeth E. Evans.

Guided Points.

BY JOHN P. GUILD.

A good conscience with a poor judgement is a very troublesome thing.

There is nothing quite so mischievous, as are good intentions misdirected.

Better be in hell with reason, than in heaven insane. Folly will make hell of heaven; wisdom will make heaven of hell.

There are some things which get helped along by being kicked; the L. U. O. is one of them. Kick away.

Sin is what does some hurt; Right is what does some good. Morals is a matter of justice, and justice is a matter of mathematics.

The wrong thing about all godly religions is the scheme to get something without earning it. Free salvation is worthless unless worked out.

There are two radically wrong things about Bible morals; The Bible mis-states man's status, making him to be totally depraved; and it mis-states the ground of right doing, making it to be the command of god, instead of the condition of things.

Christians profess to follow a master—sometimes a long way behind. Freethinkers have something better than a master to follow—the idea of rational liberty. A poor soldier can follow his file leader. It takes a hero to plant the flag on the enemies' walls.

Help the Liberal University to plant reason, refinement and righteousness in the field of its young students, and where the soil is good for anything but thistles, there will grow a harvest to bless and glorify Humanity, such as is not possible by the culture of orthodox christianity.

It is all right and needful to fell the thorny wilderness of ignorance and superstition and rascality, but unless the fruits of science, philosophy and humanity are planted in their place, the evil trees will up-sprout and grow thicker and higher than before, and like the man who had the unclean spirit cast out, taking no good ones, but seven bad ones as tenants, the last state is worse than the first.

The story of the life and death of Jesus is a grand illustration of the general cussedness, if not of the total depravity of a large part of mankind. The iron rule of evil for good is still in vogue, and a head crowned with thorns, a body crucified between thieves, and a heart broken by the abuse and desertion of brethren, are scenes in the drama of life, played to the letter, whether on the stage of the orthodox churches or the Liberal associations.

DIAMONDS.

One of the rarest gifts is the talent to judge accurately a diamond in all its various qualities. As genius for music or painting must be inborn to produce the great artist, so the faculty to correctly determine a diamond in all its diversified detail and characteristics can never be acquired, unless by the rare few who are gifted in this direction. A dealer may be a good jeweler, a successful merchant and an honest man, and yet deceive you on a diamond, simply because he himself is deceived. I have been in the business forty years. I could no more be deceived on a diamond than the cashier of the Bank of England could be on a bank note. When buying diamonds I use no glasses, ask no questions except the price; my acute vision instantly detects the slightest difference in color every flaw and imperfection. Your interests will be protected if you buy of me. If you want a Ring, Pin, Stud, etc., for \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100 or up, send to me. I will send you the goods prepaid. Keep them a week or two, and if you are not satisfied that I undersell all competitors, return and get your money.

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Otto Wettstein,

Rochelle, Ill.



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