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*No very studious man was ever very cruel; no two things in nature have less affinity than violence and reflection.*—LANDOR.

## Cross and Crescent a Century Ago.

Two religions never lived at peace with each other, except under compulsion, and then never in amity. History is full of illustrations of this truth. During the period of the Roman Empire, before the days of Constantine, we know how Jews and Christians hated each other, and how peace between them had to be kept by the authorities. It is also notorious how the Christians and Pagans hated each other. The latter persecuted the former, and then the former persecuted the latter. Centuries afterwards there was bitter animosity between the Christians and the Mohammedans, aggravated by each possessing an exclusive salvation and each regarding the other as "infidel." The Cross and the Crescent met on hundreds of battlefields, and in the end Christ went down before Mohammed. There is constant ill-feeling in India between Brahmans and Mohammedans, who are often restrained from murdering each other by the British Government. Coming nearer home, we find an unhealed feud between Great Britain and Ireland, the political and social elements of which are heightened by the difference between Protestant and Catholic. Religious fanaticism has been, and still is, one of the greatest curses in the world.

Christians, in this age of secular civilisation, too commonly assume that their religion is an exception to the rule of intolerance. It has, however, been guilty of more bloodshed and cruelty than any other faith; and it still displays its true character where it is not kept in check by other agencies.

Many publicists, pressmen, and politicians talk as though the Mohammedans of the Turkish Empire were all incarnate devils, and the Christians mere harmless lambs led to sacrifice. This is ridiculously untrue. During the old wars between the Crescent and the Cross, the Mohammedans were chivalrous and humane in comparison with the Christians. Saladin shed not a single drop of unnecessary blood when he captured Jerusalem. When the Crusaders captured the same city, they indulged in a week's massacre. Seventy thousand Moslems were put to the sword. No respect was shown to age or sex. Women and children were butchered as well as men. The Holy City was turned into a Hell.

During the war of Greek Independence, in the early part of last century, the Christians were rather worse savages than the Mohammedans. Finlay, the historian, although a friend of the Greek cause, was obliged to admit this melancholy fact. Here are a few instances from his *History of the Greek Revolution*. At Mesolonghi—famous for its association with the name of Byron—as soon as the Greeks joined the Revolution they seized and imprisoned the resident Mussulmans:—

"As usual, most of them were murdered in a short time. Only the families of the higher ranks were spared. The men were crowded together in one room, and women and children in another. But even this lasted for a brief period. The men who had been spared during the first massacre were afterwards deliberately

put to death, and the women and children were dispersed as slaves in the families of the wealthier Greeks."

When the Greeks attacked and captured Vrachori, they perpetrated the same atrocities. "The massacre," says Finlay, "commenced with the Jews. Men, women, and children were slain in cold blood, with circumstances of atrocious cruelty. The poorer Mussulmans next shared the same fate." Only a few of the wealthiest of the five hundred families in the town escaped. At Lekhonia the Greeks "put to death six hundred Mussulmans, murdering alike men, women, and children." The Turks capitulated at Navarin, but the terms of the surrender were infamously violated, and men, women, and children were again massacred:—

"Women, wounded with musket-balls and sabre-cuts, rushed to the sea, seeking to escape, and were deliberately shot. Mothers robbed of their clothes, with infants in their arms, plunged into the water to conceal themselves from shame, and they were made a mark for inhuman riflemen. Greeks seized infants from their mothers' breasts, and dashed them against the rocks. Children, three and four years old, were hurled living into the sea and left to drown. When the massacre was ended, the dead bodies, washed ashore, or piled on the beach, threatened to cause a pestilence."

The sack of Tripolitza was unexampled in atrocity, even in that bloody warfare. "Human beings," Finlay says, "can rarely have perpetrated so many deeds of cruelty on an equal number of their fellow creatures as were perpetrated by the conquerors on this occasion." Eight thousand Moslems were massacred. Women and children were frequently tortured before they were murdered. After the Greeks had been in possession of the city for forty-eight hours, and the passion for battle must have subsided, they deliberately collected two thousand persons—some men, but principally women and children—led them out to a ravine in the nearest mountain, and butchered them in cold blood. Scarcely one male child in the city was spared. Many young women and girls were carried off as slaves. Such were the tender mercies of those soldiers of Christ.

General Gordon, a warm friend of the Greek cause, could not help confessing that, if a comparison were instituted between the Greeks and the Turkish generals, it would be impossible not to "give to the latter the palm of humanity."

Yes, the Turks have been cruel enough to Christians; but they have suffered equal, if not greater, cruelty at the hands of their enemies. Byron knew what he was doing in his description of the capture and sack of Ismail by the Russians, in *Don Juan*:—

"All that the mind would shrink from, of excesses;  
All that the body perpetrates, of bad;  
All that we read, hear, dream, of man's distresses;  
All that the Devil would do, if run stark mad;  
All that defiles the worst which pen expresses;  
All by which hell is peopled, or as sad  
As hell—mere mortals who their power abuse—  
Was here (as heretofore and since) let loose."

During the fighting in Crete fifteen years ago both Turks and Greeks killed their prisoners. Religion never made people humane. That is the work of civilisation. Man for man the Turk is probably as good a human being as the Greek, the Bulgar, the Servian, or the Montenegrin. Religious fanaticism on either side turns a decent fellow into a devil.

G. W. FOOTE.



## Dr. Boyd Carpenter on the Soul.

THE Society for Psychical Research may congratulate itself on having a real live bishop for its president. Once upon a time its proceedings would have called down a charge of sorcery or of dabbling with unholy things, and I believe the Roman Catholic Church still take this view of the subject. Times have changed; bishops patronise what they once banned, and the Right Reverend Bishop Boyd Carpenter delivers his Presidential address without anyone being seriously disturbed thereby. The gentleman who was good enough to send me the report of the Bishop's address, hoped that I should be able to deal with it in an early issue of the *Freethinker*, and as the address discusses a subject with which all readers of this journal may be presumed to be interested, I have no hesitation in doing so.

Bishop Boyd Carpenter's address has nothing to do with psychical research as usually understood; it is simply a plea for a belief in immortality, and would have been as suitable to a Church Congress as the place in which it was delivered. And passing over, for the present, at least, the Bishop's comments on Materialism, which exhibit what I may call the orthodox misconceptions, I come to what are its main propositions. These are:—

1. Man is a being in process of completion.
2. That he still holds within his nature relics of the past.
3. That his is not a stationary nature, but a nature constantly acquiring powers, and in doing so, forming new capacities.

The first two propositions may be accepted without question. The only comment that one need make is that "completion" is more a process of becoming rather than an indication that an end will ever be reached. So long as life exists it is difficult to conceive it existing without the necessity for constant modification in presence of a perpetually changing environment. Cessation of change is really a cessation of life in any form. And the third proposition only challenges discussion in the direction of questioning whether man really is "forming new capacities." Nature's method, with man, at all events, is not to create anything new, but to refashion existing capacities. These are elaborated, developed, applied in new directions, are subject to new interpretations, but I see no evidence whatever of man having developed any really new capacity during the whole of his history.

Each of these propositions is emphasised by Dr. Boyd Carpenter because, it is believed, they provide a firm foundation for a belief in immortality. Reasonably interpreted, they not only fail to do this, but they establish a strong presumption to the contrary. Let us note the Bishop's method of working. The law of growth, we are told, meets us in man's consciousness of Self. As a mere statement of fact, this may be admitted, although it does not carry us far with our analysis of the nature of Self. But by a kind of mental legerdemain, Dr. Carpenter, after putting Self into the philosophical hat, waves his hand, and without any warning, produces "Soul." But "Self," whatever its nature, is a fact admitted by all. "Soul" is an assumption only required by the theologian. Having produced the "Soul" in this manner, the next statement is that "the soul is individual." And while "individual" might be used in a sense that even a Materialist could agree with, the implied, but unstated, meaning is that its individuality consists in its independence. So we have to "postulate the individuality [that is, the independence] of the soul or self if we are to study its activities, conditions, and moods with any hope of advantage."

But this is so far from being a necessary postulate that one feels fully justified in saying exactly the reverse. To merely know the varying moods and activities of self only gives us a scientific conception of it, in the sense that a boy who knows the number

and exchangeable value of his marbles can be said to have a scientific knowledge of his possessions. To say that a self or soul is aware of varying moods and activities is substituting a name for an explanation. Scientific understanding only commences when we have discovered the causation of these moods and activities. In referring them to a "self" we have merely added a word to the discussion, and a word which is incapable of helping, because we know nothing of what it stands for apart from the phenomena that are to be explained. The late Professor James expressed no more than the exact truth when he said that the soul was "a complete superfluity so far as accounting for the actually verified facts of consciousness goes." And when Dr. Boyd Carpenter says after it is well to avoid language which implies a "duality or multiplicity in self," the only reason why it is well to do this is that it would not be well for his theory to do otherwise.

Self—which Dr. Boyd Carpenter takes as the equivalent of soul—is indeed growth, but its main significance is overlooked. The Bishop's assumption is that self is something the capacities of which are developed by contact with an external world. In truth the self is both the *creation* and expression of this co-response. There is not a self and a consciousness of self; there is the latter only; and once we liberate our minds from the theological prepossessions, we can see how this self is constituted, and appreciate its significance. With a new-born infant there is no consciousness whatever of self. At a very early age—probably through the sense of touch—it discovers itself as a separate object. Later, home life, school life, and life in the outside world helps to create and fashion the "self" of each person. It is built up before our eyes, and may disintegrate before our eyes. Under the degrading influence of disease one can watch the self being pulled apart, as it were. The organisation and integration, the disorganisation and disintegration, of individuality are amongst the easiest of ascertainable facts, if we would only open our eyes to what is really before us. Dissociation of personality is now an accepted fact in psychology, and attention to this branch of study by the Society for Psychical Research would go far to explain many of its *genuine* "signs and wonders."

Self, or individuality, is not, therefore, something that arises as the expression of a mysterious "I"; it is the result of the world's impress upon a plastic organism. If no two sensations or experiences were alike, living beings *might* acquire the habit of adaptability—although even this is doubtful; but there would be in that case no sense of personality. This only arises because the same experiences occur over and over again. We feel ourself to be the same person through a multiplicity of changes because amid these changes the same experiences are continually recurring, and are recognised by the organism as such. It is really the uniformity of experience, the things thought about, that create the consciousness of self.

The Bishop's next step is that this soul, struggling for expression through a material encasement, carries within it prophetic signs of a future state of existence, much as the embryo has prophetic indications of a more mature physical existence. The main proof of this appears to be the unquestionable fact that human evolution now moves along psychical lines rather than necessitating a development of physical structure. This is quite true; but Bishop Boyd Carpenter completely misses the point. Human evolution is predominantly psychical for the simple reason that human life is in essence social. And the essence of social life is not the mere physical contact of human beings; that would no more constitute a society than a group of stones would make a social structure. Social life is constituted by the mental and moral relationships existing between people, and the traditions, beliefs, customs, and acquired knowledge which are inherited from preceding societies. The evolution of man is mainly psychical, therefore, because the series of adaptations requisite to the



human organism living its life are of a psychic character. The more developed society is, the more pronounced this feature becomes. It is a purely social phenomenon, and the worthlessness of religious thinking was never more clearly demonstrated than was done by Dr. Boyd Carpenter ignoring this elementary truth in the interests of an utterly useless hypothesis.

Even the statement that, as the embryo develops organs of vision that are prophetic of future conditions, so we have psychical anticipations of further developments, contains a misstatement and an exaggeration. All these prophetic anticipations are really recapitulations. They are reminiscent of past experiences and developments. The eye, to take the Bishop's own illustration, was not first developed in the womb as an eye, it was developed by use in the living animal. The embryo contains the product of experience and nothing more. The fish did not develop lungs and so produce an air-breathing animal. The swim-bladder was gradually modified in actual life, the acquisitions, or favorable variations, becoming a portion of the inheritance of the embryo. The biogenetic law that the individual recapitulates the history of the race means this and no more.

But, says Dr. Carpenter, "If the plane of evolution is no longer physical, but psychical," the life towards which we are growing—that is, the life beyond the grave—will be one that is "largely free from physical conditions as we now know them." In other words, by a series of adaptations fitting us for life as it now is, we are being prepared for a life that is altogether different from the present one. Stated in this way, the absurdity of the argument is apparent. People are only prevented seeing its absurdity because they carefully refrain from putting the argument in language that will enable them to appreciate all that it really means. If this future life is not in all respects substantially similar to this one, how can the present life be said to be a preparation? An Englishman's life at home may prepare him for life in another country, but that is only because the essential conditions of life remain unaltered. An organ implies a function, and a function implies an environment. Alter the environment and the function becomes useless. To speak, therefore, of our present functions implying a future state where the conditions of life are essentially different from those which now obtain, is downright nonsense. People, I repeat, can only talk in this strain because they do not stop to ask the meaning of the things they discuss, or the value of the language they use. In this respect Bishop Boyd Carpenter is only one of a numerous company; but I am afraid the rest of the band will not gain much that is really valuable from the example of one who, by position, may be described as its leader.

C. COHEN.

### Theology at Bay.

At the last meeting of the British Association the mechanistic conception of the Universe was gloriously triumphant. The President, in his courageous address from the chair, struck a keynote to which the Association, as a whole, remained loyal to the end. There were a few discords, but they only emphasised the general harmony. It is now absolutely undeniable that the science of to-day is quite as materialistic, to say the least, as was the science of the mid-Victorian era. To the divines who had for years been asserting the opposite, this was an extremely undesirable discovery. It took their breath away, for it convicted them of the crime of wickedly misleading their followers. Nevertheless, some of them put on a wonderfully bold front, contending that, even if the theory of the physical origin of life were true, the religious situation would remain unchanged. In the material Universe mechanical laws may fully account for all the changes that are perpetually taking place; but they can find refuge in a

spiritual Universe which is entirely beyond the reach of science, but conveniently accessible to men of faith. The majority of divines, however, have been led to disown science altogether. In consequence of "the extraordinary proceedings" at the Dundee meeting of the British Association they have been emboldened to denounce the conclusions of science as false because contrary to the Word of God. The Rev. Thomas Waugh, the well-known Wesleyan evangelist, lecturing lately at Burton-on-Trent on "The Bible and Modern Thought," is reported in the *Burton Evening Gazette* to have charged the Higher Criticism with putting "man's reason in the place of Divine revelation," and Darwinism with impiously contradicting the Word of Truth. "Genesis says man fell; Darwinism says man rose," and consequently the reverend gentleman did not hesitate to dismiss Darwinism as "a mass of unproven suppositions."

After all said and done, science is exclusively of this world, and treats the Universe as a vast mechanism. All its investigations and discoveries are in the realm of matter. Of such things as soul and spirit it takes no cognisance whatever, and the so-called spiritual world is unintelligible to it. Science is of necessity materialistic. It cannot possibly conceive of life except in terms of physics and chemistry. Its only method of working is that of observation and experiment; and it is obvious that only material substances can be observed and experimented upon. You can neither observe nor experiment upon mind, soul, or spirit; these escape you at every turn. Darwinism is a mass, not of "unproved suppositions," as the evangelist ignorantly imagines, but of ascertained facts which irresistibly suggest certain conclusions. Now, theology not only has nothing in common with science, but takes up positions which are scientifically untenable, with the result that the two cannot dwell together in unity. Theology is essentially animistic, while science is a continuous exposure of animism. Sometimes a specious distinction is made between theology and religion; but surely no one can deny that Christianity is an intensely theological religion. The fact is, that without its theology Christianity would be no more. When a man says, "I believe in God," he is already a potential theologian; but when he adds, "I believe that God is love," or "I believe that God is the maker, preserver, and savior of the world," he puts a whole body of divinity in a nutshell. To define religion as worship is by no means to divest it of theology, because behind the worship there must be a more or less definitely elaborated doctrine of God. Buddhism is the only non-theological religion known to us; and there are many who regard Buddhism not as a religion, but as a philosophy of life, or system of ethics. In the historical acceptance of the term, religion is rooted and grounded in theology; and between theology and science there can never be anything but conflict.

Of course, the conflict need not be always active. Indeed, science never openly attacks religion except when it trespasses on scientific ground. For example, science never formally opposes the belief in God; but when it is stated that God once made "all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good," or that he "created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures," science is bound to enter a strong demurrer. Creation, in the Biblical sense, is an act of which science can find no trace, while the making of a Divine man who ignominiously fell from his original state of perfection, can be geologically proved never to have occurred. On such points science has had no choice but to assail theology with all its might. As a rule, however, science ignores religion, pursues its investigations without any sort of reference to it, treating Nature as a vast and orderly mechanism, subject to immutable laws within itself. Professor Schafer's Presidential Address has become famous, not because it is an attack upon religion, but because it expresses



no need of its aid to account for the origin of life. The eminent physiologist merely sets "aside, as devoid of scientific foundation, the idea of immediate supernatural intervention in the first production of life," being scientifically compelled to believe that living matter "must have owed its origin to causes similar in character to those which have been instrumental in producing all other forms of matter in the Universe; in other words, to a process of gradual evolution." The truth is that ever since the appearance of Darwin's *Origin of Species* science has proceeded as if there were no God. In an unfortunate passage in the *Origin*, deeply regretted in later life, Darwin pictures the Creator as breathing life "into a few forms or into one." Referring to this notion in his Belfast Address, delivered in 1874, Tyndall says:—

"The anthropomorphism, which it seemed his (Darwin's) object to set aside, is as firmly associated with the creation of a few forms as with the creation of a multitude. We need clearness and thoroughness here. Two courses, and two only, are possible. Either let us open our doors freely to the conception of creative acts, or, abandoning them, let us change our notions of matter.....By a necessity engendered and justified by science I cross the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that matter which we, in our ignorance of its latent powers, and notwithstanding our professed reverence for its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and potency of all terrestrial life."

For forty years biologists have quietly held that materialist theory of the origin of life, and the facts which seem to support it are being rapidly discovered, while none that discredit it have ever come to light. Professor MacCullum, of Toronto, speaking at Dundee, expressed his agreement with Tyndall in the notion that "matter was endowed with the potentiality of life," and Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, the eminent zoologist, heartily endorsed Professor Schafer's views, saying: "I have heard nothing which makes it not possible to accept the exposition of our President in the fallest possible sense."

This is Materialism, or mechanism, pure and simple. Science stands to-day exactly where it stood forty years ago, only now it stands much more firmly than it did then, having much more ground under its feet; and it is quickly leavening the thought of the civilised world. In France it has completely triumphed; and the people have thrown theology down the winds. Listen to what the Rev. F. Hastings, chairman of the London Congregational Union, says:—

"It is said that in France only one in sixteen goes to a place of worship. Certainly the men who attend there are but few. If we remember that France leads the thought and movements of Europe generally, we shall see that her present indifference to religion may cause a still greater deflection in this land from Church and Christ. Materialism will conquer us, and the nation will plunge afterwards into an abyss of anarchy and hopelessness."

Theology is thus at bay. Conscious of being on the losing side, confessing its inability to stem the rising tide of unbelief, it must yet do its utmost to confirm the faith of the believing few. Parious in the extreme is the situation. There is every reason to tremble for the Ark of the Lord. It is no wonder that every conceivable attempt is being made to persuade the faithful that God is still with them, and will ere long crown his Church with eternal triumph. The Rev. John Thomas, M.A., of Liverpool, preaching in London the other day, delivered himself of the following wild rhapsody:—

"We have been indulging in gloomy utterances lately, and sometimes we think we are going to get our fish by manipulating our bait in every artistic way. That is not it at all. We must just go forward in the power of the Word which is established in heaven. And neither earth nor hell can stop us from winning. On your side is the unconquerable Son of God.....Then go forth, men, with the message and power and love of Christ in your hearts, and know that as the Lord liveth before you fail God himself must fail and all the hosts of heaven be put to flight."

If Mr. Thomas thought at all, he would realise that he was talking sheer nonsense. God has failed, and all the hosts of heaven have been put to flight. God has failed because he never succeeded; and his champions are doomed to failure because the advent of knowledge necessitates the departure of superstition. Theology is a rotten fabric of superstitious guesses and speculation, while science represents the accumulated knowledge of the ages and is man's greatest benefactor.

J. T. LLOYD.

## The Passing of Jesus.

"As we go back to older and older representations we find the human element in the *Jesusbild* fading visibly away, the divine coming more and more conspicuously to the front, until in proto-Mark we behold the manifest God; while conversely, as we descend the stream of time, this same human element comes more and more obtrusively to the light, the divine gradually retiring relatively, though not absolutely, into the background, until finally, in modern sentimentalizations, the divine Jesus, vice Jehovah of the Jew, the Savior-God of the Gentile, is reduced to a mild-mannered Rabbi or a benevolent Dervish."—PROFESSOR W. B. SMITH, *Ecce Deus*; 1912; pp. 24-5.

"Under the superscription, 'The Christianity of Christ,' there remains only a blank sheet from which all that was previously written upon it has been erased. And this is doubtless what the good people wish for; they want an open space, without limits or barriers, in order to launch their own ideas into the world without abandoning the name of Christianity; in other words, they make modern ideas sail under the Christian flag instead of under the flag of Civilization."—EDWARD VON HARTMANN, *The Religion of the Future*; 1886; p. 62.

"Though before thee the throned Cytherean be fallen, and hidden her head.

Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean: thy dead shall go down to thee dead."

—SWINBURNE, *Hymn to Proserpine*.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, in replying to three sermons preached by three Bishops during the meeting of the British Association at Manchester in 1887, declared:—

"I do not know of any body of scientific men who could be got to listen without the strongest expressions of disgusted repudiation to the exposition of a pretended scientific discovery which had no better evidence to show for itself than the story of the devils entering a herd of swine, or of the fig-tree that was blasted for bearing no figs when 'it was not the season of figs.'"

This appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1887, and it was probably to this that Mr. Spurgeon alluded—in a sermon delivered on November 3 of the same year—when he declared "Every doctrine of revelation has been assailed, but the order of battle passed by the black prince at this hour runs as follows: "Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the crucified King of Israel."\*

Poor Spurgeon, who regarded himself as another hero like him of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, who, clad in the armor of faith, leads his flock through Vanity Fair, fighting everything he met with on the way—what would he think of the situation now? Not only are the miracles of the "Crucified One" denied, but books by learned professors are following fast, one after another, denying his existence altogether. And the apologists for the Churches are busily jettisoning their cargoes of dogma as expeditiously as decency will permit. As one of the lady characters in a recently issued novel observes: "My dear Archdeacon, no one can be an unbeliever nowadays. *The Christian Apologists have left one nothing to disbelieve.*"†

The first in modern times to declare the mythical origin of Christianity and its reputed founder was the Frenchman, Francois Dupuis, in his celebrated work, *L'Origine de tous les Cultes* (The Origin of all the Worship), published in 1794,‡ in which he

\* "Driving Away the Vultures from the Sacrifice." A sermon delivered by C. H. Spurgeon, November 3, 1887.

† H. H. Munro, *The Unbearable Bassington*.

‡ Mr. Wheeler, in his painstaking *Dictionary of Freethinkers*, says it was published in 1795, in seven volumes. Robertson, *History of Freethought*, p. 244, also has 1795; but in a *Sketch of the Life and Writings of Dupuis* attached to a translation of Dupuis' work on the Apocalypse, in our possession, it is said to have been published in 1794 in three volumes, and later in twelve volumes.



traced the origin of all religions to sun worship. In a bold and uncompromising manner, backed up with immense erudition, he included Christianity among the number of religions that derived their origin from the worship of the sun.

Charles Southwell, that sturdy Freethinker who was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and fined one hundred pounds for blasphemy, translated the part dealing with Christianity into English, under the title *The True Origin, Object, and Organisation of the Christian Religion*, a copy of which, printed and published by William Friend at South London Hall, but with no date, lies before us as we write. A perusal of this work shows that Dupuis was perfectly correct in his facts—that is, that the same tale of the Virgin Birth, the Sacrificial Death, and the triumphant Resurrection of Jesus Christ had been told of the ancient Pagan gods. Where Dupuis went wrong—and it is no disparagement of him to say so, for the materials for a correct judgment upon the subject did not exist then—was in his interpretation of the facts. We know now that it was the birth, growth, death, and resurrection of vegetation during the procession of the seasons that the ancients symbolised in the worship of Adonis, Attis, Osiris, and other deities whose rites and ceremonies bore so very suspicious a resemblance to their later rival, Christianity. The proof of this has been established, once for all, in that monumental work of Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.

The next blow to the historical character of the Four Gospels was delivered by Strauss in his famous *Life of Jesus* (1835). In this work Strauss examines all the incidents of the life of Jesus as told in the Gospels, and finds them utterly unhistorical.

In 1874 appeared *Supernatural Religion*, the work of Mr. Walter Cassels, a nephew of Dr. Pusey. This learned work discussed the documentary evidence upon which Christianity is founded; and, after examining every scrap of evidence bearing upon the subject, he comes to the conclusion that the Four Gospels as we know them were not in existence until one hundred and twenty years after the death of Jesus.

Thus it had been shown that the main incidents of the life of Jesus were not new; that they were unhistorical; that they were devoid of documentary foundation. The Churches have ignored the attack upon the historical character of Jesus, finding it more profitable to scout the question as too wildly improbable. But they will have to face the question.

Mr. J. M. Robertson's valuable *Christianity and Mythology*, his still more valuable *Pagan Christs*, and Professor Drew's *The Christ Myth* still await an answer; and are now followed by Professor W. B. Smith's *Eccle Deus*.\* In this work the historical existence of Jesus is totally denied. The author himself states that he was once a believer in the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament, of the existence of Jesus and the preaching of Paul and the other apostles; but his long-drawn-out struggle to preserve a rational belief in these things ended in failure. He observes:—

"That rational men should do this or anything like this, and by their preaching should convert a whole highly civilised Roman Empire to acceptance of such a farrago of extravagances, would itself be a miracle beyond all comparison; nor need anyone that accepts this theory hesitate for an instant at any wonder of the New Testament: he need not strain out the gnat after swallowing the camel. For his own part, the writer tried many years, for at least a score, with all the help that could be found in the pages of the most con- summate critics, from Baur to Wrede, from Ewald to Wellhausen, from Renan to Schmiedel, to make his theory in some way or degree acceptable to the under- standing, but only with the result of total failure. He had, indeed, written many hundred pages of Pauline interpretation, striving with all the powers of exegesis to render this theory intelligible; but, in spite of all and every effort, the inexpugnable absurdity remained and mocked with increasing and more unmistakable

derision. Only then it was that he renounced finally the task foolishly begun, seeing that it had already so successfully defied the unsurpassed logical energies of Holsten." (Pp. 19-20.)

Then, again, we are taught to believe that the personal influence of Jesus was so intense that it inspired ignorant fishermen, turning them into elo- quent propagandists to convert the world. But, asks our author, what about Paul?—

"There is here not the least hook on which to hang any shred of personal influence. I yield to no man in admiration of the deep-piercing acumen of Holsten: he possessed an extraordinary logical faculty, the tenth part of which imparted to many a scholar might make him a thinker; and yet one cannot conceal from one- self the patent fact that all his subtleties are vain in presence of the inherent and eternal absurdity of his central thesis. He has failed, and where he has failed it is not likely that anyone will ever succeed. It is impossible to understand the conversion, the activity, and the doctrine of Paul in terms of the human personality of Jesus."

As the Professor well remarks:—

"We may also understand, and without grave diffi- culty, just why it is that even the highly cultured and not uncritical *imagine* they find such a convincing character sketch in the Gospels. The faithful Moham- medan finds everywhere in the Koran the highest perfection of literary art. To the infidel Aryan the work makes no such appeal. Wading through its Surahs in quest of gems of thought or expression seems like hunting for pearls among the oyster beds of the Delta. The difference is subjective; Moslem and Chris- tian being entirely diverse forms of consciousness to face the fact of the Koran. Somewhat similar is the case with the reader of the Gospels. He brings to his perusal an immense weight of prepossession. He is enveloped and permeated by the atmosphere of ages, shaping and tingeing the image he beholds in the Gospel, which is thus in large measure his own reflected consciousness. He accepts and rarely questions his first impressions, and never suspects that it is mainly a subjective process. But had any such documents been suddenly brought to light in Central Africa he would most probably have formed an entirely other judgment, and scarcely have received them as strictly historical." (Pp. 164-5)

Of the chapters on "The Silence of Josephus and Tacitus," on the mythical character of the City called Nazareth, on Judas Iscariot, and the author's central position, we will deal in our next.

(To be continued.) W. MANN.

### A Tribute to Shelley.

*From a Lecture delivered before the Independent Religious Society (Rationalist), Chicago.*

If Shakespeare is the most universal of English poets, Shelley is the most intense. He has not the breadth of Shakespeare, but he has more fire. Whether he shouts with joy or shrieks with pain, it is always with full volume of voice. His accents are lightning flashes; his feelings are tipped with flame. He sees the world with his soul. Every motion provoked by star or flower, by child or woman, ploughs into his inmost being. His every cry is from the depths.

But intensity implies a certain narrowness of vision. The Amazon by its very breadth cannot foam and roar like the mountain torrent; nor the sun dazzle like the thundershaft. The philosopher cannot command the eloquence of the prophet. But Shelley's intensity did not pinch his sympathies, nor stunt the development of his genius. He was not a man of "one idea." All the colors of the rainbow are in his thought; and his song sweeps clear around the human heart.

Shelley's character is the key to his poetry. He was too chaste in intellect to truckle to opinions, however popular, which did not command his respect. He would not consent to have his eyes bandaged and his conscience stifled by the conventionalities of Church and State. No yoke, however easy, had any attractions for his freedom- wooing spirit. He abhorred cant, and wept to see it corrupt men and minds and bring them to the dust

\* W. B. Smith, *Eccle Deus: Studies in Primitive Christianity*; 1912. (Watts & Co.; 6s.)



before the extinguished altars of the past. He denounced a religion that inspired fear and counselled hypocrisy. "I will venture to think and to love," he declared, and his brave heart fluttered and swayed like a sail unfurled to the breezes, with the rapture of this resolution. If Shelley left the Church, it was not his fault. The clergy gave him a stone when he asked for bread.

We are not claiming perfection for Shelley, nor are we disposed to make light of his failings. In his moral character there is hardly anyone to whom Shelley can be compared. He is at once fickle and firm, generous to a fault, and most capricious; now shy as a maiden and now unruly as a barbarian; depressed one moment and in heavenly glee the next. He is an extraordinary compound of the noblest traits and the knottiest twists of nature. His character appears to the careful observer least like a seamless robe and most like one composed of numerous patches of the most dissimilar devices.

"He had the physique of a fanatic," writes Hazlitt. There was a flame in his eye, alternately flaring and fading—an intermittent fever in his veins, a "maggot in his brain, a hectic flutter in his speech," and his voice, which piped like a shepherd's lute when tuned to a low key, became scraggy and peppered when raised to a pitch. He was, indeed, physically and morally the most singular combination of contraries that "ever wore earth around him."

But the poet's ideal was noble. He preferred the man devoted in a bad cause to those who were cold in a good cause—the man deluded by a generous error, instigated by a sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by an illustrious superstition, to those who live loving nothing on earth and cherishing no burning hopes. There is something worse than error; it is indifference.

Much will be forgiven Shelley, because he loved much. Young as he was, with passions leaping in his veins, he espoused with a noble ardor the cause of the oppressed. He became the consecrated mouthpiece of the people in shackles, and hurled his glistening javelin straight at the cankered spot in the heart of Christian civilisation. "The people! the people!" is the burden of his song. To make life a little freer for those who ate their bread in bitterness; to weed the pricking thorns from the pathway of the children who walked with bare feet; to print a smile where he found the stain of tears, and to breathe the gladdening hope into the hearts shrivelled and congested with despair—this was his self-imposed mission, and to it he dedicated every thrill in his soul.

It has been said that Shelley's poetical power is more visible in his shorter than in his longer poems. Professor Dowden, on the other hand, thinks that Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* is even superior to Goethe's *Faust*. It is generally admitted that in many fragments and passages Shelley develops wonderful luxuriance of expression, swiftness of movement, and the highest ideality, even though he may, at times, lose his breath, and fall to a more ordinary level. There is nothing more beautiful in all of Goethe's or Shakespeare's poems than the "Ode to the Skylark," written in sunny Italy. This little poem is like sparkling wine bubbling and murmuring in a crystal chalice. It has the same theme as Goethe's *Faust*—illimitable desire. But when we compare Shelley's longer works with those of the German poet, we find that the works of the latter possess a unity and a sustained power which are, perhaps, wanting in the English poet.

The poems beginning with "Ah, sister, desolation is a delicate thing," and "The world's great age begins anew"; "When the light is scattered"; and also "Lamp of life, thy lips enkindle," are among the sweetest and purest in the literature of the century. There is more music in these fragments than in all of Browning's lines, and more ideality of conception than can be found either in Wordsworth or Tennyson. Shelley has been misjudged; but the world is waking to the thunder and music of his message.

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

## Acid Drops.

Rev. Percy Dearmer rejoices that Constantinople is going to be "freed and cleansed." This gentleman evidently thinks that the Turk is a very immoral person in comparison with the Eastern Christian. We beg to tell him that he is mistaken,—to put it as mildly as possible. And when we hear him crying "Europe for the Europeans" we beg to ask him why he doesn't cry "India for the Indians." We should really like to see his reply.

When the present war in South East Europe is over, and war correspondents can go about freely again, we shall hear some nice news of what went on during the days when all news was stifled by the Christian Allies. We have heard a lot already about the cruelties of the Turk—even in places where he hardly dares to show his head. This kind of information, of course, is circulated by the Christians. It is only by accident that we hear of Christian cruelties. The *Daily Chronicle* for November 12, for instance, prints the following on the authority of "a correspondent recently returned from Servia":—

"The Servians, it is declared, have been massacring the Arnauts—Ottomanised Serbs or Albanians. Soldiers by the hundred, officers of all ranks by the score, private people in a position to know, told me the same story. Between Kumanova and Uskub 2,000 Arnauts were massacred; round Pristina, 5,000.

"After the fall of Uskub strong patrols were sent out into the surrounding country, Arnaut villages were set on fire, and when the inhabitants came rushing out they were shot down without mercy. Scores of officers told me that the rivers in that district are simply choked full of corpses.

"In the search for arms the people living in the houses were shot in the cold blood in hundreds of cases, whether they had arms or not. The last night I was in Uskub 38 men were taken by one party of soldiers, shot, and their bodies thrown into the river. I mention that case because I was told of it by a soldier of the shooting party.

"The Servians are not attempting to subdue the Arnauts in the ordinary way. They are going to exterminate them. 'We are going to wipe them out; that will be the most effective way,' is what was told me on scores of occasions by soldiers of all ranks.

"One soldier at Uskub actually invited me to come with his troop on such an expedition, and the invitation was pressed on me by a lieutenant, a captain, and a major. I was to have a rifle and 250 cartridges, and 'I would see something.' Of course, they were not aware that the idea was absurd, but that invitation alone goes far to confirm all the frightful stories I have been told."

A lovely picture of Christian benevolence!

When the truth does arrive we fancy it will be found that the successes of the allies have not been quite so easy nor so regular as has been supposed, nor has their march been one of ministering angels. Thoughtful readers of war news must have been struck by the manner in which the whole Turkish population of villages fled from their homes at the approach of the Servians and Bulgarians. It must be a great fear, indeed, that causes a peasantry to break up its homes in this manner. And from some of the reports that are filtering through, fearful anticipations of what might occur do not seem to have been ill-founded. Thus Mr. Angus Hamilton, the Central News correspondent, reports a story of a village near Lule Burgas. Some of the villagers, while defending their property, killed a Bulgarian soldier. By way of reprisal the village was fired, the men massacred, and the women outraged. This correspondent also says that the whole countryside is dotted with burning villages. Had the same thing happened on the march of the Turkish forces we should have heard more about them.

In addition, we are beginning to hear of cases of mutilation and torture. The *Daily Telegraph* of November 15 quotes from some German correspondents cases of this kind. One says that at Kirk-Kilisse, Bulgarians were walking about with the heads of Turks spitted on their bayonets. It is also stated that in long trains-full of wounded there was often not seen a single Turk. The correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* also says that often the Servians murdered "in the most horrible manner all men above eighteen years of age, and in many cases women and children as well." Other charges are beginning to be made; but, as we have said, the whole truth cannot be gained yet. It must be borne in mind that from the beginning correspondents have been officially ordered to refrain from reporting any defeat or check to the allies, or to report anything whatever to the discredit of the soldiers or the cause of the allied armies. When the correspondents arrive home some of them may, perhaps, be inclined to tell the unvarnished truth. Then, if our newspaper lords think it well that the



public should know the truth, it will be told. If not, we shall only learn what the Harmsworths and the Pearsons and the like think fit for us to know.

The *Church Times*, in the course of a kind of an apology for war, says that in the Balkans "A great drama, almost visibly working out the Divine purposes, passes swiftly before the eyes of an astonished world." That is because, in this case, the Christian forces happen to be beating the non-Christian one's. But in that case, what was the "divine purpose" when it allowed the Mohammedan troops to overcome the Christian forces? Or what was the "divine purpose" when heathen Japan beat Christian Russia? It looks as though the "divine purpose" doesn't know its own mind for long together, or as though it always backs the side with the better guns and the more efficient organisation.

The same article goes on to say that Christianity completely "transfigured" the soldier's calling. It made it a "nursery of noble chivalries" and turned the soldier into "a kind of monk, renouncing all earthly ties at the call of loyalty; even the barrack yard has an atmosphere of idealism and duty which raises it above the plane of everyday life." One can safely trust a religious journal for writing drivelling nonsense on any subject it touches. Military annals have always shown some admirable men who were soldiers because soldiers have been of necessity drawn from the home population. But it is absurd to put them down to the credit of militarism. The most that can be said is that militarism did not spoil them, but it obviously did not create them. And in the possession of military men who were admirable characters, the records of Christian countries are not at all superior to those of other countries, if they are as good. The notion that the barrack yard gives an atmosphere of idealism and duty absent from outside life can only be claimed by those who don't know the barrack yard, or are blind to outside life, with its thousand and one calls for devotion to family and friends, and duties that are fulfilled without ostentation, is immeasurably superior to the modern military life, with its machine-like drill and unthinking, unintelligent atmosphere of blind obedience.

We congratulate "J. B." of the *Christian World*, for saying a good word for the bottom dog. He says that at the close of the Russo-Turkish War he was on board a vessel that was conveying some 1,500 Turkish soldiers. The accommodation was vile, the men crowded together like cattle, with little or no sleeping accommodation. On the voyage their food was one large biscuit a day and water. Many of them were scarred with wounds. "Yet these men, in conditions which would have killed most of us, without light, without air, without proper food; did they complain? We never saw a more cheerful, a merrier, a more companionable set of people. To the English passenger their courtesy was that of gentlemen." We wonder whether "J. B." would have been able to give the same account had he been travelling with 1,500 Christian soldiers—converted into chivalrous warrior monks, in the words of the *Church Times*—under similar terms? One wants to put Rudyard Kipling's description of Christian soldiers at the side of "J. B.'s" description of Mohammedan ones to realise all that is implied in the two pictures.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, and a number of other violent-minded Christians held a meeting in favor of the "White Slave" Bill at the London Opera House on the eve of its being carried. Most of the talk turned on "flogging." These good Christians were all for it. They protested against any "weakening" of the Bill. But they were incapable of argument. All they could do by way of reply to the opponents of flogging was to go on affirming the heinousness of the crime of procurement. But this is not the point at issue. The real question is whether flogging does not degrade the criminal and disgrace society, without really acting as a deterrent.

The Archbishop of Canterbury declared that some criminals could not be degraded. This extraordinary statement is one of the results of nearly two thousand years of Christianity. A man is actually paid £15,000 a year—three times the salary of the Prime Minister!—to preach this as divine philosophy. Why, the very cinematograph pictures, which the Church wants to stop on Sunday, teaches truer lessons. There is one of a most desperate convict who is brought back to humanity again by the sympathetic touch and looks of a little girl (the prison governor's daughter)

who knows nothing of theology and philosophy and the rest of it, but sees only a man in misery. And when he rescues the sweet child at last from a burning house, and loses his own life in doing it, he pays the debt of gratitude with perfect joy. Sentimental! the Archbishop of Canterbury may call it. Perhaps so. But story for story it is a vastly better one than most of those we remember in the Bible; and assuredly it teaches a truer morality than the Archbishop of Canterbury's declaration—a false and disgraceful declaration—to his Christian friends at the aforesaid meeting.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw's opinion of the Minority Report on Divorce is published in the newspapers. He says it is "the Church's repudiation of humanity in marriage." That's about it.

Countess Russell says that "We must expect the opposition of the clergy, but the more they make themselves disagreeable, and go against the recommendations, the sooner we shall have the State Church abolished."

Christians ought to be in agreement about divorce after all those centuries from the death of their Founder. But listen! Rev. R. J. Campbell is "entirely in favor of the Majority report." Rev. J. Scott Lidgett "stands entirely with the Minority report." The English Church Union is against both, and wants divorce prohibited altogether.

In a criticism of Charles Kingsley, contributed to *Everyman*, Monsignor H. Benson calls attention to the former's treatment of Catholics in *Westward Ho!* He points out that Kingsley's Catholics are generally fools, hypocrites, or scoundrels, and charges Kingsley with manifest unfairness when dealing with a religion with which he had no sympathy. We believe the charge to be quite justifiable. Kingsley was constitutionally incapable of dealing fairly with an antagonistic opinion, and his unfairness was not confined to Catholics. In *Hypatia* he was guilty of the offence of caricature when dealing with Paganism; but as all Christians do this no protest is raised by any of them against misrepresentation in that direction. Even Cardinal Newman was guilty, in his *Callista*, of the same offence. And, after all, Kingsley was only acting as all Christians act when introducing Freethinkers into fiction. The truth is that what Monsignor Benson complains of is a specifically Christian vice. Fairness to opponents is neither expected nor exercised. We do not say that this particular complaint is not warranted; but it would be far better if an attempt were made to inculcate the duty of truth-speaking on Christians, no matter what the opinions they happen to be dealing with.

There is an example of this fatal bias in the current issue of the *Quiver*. That insufferable person, Mr. Harold Begbie, is writing a series of articles on religion in that journal. He opens the first of the series with the remark: "The religion of Christ alone can save this Age of Tolerance from becoming first an Age of Laxity, and finally an Age of Moral Anarchy." Now, it is precisely this frame of mind that is the parent of most of the lying that occurs when Christians are dealing with non-Christians or with Christians of another sect. Opinion is made identical with character, and the notion that right conduct is dependent upon a particular opinion clears the way for crediting all of an opposite view with undesirable behavior. Of course, no one expects either sane or coherent thinking from Mr. Harold Begbie; but in this matter he stands for a common Christian prejudice and method. The prejudice has already been indicated; the method is to frighten people into at least a professed support of Christianity by holding up the horrible consequences of its rejection. People are to be prevented criticising, or at least openly rejecting, Christianity because of the moral anarchy that will follow if they do. It is the method of the moral highwayman—the man who demands the surrender of your reason under penalty of wrecking your character.

And this ethical brigandage is both stupid and ineffective. The decent character is not made any better by getting Mr. Begbie's message. He is made so much the worse by setting a value on his opinions to which they are not entitled, and by unduly depreciating others. The man who is weak has his weakness intensified by operating on his fears. He is forced into a career of hypocrisy from which he might be saved. The unbeliever who is actually a lax character is not made better; he, too, develops hypocrisy by pretending to believe for the sake of keeping others straight. It does not really prevent disbelief in Christianity growing, because that is mainly determined by forces that



are beyond the control of anyone. Its only effect is to breed cowardice, uncharitableness, and hypocrisy, and to develop an intellectual charlatanism of which Mr. Begbie is so apt a representative.

The *Church Times* advertises for a clergyman for Zanzibar, and announces that the post is a quiet one and there is little to do. If the salary is all right, there should be no great difficulty in filling the vacancy.

The Earl of Selborne, speaking at a missionary meeting held in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster Abbey, said that the great thing to do in India was to give the people "the only true religion, the only true faith." That, and that alone, would save them. And what is the only true religion? Why, the Earl of Selborne's religion. The practical suggestion laid before the meeting was to raise a special fund of £500 a year for the purpose of providing the Bishop of Bombay with an additional city chaplain. Now the Bishop of Bombay is the Earl of Selborne's cousin. See?

Talmage, the famous blood-and-thunder American preacher, who was so remorselessly (and wittily) analysed by Colonel Ingersoll, was not the best exhorter in Yankeeland but he was the best-paid one. Here is his own confession in his Autobiography, recently published under the editorship of his widow:—

"My salary was 12 000 dollars as pastor of the Tabernacle. I have made over 20,000 dollars a year from my lectures. From the publication of my sermons my income was equal to my salary. I received 5,000 dollars a year as editor of a popular monthly; I sometimes wrote an article that paid me 150 dollars or more, and a single marriage fee was often as high as 250 dollars. There were some royalties on my books."

This is a pretty good total income for a preacher of the gospel of "Blessed be ye poor." Talmage had evidently made up his mind never to earn *that* blessing.

During a visit that Talmage paid to Gladstone at Hawarden, the Grand Old Man told him that "Nearly all the men at the top in our country are believers in the Christian religion." Very likely—in the world in which Gladstone moved. Politicians who openly profess themselves Freethinkers are not likely to get near "the top" in public affairs. Look at Bradlaugh! It took him thirteen years' hard fighting to win a seat for Northampton, and six years' hard fighting after that before he could peacefully take the seat he had won. Well, if that is the fate of Bradlaugh, what is the chance of Smithson and Jorkins?

Principal Garvie says that nothing hurts him so much as when he finds a clever young man who tries to test Christianity by mere intellectual ability. We are quite willing to believe that this hurts Principal Garvie, but we should like to know in what other way one can test Christianity? Dr. Garvie tells of a young man who, in his first sermon, spoke depreciatingly of the things taught him at his mother's knee. After the sermon, Dr. Garvie got hold of the preacher and told him how little he thought of a man who would dare to depreciate what his mother taught. We are not told what was the reply of the young preacher, but we hope he said something that made Dr. Garvie feel what a fool he was making of himself. As a matter of fact, we all receive along with all the love and care that mothers lavish upon their children a great deal of nonsensical teaching, part of which we are compelled to put on one side. If mothers are not the only teachers of out-of-date opinions, they occupy a prominent place among its purveyors. And there is no disrespect to one's own mother or to anybody else's mother in stating and recognising the truth. Sloppy, unquestioning obedience to all that one's mother has said—when one has reached years of discretion—reflects small credit upon one's parents. It only shows that they did not know how to make men of their boys or women of their girls. And anyone but a theologian would realise that unless someone departed from their mother's knee, progress would be impossible. Even Christianity could not have arisen. And what would the world have done with its Garvies?

An article in the *British Medical Journal* of November 9 on "Illness and Intellect," notices the case of the great Genevan "Reformer." "Calvin," the writer says, "was in himself almost a pathological museum." So were his doctrines.

Rev. Robert A. Bakeman, assistant of the Rev. George Lunn of the United People's Church in Schenectady, New York, has quitted the pulpit and the ministry. In his

farewell sermon on October 6 he said that the clergy seemed to have no other function than to cry out against Sunday recreations and to keep the working classes from securing better conditions of life. The following passages of Mr. Bakeman's farewell sermon are refreshing:—

"We talk about a free pulpit, but the pulpit is not free. It is pledged to certain ideas from the start. A minister cannot discuss a single act or word of Jesus. He must start with the assumption that Jesus was right. The pulpit has no place for the open mind in its search for truth.

"A minister cannot discuss immortality. He is bound to believe in it. He cannot talk with an open mind about God. He is bound to assume his existence. As a minister for several years I have hidden behind the fact that you could not prove that there is no God. But I cannot prove that there is a God, and I want something positive on which to base any future ministry.

"There may still be a place for the Church, but there is no room in life for a professional ministry. I have just awakened to the effect it was having on me. I have preached on immortality every Easter, not because I was fired with a conviction of immortality, but because it was Easter. I have made my pastoral calls every day, not because I had some special message to bring, but because there were so many names on my list. I have visited the sick and the dying, not because I knew anything more than they about what lies beyond, but because I was a professional minister.

"I want to see it all done away with. I want to speak hereafter only where my fellow man can call me to account; I want to visit only where there is some actual ministry to be done. I want to break away from the special code of conduct which you have woven for ministers, too. And when I am on my deathbed I do not want any professional minister around. I want men—real men—about me then; men who fought out the battle of life first-hand, and who can do for me the only thing I can do for others—take their hand, tell them I don't know what is beyond, bid them be brave and remember that we are comrades to the end."

We are indebted to the New York *Truthseeker* for this report. Our contemporary says that, according to the newspapers, Mr. Bakeman is working as a laborer under the superintendent of streets. This is sincerity.

Commander Peary, the famous North Pole explorer, has a very good opinion of the Eskimos. He hopes they will never be "civilised." At present they have nearly all the virtues, and there is no kingdom-come business amongst them:—

"Without religion and having no idea of God, they will share their last meal with anyone who is hungry, while the aged and helpless among them are taken care of as a matter of course. They are healthy and pure-blooded; they have no vices, no intoxicants, no bad habits—not even gambling. Altogether they are a people unique upon the face of the earth."

Quite unique. They are highly moral without God—which the Christians say is an impossibility. But it is a fact.

There was a queer advertisement in the *Farnham Herald* of November 9. It was inserted by the Gospel Temperance people, and it suggested that all licensed houses in the town should close half-an-hour earlier on account of the annual temperance demonstration. We hope this doesn't mean that the open "pubs" would be too much for a lot of the temperance demonstrators. On the other theory of its meaning, we must express amusement as well as astonishment. It calls up another picture in our mind,—the town butchers being asked to close early out of respect to a vegetarian demonstration.

Rev. C. F. Aked, formerly of Liverpool, then of New York, and now of San Francisco, has taken out naturalisation papers and will henceforth be an "Ammurican" citizen. People over here will bear the news with fortitude.

## Official Notes.

### THE NORTHERN TOUR.

OWING to the eminently unfavorable weather, there is but little to report from Messrs Gott and Jackson.

Brave attempts were made last week to hold meetings in Rochdale, Bolton, Manchester, and Burnley; but intense cold and driving rain sent the audiences indoors, and frustrated the efforts of our friends. In spite of these trying circumstances a very fair quantity of pamphlets and of the *Freethinker* were sold.

The Executive of the N. S. S., through the secretary, is now making arrangements for indoor meetings. A descent on Bolton was contemplated, but the pending bye-election there makes it necessary to choose another town, and it is possible Burnley may be fixed upon.

E. M. VANCE, *General Secretary.*



### Mr. Foote's Engagements

Sunday, November 24, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, Regent-street, London, W. : at 7.30, "The Church and the Divorce Report."

October 6 to December 15, every Sunday evening, Queen's (Minor) Hall, London, W.

### To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—November 24, Leicester. December 15, West Ham.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1912.—Previously acknowledged, £251 2s. 7d. Received since :—Wm. Mitchell, £1 1s ; R. Walsh, £2 ; D. Mapp, 1s. 6d.

J. T. G.—The report in the *Wakefield Herald*, which you send us, of Mr. J. E. Barton's lecture on "The Making of Shakespeare" appears to be very well done, and the lecture itself is marked by much knowledge and ability. We are glad to note his declarations that "Shakespeare was in no sense whatever a child of the Reformation," and that "his mind moved on a plane above creeds." All Shakespeare criticism is gravitating to this point.

T. C.—See "Acid Drops." Thanks.

H. R. E.—(1) When we review the Meredith Letters presently we will give you his own words about prayer, which are preferable to Sir Conan Doyle's account of them. It is astonishing—and yet, in a way, not so—how every effort is being made to conceal or minimise Meredith's scepticism. (2) We have no opinion to express about anybody's chances in the Bolton election.

T. RAFF (W. Australia), subscribing to our Fighting Fund, says : "It gives me great pleasure to see that a good stand-up fight with the London County Council is anticipated, for there is nothing gained by tamely submitting to tyranny of any kind."

R. H. ROSETTI—Pleased to hear that Mr. Lloyd had a good audience at the Workmen's Hall, Stratford, on Sunday evening, in spite of strong counter attractions. We hope Mr. E. Burke will have as good an audience this evening (Nov. 24).

E. B.—Much obliged for cuttings.

W. P. BALL.—Your cuttings are always welcome.

J. B.—We note your pleasure at the announcement that we intend to carry the "Meredith Last Letter" matter further. Glad to hear of the way in which you are successfully promoting the circulation of the *Freethinker*. With regard to Mr. Morris Young, we hardly know what we can do to assist him beyond stating that he is open to lecturing engagements and that the reports of him that reach us are all favorable.

STUART GRAHAM.—We have noticed Talmage's statement about Gladstone, etc., in another connection. We should shrink from the task of drawing up a list of the "sixty leading intellects in England to-day." Glad to hear that, in Burma, you look forward to the weekly arrival of the *Freethinker*.

A. P.—Printers' blunders will happen ; and often in cases where "the least said the soonest mended"—as in this one—though we thank you for pointing it out.

CLIFFORD D. WESTON.—Much obliged, but Tuesday is too late for such things. But it will not be overlooked, as you will see elsewhere.

D. MAPP.—You are quite right. Nothing pleases us more than to hear of Freethinking mothers. Our compliments to the one in this case.

R. IRVING.—Thanks for the marked passage, but the matter needs larger treatment for ordinary readers.

R. AXELLEY.—The Liberation Society would refer you to, and supply you with, the latest literature on Welsh Disestablishment.

ELIZABETH LECHMERE.—Many thanks for your successful efforts to have the *Freethinker* placed upon the reading-room table of the Chiswick Free Library.

W. P. ADAMSON.—Such letters in the local press are of great value.

H. J. HYETT.—It was not a very savory case, and we let it pass. Thanks, all the same.

J. HEWITT.—It isn't our mission to be always correcting ignorant journalists. Events will show—are indeed already showing—who is right.

R. WALSH.—We have ventured to quote from your letter in "Sugar Plums." Yearly subscription handed over to shop manager. Yes, you could order the "Dresden" Ingersoll through our office.

LETTERS for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Shop Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Edit

The *Freethinker* will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid :—One year, 10s. 6d. ; half year, 5s. 3d. ; three months, 2s. 8d.

### Our Fighting Fund.

[The object of this Fund is to provide the sinews of war in the National Secular Society's fight against the London County Council, which is seeking to stop all collections at the Society's open-air meetings in London, and thus to abolish a practically immemorial right ; this step being but one in a calculated policy which is clearly intended to suppress the right of free speech in all parks and other open spaces under the Council's control. This Fund is being raised by the Editor of the *Freethinker* by request of the N. S. S. Executive. Subscriptions should therefore be sent direct to G. W. Foote, 2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to him.]

Previously acknowledged, £70 2s 9d. Received since :—T. Raff (W. Australia), £1 1s. ; Mrs. Mapp, 1s. 6d.

### Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote's subject at the Queen's Hall this evening (Nov. 24) will be "The Church and the Divorce Report." Generally the whole Report will be dealt with ; but specially the Minority Report reflecting the views of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the opposition of the Christian Churches to moral and social progress.

In the course of his lecture Mr. Foote will reply to Mr. Harold Begbie's article in the *Daily Chronicle* on the Majority Report as the "Manifesto of Materialism." Mr. Begbie is not an important person in himself, but he represents a great number of sentimentalists and loose thinkers, who nevertheless think themselves very wise and logical, and from that point of view he may be worth answering, especially as he enjoys access to the leading newspapers of the day.

There was a further improved audience at the Croydon Hall on Sunday evening, and Mr. Cohen's lecture gave great satisfaction. A lot of questions were asked afterwards, and very ably answered ; but a few of the orthodox tried to imitate the rowdy party in the House of Commons, and one had to be ejected. This evening (Nov. 24) Miss Kough occupies the platform. We hope there will be a large meeting, and no more disorder than a woman's tongue can deal with.

The Glasgow Branch holds a special meeting at noon to-day (Nov. 24) at the Secular Hall, Brunswick-street, the object being to form as strong and influential a committee as possible for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. Local "saints" are earnestly invited to attend.

The Bradlaugh Fellowship holds its eighth annual meeting on Wednesday, November 27, at 8 30 p.m., at the Shoreditch Radical Club, 43 New North-road. A social party follows, with speeches, songs, and dances. Admirers of Charles Bradlaugh will all be welcome.

We wish to call attention to the first Manifesto of the National Committee for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, which is inset in the present issue of this journal. The Committee wants means for its work, and we should be glad to see it well supported. The N. S. S. has subscribed £5 towards the initial expenses, and the rest must be left, of course, to the great body of sympathisers.

Number III. of the "Pioneer Pamphlets" is now on sale. It is the ever-popular *Mistakes of Moses* (the lecture edition) by Ingersoll, which has been out of print for some time. The present edition is a wonderful pennyworth. Freethinkers would find it a good pamphlet to buy and give away.

"Pardon my familiarity," writes an Irish correspondent, "but I somehow feel we have met before ; you have become so near to me through your writings. You have developed a most enviable literary style, and in your defence of Freethought you have made me more than your beneficiary. I have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for your Honorarium Fund and my year's subscription to the *Freethinker*, which I consider indispensable to every lover of pure literature and advanced ethical teaching."



## The Scope and Limits of Eugenics.—II.

(Concluded from p. 731.)

FREDERICK the Great, Pascal, Heine, Nietzsche, the Brönte sisters, Michael Angelo, Byron, and John Davidson all departed from the normal in some respect or other. And the roll of distinguished names representing those who have either remained unmarried or died childless is an imposing one. Kant, Hume, Gibbon, Macaulay, Herbert Spencer, Adam Smith, J. S. Mill, Handel, Beethoven, Newton, Pope, Johnson, Buckle, Carlyle, Ruskin, Tyndall, and Schopenhauer are a few only out of a lengthy list. There is evidently much to support the view entertained by various careful thinkers that high mental ability is opposed in some way to the procreative power. This conclusion has been lucidly set forth by Herbert Spencer in a celebrated chapter of his *Principles of Biology*. In this, his weighty arguments and illustrations all lead to the irresistible conclusion that individuation is more or less opposed to the successful exercise of the reproductive faculty.

It has often been the occasion of wondering comment that the children begotten by men of outstanding ability so seldom rise above a very ordinary average. Indeed, many of the offspring of distinguished fathers appear to be extremely commonplace. But of the family to which Francis Galton belongs this seeming paradox finds no place. On the contrary, Galton's family group is distinguished by a lengthy list of notable names. Erasmus and Charles Darwin; the great evolutionist's famous sons, Sir George Howard Darwin, the mathematician and astronomer; Professor Francis Darwin, the botanist; Major Leonard Darwin, the economist; Josiah Wedgwood, the celebrated potter; and Sir Douglas Galton, the eminent chemist, all sprang from the stock which gave us the founder of the science of eugenics. But in this particular family group high mental ability existed in both maternal and paternal ancestors: And the intermarriage of intellect with intellect very largely explains the maintenance of the mental quality of the family stock.

Were we always to remember that a mother as well as a father is involved in the reproductive process, possibly less surprise would be expressed when the male parent's ability fails to manifest itself in his offspring. Moreover, not only has each child two parents, but it has also four grandparents, eight grand-grandparents, sixteen great grand-grandparents, and so on, until in past generations it is found to include among its ancestors a large percentage of the earlier population. The child does not merely inherit the good or bad qualities of its immediate begetters; some of the characteristics of ancestors in all degrees of remoteness are to a certain extent transmitted. This explains the reversion of the offspring of genius towards the average normal type of the race. It is difficult, therefore, to exaggerate the importance which resides in descent from two healthy stocks endowed with ability which rises above the general level.

There is a large and increasing number of anti-social units in the majority of so-called civilised societies. Criminality is to some extent a disease, and criminologists have shown—more particularly in Italy—that this morbid condition runs in families. The congenital criminal is irreclaimable. Eighty per cent. of those who fall into prison life never fail to return thither. The amazing record of criminality and disease portrayed by Zola in his wonderful series of novels was drawn from the Penal Archives of France. In degenerate families in which the sons pursue a career of crime, the daughters frequently descend to the hideous calling of the harlot. Doubtless, a miserable social environment is largely responsible for this sad state of things. But a bad heredity is also partly responsible for these morbid social phenomena. In the notorious "Jukes family" of criminal degenerates, for instance, the percentage of prostitution among the females of marriageable

age down to the sixth generation was over 52 per cent., while the percentage of fallen women in the population generally has been estimated at 1.66. All recent inquiries justify the conclusions arrived at by Maudsley more than a generation ago. That great authority says:—

"The criminal class constitutes a degenerate or morbid variety of mankind, marked by peculiarly low physical and mental characteristics.....They are scrofulous, not seldom deformed, with badly formed angular heads; are stupid, sullen, sluggish, deficient in vital energy, and sometimes afflicted with epilepsy."

In some cases the criminal instinct is transmitted unchanged through several generations, as in a family history which Rossi investigated. In this unsocial group the insanity of the maternal grandfather showed itself in the form of instinctive criminality in his three children. In the succeeding generation the six sons all proved to be instinctive criminals, the seventh child, a daughter, alone escaping the taint.

It seems only rational to assume that society is entitled to protect itself against palpable degenerates of all kinds. Confirmed drunkards are no more fit to be at large than those unfortunate creatures who spread abroad, or bring into the world, children cursed with the loathsome disease of syphilis. Alcoholism is frequently, and syphilis nearly always, transmitted from parent to child. Few will dispute that the germ cells tend to be poisoned by the effects of these diseases. Dipsomaniacs and other pronounced degenerates are a curse to themselves and everyone connected with them. The State is therefore justified, if only in self defence, in refusing the right of procreation to congenital or chronic degenerates. Let them be treated with every kindness and consideration while they live, but safeguard them from handing on the burden of their curse to future generations.

To some it may seem a dangerous policy to in this way interfere with the freedom of the subject. But sentiment apart, the following remarks of Dr. Strahan are well warranted by all too obvious facts:—

"All men and women," he writes, "who have been insane once and have a bad family history, those who have been twice insane, even if the family history be good, and all who are confirmed epileptics and drunkards, should be prevented by the State from becoming parents, for they have no greater right to carry suffering and contamination amongst the people, and throw expense upon the State, than has a person suffering from small-pox to do so by travelling in a public conveyance. As with the victim of small-pox, it is their misfortune more than their fault, but of this society can take no notice. The unfortunate few must always suffer for the benefit of the many."

The difficulties which encumber the path of racial progress are legion. Eugenics, like charity, should begin at home, although it need not remain there. If we put our precepts into personal practice we shall make a brave beginning. Diseases are very frequently engendered through ignorance of the laws of healthy life. They also arise as a result of the deliberate disregard of notorious physiological requirements. Of course, the falsehood of extremes, whether in the direction of self-gratification or self-denial, must be avoided. Temperance in all things is the ideal to be aimed at, and, if possible, secured. Personal cleanliness is one of the greatest of virtues. Sexual excess, even where it is covered by the mantle of matrimony; intemperance both in eating and drinking, are among the greatest of the vices. Want of exercise, improper food, and bad air are all largely responsible for the diseases which have taken so firm a hold upon "civilised" humanity.

When breeding our animals or cultivating our gardens, we select the best seeds, shoots, and stocks. But in human breeding the pairing of the best partners for the production of progeny is usually the last consideration of all. As Lord Ernest Hamilton has recently written:—

"For the purposes of maintaining the race each man is allowed one woman. He is allowed to take any one woman who is willing to be taken. A feast is



given. Pipes and timbrels sound; names are written in a book; and what is otherwise wrong becomes right. But alas! the pipes sound and the Church blesses, and the crowd cheers quite impartially, whether twenty-five mates with twenty, eighty with eighteen, or tuberculosis with anæmia.\*

Many years ago a famous cartoonist hit off the eugenic problem to a nicety. A degenerate scion of an aristocratic house was musingly surveying some fine pedigree horses. "What remarkably fine animals, dem'd fine animals," he observed. "They come of fine stock, sir," said the carter. "My family is of fine stock," returned the aristocrat, "but we are not such very fine animals." "Well, sir," rejoined the man, "perhaps if as much care and attention had been devoted to the breeding of your family as we have given to the breeding of these horses possibly you would have been a better specimen of humanity."

The new science of eugenics, then, is concerned with the procreation of the better and the best. Disease, or the liability to disease, lurks everywhere in human society. To those about to marry with the prospect of adding to the population the sanest counsel dictates that prospective husbands and wives should be selected from sound and healthy strains. As in days of old, the sins of the fathers continue to be visited upon the children. In matrimonial alliances the physiological and mental efficiency of the immediate parents of the candidates for marriage, although, perhaps, the more important, are not the only factors to be taken into account. The mental and physical stability of more remote ancestors are frequently of very considerable importance. The health values of the stock as a whole should be, as far as possible, ascertained. With a good human pedigree as with a good animal pedigree, the parents may confidently enter on the path of reproduction. But such safeguards appear very necessary if the offspring are to enjoy the blessings of sanity and bodily health, while escaping the curses which mental, moral, and physical disease always carry in their train.

T. F. PALMER.

### Freethought and Peace.

THE first meeting of the newly elected Bureau of the International Freethought Federation took place at Brussels on November 6, and several delegates from the different nations affiliated with the Federation were in attendance. Some delegates sat there by proxy, and others sent excuses for non-attendance. Two of the members of the Bureau—our friend Magalhaes Lima and a Chinese Freethinker, Mr. Ain—represent the two new Republics of Portugal and China.†

The Bureau confirmed the resolution of the Munich Congress to hold the next International Freethought gathering at Lisbon, and Magalhaes Lima intimated that the Congress is to be held at the beginning of October, 1913, at a date which will enable the delegates to hold a festival to commemorate the proclamation of the Republic.

The other question discussed bore reference to the decision of the Munich Congress to issue a Manifesto to be placarded in the different countries in favor of international peace. M. Lorand pointed out that the danger of the present moment is the outbreak of wars between governments, which would degenerate into unpardonable massacre. The recent appeal to religious rancor in the Balkans is an ominous sign of danger. M. Hubbard, the distinguished French jurisconsult, urged the necessity of direct intervention on the part of organised Freethought in favor of international peace. In result, a Commission was appointed to draft the text of a Manifesto, and this was duly settled, and its publication in the different countries recommended.

\* *Involution*, p. 318.

† See *La Pensée*, November 10.

Subjoined is the translation of the Manifesto:—

"TO THE CITIZENS OF CIVILISED NATIONS.

"In execution of the mandate which it received from the International Freethought Congress (Munich), at its session held on September 3, 1912, the General Council of the International Freethought Federation, whilst applauding the declarations of Franco-German friendship unanimously expressed by the German and French delegates, has come to the solemn decision that the Peace agitation, without being the special aim of Freethought, is a necessity of civilisation, and naturally involves the duty of active co-operation on the part of Freethinkers in the cause of Peace.

"Whilst the abominations of war are horrifying the whole world, the chiefs of the nations and the heads of the Churches are invoking the blessings of their Almighty God upon the frightful means of destruction which the armed forces on land and sea are putting into operation during the homicidal struggles which are staining the world with blood.

"As rationalist Freethinkers who, in order to safeguard human lives and to secure the development of social progress, rely only upon solidarity, science, and industry, it becomes our duty indignantly to condemn the barbaric employment of the instruments of murder between the different races and peoples and between the diverse families of nations. It is the bounden duty of all Freethinkers and of all Freethought societies in every country to cry shame upon those who exploit the various religions for the purpose of perpetuating the regime of carnage on the field of battle.

"We demand that all genuine pure-hearted men and women should energetically make known the sense of reprobation for war felt by the universal conscience of mankind, and put pressure upon all governments to take measures for the purpose of establishing peace, and for securing by judicial conventions the solution of all international conflicts.

"The ideal which the religions have failed to establish, Freethought shall yet realise, viz.: *Peace between man and man!* Down with War! Let us organise Peace!"

This Manifesto is signed, for the International Freethought Federation, by the Permanent Bureau, viz.: Hector Denis, Député; Leon Furnémont, Député; Georges Lorand, Député; Eugène Hins, Professor; Jean Dons, Publicist; Mélanie Janssens, Professor; Emile Royer, Député; Eugène Monseur, Professor; Dr. Terwagne, Député; Houzeau de Lehay, Senator; and also by or on behalf of the different nations, including the present writer, as the N. S. S. representative.

Freethought societies, in English-speaking countries, are requested to reproduce this Manifesto and to advocate its principles. This might be done in co-operation with the Rationalist Peace Society.

An excellent pamphlet, giving an account of the various proceedings at the Munich Congress, has just been issued.\* Amongst other matters of interest, it contains a report of the discussion leading up to the resolution to draw up the above Manifesto, which was directed to be issued in order to set forth "the reprobation of war felt by the Freethinkers of all countries." The pamphlet is quite an interesting and important document, and deserves to be noted by the future historian of the modern Freethought movement. If only for the magnificent inaugural discourse of Dr. Hector Denis, its perusal would amply repay the philosophic student of Freethought.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

### Shakespeare and the Devil.

BY THE LATE J. M. WHEELER,

Sub-Editor of the "Freethinker" and Author of the "Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers," etc.

SHAKESPEARE has been claimed as an endorser of the superstition of his time, on account of his introducing witches, ghosts, and fairies in his plays. If this were so, it would not be wonderful. King

\* *Le Congrès de Munich*, par Marcel Alexander. (Bruxelles: 350, Chaussée de Boendale; pp. 40; 10 centimes).



James, to whom the Bible was dedicated, wrote a work on demonology, in which he said that witches kissed the Devil in imitation of God's showing his back parts to Moses (Exodus xxxiii. 33). After his time some of the most eminent men in English literature endorsed the Bible-founded belief in witchcraft. Sir Thomas Browne gave evidence at Norwich which led to the hanging of two poor women by Sir Matthew Hale. Dr. Henry More, Joseph Glanvil, Richard Baxter, and Meric Casaubon, all wrote against the Sadduceism which, denying the Devil and his angels, virtually challenged God and his. Addison "believed there is, and has been, such a thing as witchcraft," and John Wesley declared, "The giving up witchcraft is in effect giving up the Bible."

Shakespeare uses the supernatural, but his usage implies no belief, for he treats it as its master. We cannot prove he did not believe in fairies, ghosts, or witches, but we can show that he makes them subserve the purposes of his play. Mazzini observes:—

"The divine power has scarcely ever any direct intervention in the Shakespearean drama. The fantastic element, so frequently introduced, if closely examined, will be found never to depart from the individual sphere. His supernatural apparitions are all of them either simply personifications of popular superstition, or, like Caliban and Ariel, symbols of the duality of humanity; or, like the witches in *Macbeth*, the incarnation of human passions."

Note, however, that the weird sisters,—

"So withered and so wild in their attire  
That look not like the inhabitant o' the earth,  
And yet are on't—"

are not emissaries of the Devil, but the visible promptings of criminal desires. They are more akin to the Scandinavian Norns, or the Greek Furies, than to the Christian agents of hell. They own allegiance, not to Satan, but to Hecate. Here Shakespeare has seized the essential fact about witchcraft, to which sufficient attention has never been given. The stamping out of witchcraft was the suppression of Pagan rites which remained in Christendom until the seventeenth century. The worship of Hecate, with its lunar dances, survived in the "antic round" of the witches' Sabbat.

In his treatment of the belief in possession by devils Shakespeare shows himself to have been emphatically a Freethinker, who ridiculed the credulity of his times. He would deserve to rank among the liberators of mankind if only for his playing the devil with the Devil. The Gospel-supported belief in possession by devils was the occasion of much insanity, misery, and ill treatment of those under its baneful influence. Persons seized with epilepsy or madness were pinioned, confined in the dark, and frequently flagellated, to whip the offending devil out of them. The treatment is alluded to in *Romeo and Juliet* (i. 2):—

"Not mad, but bound more than a madman is;  
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,  
Whipp'd and tormented."

In the *Comedy of Errors* (iv. 4) is an amusing scene which further illustrates this. Dr. Pinch, as schoolmaster, is exhorted, as "a conjurer, to bring the alleged mad Antipholus of Ephesus back to his senses. Pinch says:—

"I charge thee, Satan, housed within this man,  
To yield possession to my holy prayers,  
And to thy state of darkness hie thee straight;  
I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven."

But all the saints in heaven do not avail, and Pinch declares:—

"Mistress, both man and master is possessed;  
I know it by their pale and deadly looks.  
They must be bound, and laid in some dark room."

The scene between Malvolio and the Clown in *Twelfth Night* (iv. 2) further caricatures the New Testament-supported idea of demoniacal possession and exorcism. The clown, arrayed in gown and beard, pretends to be Sir Topas, the curate, and speaks to the Devil within Malvolio: "Out, hyperbolic fiend! how vexest thou this man"; and when

Malvolio pleads, "Good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad; they have laid me here in hideous darkness," replies: "Fie, thou dishonest Satan! I call thee by the modest terms, for I am one of those gentle ones that will use the Devil himself with courtesy"; whereas the priestly exorcisers treated them contumeliously. In ridiculing possession by devils, Shakespeare was virtually discarding the New Testament, which countenanced that belief; and in jeering at exorcisms he was flying in the face of the canons of the Church of England, which recognise the exorcism of demons, but prohibit it to any but priests.

Another satire on the belief in possession is found in *King Lear*, where Edgar pretends to be mad and possessed. He says (ii. 3):—

"My face I'll grime with filth,  
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots."

Lodge, in his *Wits Miserie*, describing a devil whom he names Brawling-Contention, says: "His ordinary apparell is a little low-crowned hat with a feather in it like a fore-horse; his haire are wild and full of elves locks, and withy for want of kumbing." Edgar says:—

"This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet; he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth."

"St. Withold footed thrice the wold;  
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;  
Bid her alight,  
And her troth plight,  
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee."

Then he says:—

"Peace, Smolkin, peace, thou fiend.....  
The Prince of Darkness is a gentleman;  
Modo he's called and Mahu."

And later on:—

"Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend."

The very names of the evil spirits which Edgar pretends beset him, Archbishop Harsnet, in his *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (1603), tells us were those of the demons alleged to have been exorcised by Popish priests. Among these were Smolkin, Modo, Mahu, Frateretto, and Flibbertigibbet. No way of ridding the mind of belief in these "foul fiends" could be more effective than putting them into the mouth of one whom the audience knows is only pretending to be mad. And yet some people pretend that Shakespeare was a Roman Catholic! When Edgar describes the Devil, he depicts an incredible monster:—

"Methought his eyes  
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses;  
Horns welk'd and waved like the enridged sea."

The many stories of devils with awful names are again satirised when, in *Henry IV.* (ii. 4), Falstaff alludes to Glendower, as "he of Wales, that gave Amaimon the bastinado, and made Lucifer cuckold, and swore the Devil his true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook." Ford, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (ii. 2), says: "Amaimon sounds well, Lucifer well, Barbason well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends." In *Henry V.* (ii. 1) Nym tells Pistol: "I am not Barbason; you cannot conjure me."

Shakespeare satirises, too, the belief that the Devil could transform himself into any shape—a belief countenanced by Paul, who says (2 Cor. xi. 14) that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. Thus Prince Hal (1 *Henry IV.*, ii. 4) tells Falstaff, in the character of the King: "There is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of a fat old man..... That villainous, abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan." So in the *Merchant of Venice* (iii. 1), on the approach of Shylock, Salanio says: "Let me say amen batimes, lest the Devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew." In *Othello*, Iago tells Brabantio to seek his daughter, "or else the Devil will make a grand-



sire of you," owing to the Devil being regarded as black, and as acting the part of an incubus.

In the *Comedy of Errors* (v. 3) Antipholus of Syracuse says to a courtesan, "Satan! avoid! I charge thee, tempt me not." His servant Dromio says, "Master, is this Mistress Satan?" A.—"It is the devil." D—"Nay, she is worse, she is the devil's dam; and here she comes in the habit of a light wench; and therefore comes that the wenches say, 'God damn me'; that's as much as to say, 'God make me a light wench.' It is written, 'they appear to me like angels of light: light is an effect of fire, and fire will burn; ergo, light wenches will burn.'" And when she asks him to "mend our dinner," Dromio says: "Master, if you do, expect spoon meat, or bespeak a long spoon." A.—"Why, Dromio?" D.—"Marry, he must have a long spoon, that must eat with the Devil." In *Love's Labor Lost* (iv. 3), too, we have: "Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light"; and Constance, in *King John* (iii. 1), tells the Dauphin, "The Devil tempts thee here in likeness of a new, untrimmed bride." Hamlet pauses lest—

"The spirit that I have seen  
May be the devil: and the devil hath power  
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps  
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,  
As he is very potent with such spirits,  
Abuses me to damn me."

Here, giving the superstition of the time, our dramatist also shows its occasion, in weakness and melancholy. Farther light on the Devil is given when Cassio, in remorse for his drunkenness, says (*Othello* (ii. 3): "O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let me call thee—devil!" and, giving at once the rational, true, and poetic meaning of the word, he says: "It hath pleased the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath; one unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself." And yet again: "Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil." Thus does Shakespeare refine the old savage belief in a devil into the actuality which works evident woe among mankind. So in *Triolus and Cressida* we have the Devil as a metaphor. "How the Devil, Luxury.....tickles these together." That the devil is only evil spelled with a d—as god is good with one o—we may see from the exclamation, "I' the name of evil" (*Winter's Tale*, iv. 2), which is equivalent to "In the Devil's name."

### Tales of Our Times.

BY A CYNIC.

A lunatic who had escaped from his asylum, and had been wandering all day over the neighboring countryside, found himself, as evening approached in the grounds of a large private mansion. Creeping stealthily through the shrubbery, he reached an open window, and peeped into a large, luxuriously furnished room only dimly illuminated by the twilight. Here he saw some five or six persons, male and female, sitting in the semi-darkness round a small table, with their hands lightly placed on it in a continuous circle. Every face wore a look of deep solemnity, and an air of awed expectancy seemed to pervade the silent group. The lunatic watched this scene with great interest for some minutes, till the emotional tension of it became too much for him, and he tapped gently at the window.

"Ah, they are here," whispered one of the sitters to his neighbor.

"Hush!" whispered another. "We must keep absolute silence."

As nothing more happened, the lunatic presently tapped at the window again, a little more loudly than before, and at the same time said in a low voice: "'Ush be blowed. You'd better 'urry up or they will be 'ere, and then you'll lose this damned fine chance to 'ook it."

There was no mistaking the purely mundane origin of this communication, and the sitters, looking towards the window, saw the lunatic standing outside, and hastily approached him.

"Who are you?" asked one of them, "and what do you want?"

"Same as yourselves," said the lunatic; "but I'm free now. Got away from my place this morning very cleverly,

and been 'aving a jolly time all day, and you can do the same. 'Ere's the window open and not a blooming keeper to be seen. Now's your chance to 'ook it, so 'urry up afore a keeper comes along."

But, unfortunately for the lunatic, his own keeper came along just at that moment and took charge of him. "Found you at last!" he exclaimed. "A fine dance you have been leading us all day, my boy. Very sorry, ladies and gentlemen. I hope he has not been causing you any alarm or annoyance. He's generally quiet enough."

"Oh, it's all right, keeper," said one of the gentlemen inside the window. "He only startled us a little at our séance."

On their way back to the asylum the lunatic asked the keeper whether the people in the room weren't really inmates of a similar institution, since their actions lent such probability to that supposition.

"You were quite justified in thinking so, my lad," said the keeper, laughing. "And there's no denying that there are many folk outside asylums who might well be inside 'em."

### God and the Assassin.

JOHN SCHRANK tried to kill Col. Roosevelt the other day. It was a stupid as well as a cowardly act. But he said he was acting in the name of God. To what extent he was insane it is for the experts to ascertain. He seems, however, to be quite sane on religion. He believed that he was an instrument in the hand of God. Was that insanity? And he believed that God wanted him to kill his neighbor. If the Bible is true, that surely was not the first time that such an idea ever entered into anyone's head. If the people in the Bible, who did in the name of God just what Schrank attempted to do to Roosevelt were not insane, why is Schrank insane? "God has called me," he says, "to be his instrument." Where did he get the idea that God sometimes calls people as his instruments to commit murder for him? From the Bible.

But how can John Schrank prove that he is the instrument of God? Well, how can any man prove such a claim? All the proof that any Bible character or any Pope or Inquisitor ever gave that he was acting in the name of God was his own "say so," and John Schrank gives as much. If the proposition that God uses men as his instruments is sound, why is the man who claims that he is such an instrument insane? It is the proposition that is responsible for the delusion of such men as Schrank and his predecessors in Church and Bible history. Fortunately, few people live up to the teaching of the Church, and even the clergy are horrified when someone is foolish enough to try. The everlasting arms of Reason are about us all, the theologians included. At least six days in the week men try to be reasonable.

Again, if the teaching of the Bible is true, there is no possible way of proving that this man was not an instrument in the hands of God. Surely God could have prevented the act if he so desired. If he could not, why then do we pray for divine protection? And if he could protect, why was Roosevelt shot? "God moves in a mysterious way," reply the clergy. Precisely; but such a plea would prove that Schrank might for all we know have been, as he claims, an instrument in the hands of God, since there is no telling what God's ways are. If "So help me God," and "Almighty God is my witness," and "God is a strong defence," the language used by Schrank, do not prove that he was religiously sound, what would prove it? Reasonable conduct? But if reason is the supreme guide and criterion, what is the function of a revelation?

We are glad the madman failed to injure Mr. Roosevelt, and glad that it was a manuscript which helped to save the ex-President's life. Had it been a Bible given to him by his mother, and which he had been carrying in his breast, what a theme that would have been for the pulpits! It is a matter of congratulation that Mr. Roosevelt spared us the inanities and absurdities that would have been poured forth by the pulpits had he carried a Bible instead of a manuscript of his own next to his heart.

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

### SCHOOLROOM PHILOSOPHY.

In an essay on tobacco an intelligent schoolboy wrote as follows: "Tobacco is eternal, and when Raleigh and Bishop Ridley first smoked together the former remarked, 'Master Ridley, we have this day lit such a fire in England as will not soon be put out.'"

Teacher: Why would the Devil rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord?

Pupil: Because he could walk outside while the sermon was being preached.



## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice" if not sent on postcard.

### LONDON.

#### INDOOR.

QUEEN'S (MINOR) HALL (Langham-place, Regent-street, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The Church and the Divorce Report."

CROYDON PUBLIC HALL (George-street, Croydon): 7.30, Miss K. B. Kough, "Immortality."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workmen's Hall, Romford-road, Stratford, E.): 7.30, E. Burke, "Robespierre, the High Priest of the Revolutionary Spirit."

#### OUTDOOR.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): Wednesday at 8, Saturday at 8, Sunday at 12 noon and 8, Mr. Lieberman, Lectures.

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12 noon, Special Meeting for Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws; 6.30, Discussion, "Is God Moral?" Affirmative, W. C. Cochrane; Negative, C. Howat.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): 7, J. Arthur, "The Origin of Life."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): Joseph A. E. Bates, 3, "Religion, Science, and the End of the World"; 6.30, "The Religion of Ancient Egypt and its Survival in Modern Christianity." Tea at 5.

PRESTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Stanley Chambers, Lancaster-road, near Tram Office): Meeting.

#### OUTDOOR.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE: THOS. A. JACKSON—Leeds (Town Hall Square): Nov. 24, at 11, "Who Made God?" at 3, "Religion and Science"; at 6.30, "The Faith of an Infidel." Manchester (Tib-street): 25, at 7.30, "Who Made God?" Stockport (Mersay Square): 26, at 7.30, "Religion and Science." Ashton-under-Lyne (Market Ground): 27, at 7.30, "Bible and Beer." Manchester (Tib-street): 28, at 7.30, "The Faith of an Infidel." Failsworth (The Pole): 29, at 7.30, "Why I Reject Christianity." Manchester (Tib-street): 30, at 7.30, "Blasphemy Prosecutions."

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Secretary—MISS E. M. VANCE.

This Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularisation of the State, etc., etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

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