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The public know nothing of well-wishers, and keep a wary eye on those that would reform them.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

The "Unspeakable" Turk.

Two Years Under the Crescent. By H. C. Seppings Wright.
London: James Nisbet & Co. 10s. 6d.

DURING my recent illness—at least during a large part of it—I had no energy to read anything more than the newspapers. It was thus that I noticed a review of the above book in the *Daily News*, in which astonishment was expressed that the author claimed many virtues for the Turk, including the virtue of toleration. This seemed to strike the reviewer all of a heap. Fancy the Turk tolerant! He could not agree with the statement, neither could he answer it, so he just let the author's tribute stand. But my own curiosity was excited. I made up my mind to get a copy of Mr. Seppings Wright's book, expensive as it was. This I did as soon as I was well enough. I have read the book through, and I find that the author, like almost everyone else who has come into close personal contact with the Turk, regards him as a better gentleman than the great majority of his opponents, and as a constant sufferer from Christian abuse and misrepresentation.

A hundred years ago Byron, who knew the Levant so well, stated his own opinion very plainly, that whoever had dealings with a Turk would find him a gentleman, and that whoever had dealings with a Greek would find him a scoundrel. In a long note to the Second Canto of *Childe Harold* "On the Turks" he wrote with his usual force and decision:—

"If it is difficult to pronounce what they are, we can at least say what they are *not*: they are *not* treacherous, they are *not* cowardly, they do *not* burn heretics, they are *not* assassins."

Byron also pointed out (it was before Catholic Emancipation was carried) that the Turks treated the Christians under their rule with far greater toleration than Protestants treated Catholics in Great Britain, and especially in Ireland. Byron, it must be remembered, was not a Christian himself. That makes all the difference. He could take a disinterested view of the matter.

Carlyle had a bad opinion of the Turks. But he had no knowledge of them. And although he was not really a Christian himself he was, paradoxical as it may sound, a Christian bigot. With his usual graphic power he advised Europe to get rid of "the unspeakable Turk." The epithet was splendid from a literary point of view, and extraordinarily serviceable from a partisan point of view. It suggested that evidence was not necessary or was too bad to print. Yet it was well known to Carlyle that Russia was far fuller of tyranny, bloodshed, and misery than Turkey was. But, I repeat, he was a Christian bigot, though not a Christian; so the Sultan was a devil, and the Czar was simply "drilling anarchic populations" into law and order.

For my part, I venture to say that the average Turk has all along been a far more good-natured and tolerant person than the average Christian. I admit that under sufficient provocation the Turk has been cruel after the general fashion of his age and locality. But I contend that what the Turk has done

in hot blood the Christians have done in cold blood; what in the one was an outburst of temper was in the other a deliberate policy; and when the Christians have had an opportunity of imitating the Turk, as they blandly put it, they have always managed to better the example. Even in the present (or recent) war it is undeniable that the Christians have perpetrated shocking outrages upon the Mohammedans in Macedonia, Thrace, and elsewhere; while the evidence of outrages on the other side is of the flimsiest character. War correspondents in a position to know the facts—that is to say, who have been with the Turkish Army—deny that anything of the kind has occurred. Mr. Seppings Wright denies it too:—

"It was not possible to go through this campaign without hearing in various quarters the reports which had been circulated with regard to the massacre of Christians by the Turks. Personally, I cannot believe there was ever any substantial foundation for these rumors, and the inquiries I made did not induce me to change my opinions in regard to these allegations."

Mr. Wright reports something very different in the awful retreat after the battle of Lüle Burgas:—

"It is impossible to give more than a slight idea of the awful scenes witnessed on this retreat. A redeeming feature in it was the entire absence of mutiny or violence."

"Mohammedan and Christian were knit together in the common bond of suffering. At least a third of the crowd were Christians. The way in which members of one creed helped the other contradicts to some extent the theory that it is impossible for people of two religions to live together in harmony."

"The soldiers of Asia apparently did not resent the Christian refugees of Thrace sharing their troubles and lightening each other's burdens where it was possible to do so. Wearied children slept peacefully in the arms of rough soldiers."

Later on, when the refugees reached, or entered, Constantinople, Mr. Seppings Wright bears the following testimony:—

"This dark and dismal picture of human misery, reaching down to the lowest depths, will never be erased from my mind. That these terrible scenes and experiences did not produce serious outbreaks and inroads upon private property, proved the respect which the Turks have for law and order, and for the philosophy with which they regard calamities. What impressed me more than anything else was the display of human sympathy and the charity shown by them to their more unfortunate fellow countrymen, even when they were Christians."

Mr. Seppings Wright stayed at an hotel kept by a Greek in Constantinople. His customers were Turks, Greeks, and Jews, and there was no quarrelling. "I saw nothing," our author says, "of the objectionable demonstrations which were freely reported in the European journals—a fact which speaks volumes for the tolerance of the Turk." (This was the phrase that stuck in the throat of the *Daily News* reviewer.)

A Servian's tribute to the Turk, quoted by Mr. Seppings Wright, is worth quoting here. "The Turk," he said, "was the master of the Balkan nations for nearly five centuries. During all those centuries he consistently refrained from interfering with our national churches and with our village municipal life. From the liberty which the Turk left to our Church and our municipal life in the country, our political liberty was reborn."

(To be concluded.) G. W. FOOTE.

The Pathology of Conversion.—III.

(Concluded from p. 243.)

To the examples already given it may be as well to add this one from a missionary's account of a quite recent revival in India—July, 1906:—

"There were people.....on the floor fairly writhing over the realisation of sin as it came over them..... Saturday we were favored with a wonderful manifestation of the Spirit. One of the older girls, who had had a remarkable experience, went into a trance, with her head thrown back, her arms folded, and motionless, except for a slight movement of her foot. She seemed to be seeing something wonderful, for she would marvel at it, and then laugh excitedly.....One girl rushed to the back of the vestibule and, lying across a bench, with her head and hands against the wall, she fairly writhed in agony for two hours before peace came to her."*

I do not know on what ground we are justified in calling people civilised who chronicle these outbreaks as "manifestations of the Spirit." Savages would do no more; our "civilised" missionaries do no less. Tylor well says that "these manifestations in modern Europe indeed form part of a revival of religion, the religion of mental disease."†

The morbid state of mind induced by these attempts at conversion—a condition that may very easily become pathological—is illustrated by a number of the answers to Dr. Starbuck's inquiries. Seventy-five per cent. of the males and sixty per cent. of the females confessed to feelings of depression and sadness before conversion. In all probability this was partly due to the harping upon a "sense of sin," which is itself of a wholly unhealthy character. The following confessions well illustrate both points. I give the age, where known, in brackets. One writes:—

"I felt the wrath of God resting on me. I called on Him for aid, and felt my sins forgiven" (13).

"I couldn't eat, and would lie awake all night."

"Often, very often, I cried myself to sleep" (19).

"Hymns would sound in my ears as if sung" (10).

"I had visions of Christ saying to me, Come to Me, My child" (15).

"Just before conversion I was walking along a pathway, thinking of religious matters, when suddenly the word H-e-l-l was spelled out five yards ahead of me" (17).

"I felt a touch of the Divine One, and a voice said, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee; arise and go in peace'" (12).

"The thoughts of my condition were terrible" (13).

"For three months it seemed as if God's Spirit had withdrawn from me. Fear took hold of me. For a week I was on the border of despair" (16).

"A sense of sinfulness and estrangement from God grew daily" (15).

"Everything went wrong with me; it felt like Sunday all the time" (12).

"I felt that something terrible was going to happen" (14).

"I fell on my face by a bench and tried to pray. Every time I would call on God something like a man's hand would strangle me by choking. I thought I would surely die if I could not get help. I made one final effort to call on God for mercy if I did strangle and die, and the last I remember at that time was falling back on the ground with that unseen hand on my throat. When I came to myself there was a crowd around praising God."

A crowd around praising God! For all substantial purposes one might as well be describing a state of affairs in Central Africa instead of depicting events in a country claiming to be civilised. It is no wonder that so eminent an authority as Sir T. S. Clouston says revival services and unusual religious meetings should "on no account be attended by persons with weak heads, excitable dispositions, and neurotic constitutions."‡ Unfortunately, it is precisely these classes that are most attracted to them, and which furnish the revivalist with his largest crop of cases.

"Every revival," says Dr. Mercier, "is attended by its crop of cases of insanity, which are the more numerous as the 'revival' is more fervent and more prolonged."* To actual insanity we may add all kinds of hysterical and nervous disorders; and it is not at all difficult to see a sound physiological reason for this. Let us bear in mind that the central significance of adolescence—the period during which nearly all cases of conversion occur—is that it is a time of instability and readjustment, physical, emotional, intellectual. It is a time of unavoidable stress and strain, of the impact of new mental associations and groupings, of new feelings that crave expression and new desires that press for gratification. It is because of this peculiarly unstable and impressionable condition that the organism needs to be shielded from undue stress, and also because of the neglect or the impossibility of doing this, that so large a crop of nervous disorders first show themselves during adolescence. Dr. Clouston says that about one-half the inhabitants of Scotch asylums are under twenty years of age, and gives a whole crop of diseases as first manifesting themselves during adolescence.†

Dr. W. R. Gowers, dealing with 1,450 cases of epilepsy, says that "Three quarters of the cases of epilepsy begin under twenty years, and nearly half (46 per cent.) between ten and twenty, the maximum being at fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen."‡ Of hysteria also the same writer says that of the total cases of hysteria, 50 per cent. occur from ten to twenty years of age, 20 per cent. from twenty to thirty years of age, and only 10 per cent. from thirty to forty.§ And, in view of the cases of converts cited above, it is well to note Dr. Gowers's warning that "Mental emotion—fright, excitement, anxiety—is the most potent cause of epilepsy," while "the profoundly disturbing effect of alarm on the nervous system, deranging as it does almost every function of the nervous system, enables us to understand its frequency as an excitant of epilepsy."

Yet is precisely at this stage of life when care ought to be exercised to protect the youth from all that is morbid or unduly exciting, and, above all, when the developing qualities of mind need to be carefully and wisely guided in order that the social qualities shall be exercised in the most useful manner, that young people are handed over to the ignorant ministrations of professional evangelists. It is small wonder that so large a proportion of the people grow up with such a rudimentary sense of social duty and obligation. The really golden years of their lives are wasted. What Professor Davenport says of the relation between certain brutal manifestations of social life and religious teaching in America, applies with equal truth to ourselves:—

"It is well-known that lynching in the South is carried on largely by the ignorant and baser elements of the white population. It is also well-known that the chief method of religious influence and training of the black man and the ignorant white man is impulsive and emotional revivalism. It is a highly dangerous situation, and deserves the earnest consideration of the ecclesiastical statesmen of all denominations which work in the South. It will be impossible to protect that part of the nation, or any other, from the epidemic madness of the lynching mob if the seeds of it are sown in the sacred soil of religion.....Their preachers are great 'soul-savers,' but they lack the practical sense to build up their emotionalised converts into anything that approaches a higher life."||

The truth indicated here is much wider than Professor Davenport imagines. It is true that so long as the revivalistic type of religion is encouraged we are unconsciously assisting certain very ugly manifestations in social life. But it is also true that so long as we allow the religious interpretation of life to prevail we can never make the most of the human material that lies at hand. For while the process of

* The *Examiner*, September 6, 1906. Cited by Crutten, *Psychological Phenomena of Christianity*, p. 185.

† *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii., p. 421.

‡ *Clinical Lectures*, p. 39.

* *Sanity and Insanity*, p. 282.

† *The Neuroses of Development*.

‡ *Manual of Diseases of the Nervous System*; 1893; p. 732.

§ *Manual*, p. 786.

|| *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*.

what is called "religious awakening" encourages, in its more sensational aspects, displays of morbidity which we should do our best to restrain, in its quieter and better aspects it amounts to a sheer misdirection and misuse of human energies. The increase of self-consciousness, the desire to spend oneself in the service of others, the craving for sympathy and communion with one's fellows, has nothing whatever to do with religion, although all these qualities are utilised by it and are classified as religious. They are actually and fundamentally belonging to the social side of human nature. As our hands are developed for grasping, and the various organs of the body for their respective functions, so the mental and emotional qualities are developed in their due course for a rational, social life. Biologically, male and female, at adolescence, are entering into a deeper and more enduring relationship with the life of the race. There is no other meaning to the process.

Naturally enough, men and women, whether they be old or young, but particularly if they be young, express their feeling in accordance with the fashion of their environment. If this were rationally non-religious, the language would be that of a non-religious philosophy. As, however, religion plays a large part in determining the form of the environment, we have, in the majority of cases, quite a contrary result. Only here and there is one found capable of analysing his or her feelings, and very few possess the knowledge that would make such an analysis profitable. The consequence is, that each newcomer is handed over, bound hand and foot, to organisations that are either incapable or unwilling to train a plastic human nature in the right direction. We do not merely sacrifice our first-born; we immolate the whole of our progeny. The ignorant past plays into the hands of the designing present; the past conspires with the present to rob the future of the good that might come to it from the growth of a wiser and a better race.

Were society really enlightened and genuinely civilised, the truth of much that has been said would be recognised as soon as stated. It would, indeed, be unnecessary to labor what would then be a recognised truth. But we are not genuinely enlightened, and a host of agencies conspire to prevent us becoming so. Thus, it is that, instead of an explanation of development in terms of biological and social evolution, we have an explanation in terms of ideas that are essentially pre-scientific. Because the individual, as James says, emerges out of the narrow world of childhood into the larger world of humanity, we are given an explanation in terms of a religious or supernatural influence. Because this development involves a certain surrender of one's egoism to the needs of others, supernaturalism again claims to be the operative force. And when this diminished, or, more properly, transfigured egoism leads to the desire for service, or even sacrifice, we have once more an explanation in terms of religious conviction. In reality there is not a heightening of life by supernaturalism, but its exploitation. This is the central truth of the situation. And in ignoring this truth we hand over the care of a growing generation to the worst possible teachers at the very time when a wiser control would be preparing it for intelligent participation in the serious and enduring work of social organisation.

C. COHEN.

Evolution and Creation.

THE supernatural origin of the Universe has always been regarded as a religious truism. Until very recently no theologian ever dreamed of taking the story of Creation as related in the Book of Genesis as anything but literal history. It was so accepted by Gladstone in his memorable controversy with Huxley in the *Nineteenth Century*, and it is so understood by the bulk of Christians to-day. Since the

advent of evolution, the more scholarly among present-day theologians argue that the Biblical story is either a poem or a parable, and that its value consists not in its historical accuracy, but in the religious ideas that underlie it. This was the interpretation put upon it by Henry Drummond when he intervened in the Gladstone-Huxley debate. Towards the end of his life Drummond became an out-and-out evolutionist, as so many others have done since; but not one of the theologians who have adopted evolution is prepared to abandon the theory of creation altogether. Most of them readily enough admit that all existing species of plants and animals are products of evolution, and not special creations; but they all with one voice contend that the stuff out of which all forms of existence have been evolved was brought into being by a Divine act of creation. The essential point in this contention is that existence has had a beginning, or that there was a time when God existed alone. Now, the question is, if the Universe began to be, how did it originate? To say that God made it explains nothing. When a man makes anything it is, not understood that he brings anything into being that did not previously exist, but, rather, that he takes some already existing stuff and fashions it anew. To affirm that God made the Universe in that sense is merely to complicate the problem. One instantly wants to know whence the original stuff came which he moulded into the Universe. There are, however, in the United Kingdom alone some two millions and-a-half people whose Catechism teaches them to believe that "the work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing by the word of his power."

Thus, on the assumption that God made the Universe, we are confronted with three distinct interpretations of the act. He either fashioned or shaped it out of an existing stuff, wove it out of his own substance, as the silkworm spins the threads of its cocoon, or created it of nothing by so many words of his mouth. The word *create* in Genesis i. 1 is not at all decisive, inasmuch as, according to Canon Driver, its root meaning is to *cut*, so that probably the proper signification of the Hebrew *bara* is to *fashion by cutting, to shape*; but, then, we are told that "in the simple conjugation, it is used exclusively of God, to denote, viz., the production of something fundamentally new, by the exercise of a sovereign originative power, altogether transcending that possessed by man." Whatever be the exact meaning of the Hebrew word *bara* as found in Genesis i. 1, the general Hebrew belief was that the heavens and the earth had been made out of nothing. In 2 Maccabees vii. 28, we read: "I beseech thee, my child, to lift thine eyes unto the heaven and the earth, and to see all things that are therein, and thus to recognise that God made them not of things that were." In Hebrews xi. 3, also, we find words of the same import: "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear." Taking all things into account, it seems impossible to escape the idea of *creatio ex nihilo*, though it may not be necessarily implied in the terms employed.

Now, the Theist bases his whole argument upon the assumption that the Universe is a manufactured article of enormous proportions, a thing made once for all at a given time named "the beginning." In other words, the Universe is treated as an effect the cause of which must be chance or purpose. "Remember," exclaims the Theist, "there is no third alternative." On the assumption under consideration, we admit the truth of that exclamation; but then we repudiate the assumption because of its absolute unverifiableness. There is not even the shadow of evidence that the Universe ever began to be. Our solar system has doubtless had a beginning, but astronomy tells us of solar systems which have run their course and become extinct, and of others which are now in the process of formation. Solar systems may come and go, like drops of water in a river, but Nature goes on for ever. There is, then, a third

alternative, namely, that the Universe is infinite both in extent and in duration. This also, we admit, is only an assumption fairly based upon scientific experiments. Using it meantime merely as an assumption, we claim that its services are altogether invaluable. It rids us of the illogical bugbear of a *First Cause*. We frankly admit that assuming a First Cause we are bound to believe in a Final Cause, because the former can only be justified by the latter; but in Nature we can find no trace of either. A First Cause is a contradiction in terms, because the law of causation implies the impossibility as well as the absurdity of an uncaused Cause. "Oh," objects the theologian, "you believe in an uncaused Universe, which is certainly an infinitely greater absurdity than an uncaused Cause." We are exultantly told that a certain well-known apologist "hits the nail on the head when he says that to demand a cause for a First Cause is only to assert that the First is second—which is absurd." To show how well he has driven the nail home, the said apologist adds: "Everything must have a cause, but God is not included in the everything, but is the Source of everything." How does he know that God is not included in the "everything"? We have only his word for it, unsupported by a single argument. We demand a Cause for the so-called First Cause, because we know of no exception to the law of causation; and all that the Theist can bring forward in defence of his position is the bald assertion that the First Cause is uncaused simply because it is the Source of all things.

Not only is the idea of a First Cause illogical and absurd, but it is also disproved by the facts of Nature, so far as they are known. In the first place, matter is both uncreatable and indestructible. As to its forms, it is in a state of perpetual impermanence, coming and going without ceasing, "but," to adopt the words of Sir Oliver Lodge, a reluctant witness—"but it can hardly be thought of as either going out of existence, or as coming into existence, at any given period, though it may completely change its form and accidents" (*Life and Matter*, p. 101). When you burn a lump of coal you only apparently destroy it; but in reality you only change it into carbonic acid gas by combining it with the oxygen in the atmosphere. No new matter has ever made its appearance, and we are confident that such an event is never likely to occur in the future. In the second place, the same statement is true of energy. Energy may be potential or active, but its sum never varies. You may change its form from time to time, backwards and forwards, almost endlessly, but you cannot destroy it. You can change motion into heat, into light, into electricity, and back again, without intermission; but when all your experiments are over, energy is the same in amount as before. As Professor Moore, of Liverpool, says:—

"Energy may pass from one form to another, and the quantity present in any given form may and does vary, for it is the passage from one form to another, which constitutes all natural phenomena; but there is no manufacture or destruction of energy, there is the same quantity of energy in the Universe as was in the beginning, and shall be for ever. These two great tenets are fundamental in the orthodox faith of the scientific world of to-day" (*Origin and Nature of Life*, p. 29).

If these two wonderful laws—the persistence of matter and the conservation of energy—hold good in Nature, the idea of creation is necessarily excluded. If matter and energy are neither creatable nor destructible, it follows that Nature is eternal. Solar systems are but so many changing forms of matter and energy.

But there is a precious last straw at which the Theist, in desperation, always catches. Powerless to disprove the two great laws just described, he flies for refuge to the oft discredited argument that whatever is present in the effect must, likewise, exist in the cause. Inasmuch as we are intelligent and self-conscious, it is contended, the power behind the whole of the evolutionary process must possess

intelligence and self-consciousness; else how could we have been produced? This is an entire fallacy. Anyone who understands Nature at all is fully aware that every effect exhibits qualities which are not present in the cause. The wetness of water is a characteristic which neither hydrogen nor oxygen displays: it is a quality that only results from the combination of the two. Life is the outcome of a specific combination of materials every one of which is to be found in inorganic Nature. As soon as the chemists discover the exact nature of the combination they, too, will doubtless be able to produce living matter. Intelligence is the natural product of the gradual evolution of living substance. When living matter first appeared it showed no signs whatever of intelligence; but as it slowly advanced from the simple to the complex, from the rude to the refined condition, resulting in a centralised nervous system and a brain, it gradually became more and more intelligent, until self-consciousness and personality made their appearance.

We therefore conclude that evolution, scientifically apprehended; excludes the idea of a creator and a creation, and in particular the idea of a purposive direction or conscious guidance towards a designed end. Evolution may be compared to a tree whose fruit is intelligence. If you were to investigate the roots and the trunk of the tree you would see no promise whatever of this incomparable fruit: it is not present at all in either roots or trunk, but is the ultimate reward of the combined action of soil and air upon roots and trunk. One is continually meeting people who labor under the delusion that because there is intelligence at the top of the evolutionary process, intelligence must have been present at the very bottom, and all the way through. They seem incapable of realising that mind, consciousness, personality, call it what you will, is the flower, the fruit, appearing for the first time after the process had been at work for countless millions of years.

J. T. LLOYD.

Animal Metamorphosis.

As the most unsophisticated person is aware, the human infant is developed in the course of nine short months from a tiny protoplasmic speck. In a few weeks frog-spawn passes through various stages, which end with the evolution of the adult amphibian; and the metamorphic history of the countless insects commences with a minute egg. Yet these notorious facts, so obvious to all, have so far failed to impress their real meaning upon the mind of the ordinary average man.

One may still hear, as the writer quite recently heard, men of quite ordinary intelligence express their astonishment at the circumstance that not only the entire scientific world, but the vast majority of brain-workers in every department of civilised life, have calmly accepted a doctrine which manifestly implies that in the course of organic evolution living organisms have become so modified that they bear no outward resemblance to their remote ancestors.

Many, and probably most, animals live in surroundings widely dissimilar to those of their far-off progenitors. And their development from the eggs or spawn of their parents, up to the adult condition, is largely reminiscent of the evolutionary modifications which have marked their upward growth.

The metamorphic processes in toads and frogs are very extensive, and may be observed quite easily in any available pond. When the embryo emerges from the egg, it is composed of head and body only, but the tail makes its appearance in the course of a few days, and the tadpole stage is then attained. As the tail develops, the external gills begin to form, the mouth appears, and the intestine lengthens and becomes coiled. Numerous microscopic teeth arise in the mouth, and these are many times shed. As the tadpole is transformed into a toad or frog, the entire body is renewed. As the lungs develop, the

external gills shrivel away. The permanent teeth develop; the intestine changes from its coiled form into a shortened and straightened organ. The feeding habits are also modified, and instead of subsisting on decaying vegetable and animal substances suspended in the water, the animal preys on snails and insects. The fore limbs now begin to protrude, the tail dwindles away, finally the hind limbs lengthen, and, with the absorption of the gills, the metamorphosis is complete. The frog now leaves the water and makes its way to the land, there to lead its terrestrial life. Most amphibians undergo somewhat similar transformations. In a small number of instances, however, the absence of water or other causes have necessitated direct development from the egg, and the consequent suppression of metamorphosis. Variations in temperature, or the scarcity of food, are sometimes responsible for the retardation of such evolutionary phenomena as those above set forth.

In all the vast range of insect life, the metamorphosis of the butterfly is most complete. The career of this interesting insect is distinguished by four distinct stages, the egg, larva, pupa, and imago or perfected adult. As soon as the egg is hatched, the emerging larva creeps over its food plant and voraciously devours the foliage. After a time, the gluttonous caterpillar changes into a fasting pupa or chrysalis, and remains almost motionless. Although no food is taken during this resting or pupa stage, very important structural changes are proceeding. With the completion of the pupa period of probation, the ugly creature is transformed into the peerless butterfly. The powerful jaws of the greedy caterpillar have disappeared, and the winged butterfly is provided with a suctorial proboscis, beautifully adapted for probing the corollas of blossoms. Although, as above hinted, these changes appear to occur suddenly, the internal transformations which lead up to them are constantly proceeding. From one to three days before entering the chrysalis stage, the larva appears impatient and restless, and ceases to feed:—

"If a spinner it spins a cocoon, or if not it enters the earth to undergo its transformation into a chrysalis, or if a larval butterfly it attaches itself to some fixed object as a tree or fence. Profound changes now take place in the mouth parts as well as in the nervous, muscular, and other systems of internal organs."*

The various stages which make up the life of the privet hawk-moth afford a further example of insect metamorphosis. The moth lays her eggs on that common evergreen—the privet, and when the caterpillars hatch out they feed on the foliage. These are jointed worm-like larvae, whose heads are provided with six simple eyes, a pair of minute three-jointed antennæ and biting jaws. The caterpillar moults three or four times, and before the final moult occurs it stops feeding and wanders aimlessly over its feeding plant. It has now reached its pupal period, and proceeds to search for a suitable spot for pupation. The privet hawk-moth caterpillar then descends to the earth and scoops out a dry burrow in the soil. There the final moult is carried out, the pupa or chrysalis emerges, and very shortly becomes stiff and brown. A careful examination of the chrysalis at this stage proves that it resembles a moth much more closely than the caterpillar from which it was derived. The chrysalis displays a head and body of a moth-like form; it is provided with the appendages of a moth, and betrays the presence of short-folded wings. As soon as the moth is matured, its wings expand and its aerial life begins.

But immense as are the differences between the unsightly grub-like larva and the frequently beautiful winged moth, these are, nevertheless, not nearly so remarkable as those which separate the maggot of a blow-fly from the adult insect. The blow-fly drops its eggs on animal matter, and the insect displays a marked preference for meat which sends forth the odors of putrefaction. These

eggs hatch out into small dingy-headed white maggots. These larvae or "gentles" are provided with a pair of powerful jaws with which they gorge upon the meat in which they have been hatched. Their body integument is of a tough, leathery character, quite destitute of limbs. Twice or thrice these leathery, limbless maggots moult, growing larger meanwhile, and immediately after their concluding moult their body assumes an oval form, which continues to retain the larval skin, although the skin parts with its moisture and changes its color from white to brown. After the pupa has remained motionless for a day or two, the brown skin breaks, and the fully formed fly issues forth, and in a few moments is winging its way through the air. The adult insect is as utterly unlike the maggot which is hatched from the egg as any creature can conceivably be.

Nor is this all. In the words of Professor Chalmers Mitchell,—

"With the exception of the nervous system and parts of some other organs, it seems as if the whole of the organs within the hardened skin of the larva were melted down and became rearranged to form the very different organs of the adult. Patient and extremely difficult dissections, however, have shown that there is an intelligible order in this transformation. Some time before the fly emerges it is surrounded by two delicate and transparent skins. The inner of these, if we can imagine it taken out whole, plumped up with air, and dried, would have the appearance of a fly with a head bearing antennæ, eyes, and mouth organs, etc., like those of a living fly, but rather simpler. This skin is the pale ghost of a former metamorphosis, of a true moult once passed through by the ancestors of the flies, but now on its way to being suppressed. The outer skin is the similar remains of a still earlier moult, and its structure, although fly-like, is less fly-like than the inner skin."

The foregoing phenomena may be regarded as salient illustrations of progressive evolution. In other instances, however, metamorphosis proceeds along paths of degenerative evolution. Professors Herdman, Haeckel, Ray Lankester, Kowalevsky, and other eminent naturalists have laboriously elaborated the developmental processes of the tunicates or ascidians. The well-known sea squirt is a member of this animal group, and the larvae of these organisms are little tadpoles which swim actively in the sea. As the larvae approach the adult sea squirt or ascidian form, their tails, and the main parts of the nervous system, with its organs of sight and hearing, disappear. The gullet, with its adjacent body parts, becomes much larger in proportion to the general size of the animal, until these mouth organs make up the greater part of the body, which now permanently settles down to a stationary mode of life. The wall of the ascidian's gullet is now modified into a sieve-like structure, provided with numerous orifices through which the sea water is strained, thus leaving behind the tiny particles which serve as the creature's food. Such are the changes which the energetic swimming larva, whose structure strongly resembles that of the lower vertebrates, undergoes as it sinks to the level of a stationary digesting sac which sucks in liquid at one opening and discharges it at another.

Before these metamorphic phenomena were discovered, no naturalist imagined that the adult degenerate ascidian had any close relationship to the back-boned animal class. This relationship, however, is rendered very obvious by the relatively advanced structure of the ascidian tadpole. The greater number of zoologists are now convinced that the active, free-swimming tadpole represents ancestral remembrances of the originally life-long condition of the organism. And they also regard the stationary and stagnant condition of the adult ascidian as an instance of utter degeneration. Embryological and anatomical considerations lead to the unavoidable conclusion that the sea squirts are lowly forms of the vertebrate animals, which, in their higher forms, completely dominate the world of life. The sea squirts have not participated in the progress which as a whole distinguishes the back-boned organisms.

* Professor A. S. Packard, *Metamorphosis*.

Strenuous endeavor is to them unknown, but, despite their indolent habits, remembrances of their illustrious origin are made visible during their course of development.

Rising to a more exalted order of animal existence, we discover in the transformations which take place among flat fishes, such as the sole and the turbot, phenomena of a very remarkable nature. These fish metamorphoses appear to be directly conditioned by the circumstances which shape the lives led by the larvæ and adults respectively. Flat fishes form an important family, which are to be found in all seas, while some have adapted themselves to fresh-water life. The young forms of such fishes as brill, halibut, plaice, soles, and others present striking contrasts to the adults. Their general outline is that of ordinary fishes, such as the salmon or roach. In other words, they are bilaterally symmetrical, with an eye on each side of the head, with the right and left sides of the body alike in shape, coloring, and arrangement of the fins. "Whether they live near the surface of the sea, or haunt the bottom, they swim in the same sort of position as we do when we are using the ordinary breast stroke, that is to say, the back is upwards, the under side is downwards." The upper side, again, as in symmetrical fishes, is far darker in color than the pale under side. Not only are the larvæ of newly hatched flat fish identical in form with ordinary free-swimming fish, but like them, they pursue their prey in the normal predaceous manner. When the larvæ have grown to about half-an-inch in length, remarkable modifications occur. The right and left sides of the fish lose their original color. With the sole, plaice, and halibut the right side, and with turbot and brill, the left side darkens in color, whilst the opposite side of the body loses its color and becomes almost completely white. The skull of the larval fish is gristly and plastic, and the eye on the uncolored side of the body now begins to move partly round and partly through the head, until it reaches the other eye on the dark surface of the body. The two eyes remain close together permanently. While the above changes are taking place, the shape of the body and the position of the organs are modified, and the originally normal-shaped fish is transformed into a distorted adult. Thus it is that "what we would call at first sight the upper side, not being the real back of the animal, but the right side in some cases, the left in others." When the transformation is complete, the fish's mode of life changes. It no longer swims eagerly in the water, but falls to the bottom and lies amid the sand or mud with its dark side uppermost. "In these cases," writes a leading biologist, "there can be almost no doubt but that the larva, which is like the great majority of fish, is the ancestral form, and that the change to the adult condition is a condensed and rapid repetition of the slow ancestral history."*

T. F. PALMER.

Dr. Dixon, of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, is a master in the art of Christian begging. The other Sunday his subject was "Hilarious Giving." Giving, he represented as a species of sowing, saying, "He that soweth abundantly shall reap abundantly." Christian giving is giving in order to get. "God gives to those who give," exclaimed this servant of Jesus. It is an old dodge. "Give," cried a colored clergyman to his people, standing invitingly behind a table in front of the pulpit, "and the Lord will repay you fivefold." Ruminating on that at the back of the little church, a young Kaffir, with one sovereign in his pocket, rose and marched ostentatiously down the aisle, and with a magnificent swing of the arm, thrust the gold piece on the table and returned. Every day that week he expected to receive £5, but the Lord delayed the repayment, with that noble interest promised in his name by the minister. The young fellow waited anxiously for weeks and months, but at last his patience ran out, and he went to the minister and said, in a temper, "Give me back my money; you lied when you said the Lord would pay me back fivefold; he hasn't given me a farthing."

* Professor P. C. Mitchell, F.R.S.

Acid Drops.

We are not at all surprised that the Home Secretary has seen it wise, in the exercise of such intelligence as he possesses, to prohibit the Suffragettes from holding meetings in Hyde Park and elsewhere. We are not concerned either to defend or attack the methods of the Militant Suffragettes, but we are vitally concerned with the right of public meeting, which has been attacked more than once during the lifetime of the present Government. When certain Freethought meetings were prohibited because Christians publicly declared that they would create a disturbance if they were held, the Home Secretary decided that the true policy was to threaten with imprisonment those who proposed to speak at such meetings. It was pointed out at the time that these tactics involved a serious breach of public freedom, but we are not surprised that further steps have been taken in the same direction. The real position at present is this: So long as a man is not a member of the Government—an exception was made in the case of Mr. Churchill's meeting in Belfast—any gang of ruffians who make up their minds to create a disturbance can prevent an opinion finding public expression. And this is really mob law with the full sanction of the Government. It is the mob that determines whether certain meetings shall be held or not, and the Home Secretary in a Liberal Government meekly announces that if it will only make its wishes known he will see they are enforced. For our part, so long as a speaker is expressing opinions that he or she has a right to express, adequate protection should be given, even though it involved the use of armed force. And if the opinions expressed are contrary to law, it is the place of the law to deal with them, not the mob. It is idle saying that the Government cannot maintain order if the meetings are permitted. A Government that cannot do this should resign or make room for more capable men. At all costs the right of public meeting should be upheld. It was the turn of the Freethinker yesterday; it is the turn of the Suffragette to-day. Who can say whose turn it will be tomorrow? King Mob has but to speak, and Mr. McKenna will see that his wishes are obeyed.

The editor of the *Catholic Review* contributes an article on "The Failure of Religion in England." "Religion," he says, "no longer counts as a factor in the life of the nation. It is true a diminishing section of the population worship at the ancient shrines; but an overwhelming majority simply pass them by, with that sort of benevolent indifference that is so much more hopeless than the bitterest hostility." "Even, perhaps, as an interesting archaeological pursuit," the writer adds, "Christianity no longer exercises its influence on the generality of people, and such influence as remains to it is declining swiftly enough, even among that small section that still in some sort acknowledge its claims."

"Even the Celtic temperament of Wales," the Catholic editor points out, "is feeling the influence of the movement away from God." And the worst of it all is that "the religious leaders of the people" fail to "apprehend this great fact," they do not "grasp its meaning" or "propose any adequate remedy," which "only adds to the pitiful hopelessness of the situation." It is only the Roman Catholic Church that "maintains her position; she has progressed at Liverpool, for instance, while the Protestant Churches have all lost ground;" but she does not show "any great eagerness to fill the void" caused by the general failure of Christianity.

"The movement away from God" is, by the way, a very queer expression. If the existence of God is a fact, how on earth could anybody or anything move away from him? Would it not be just as sensible to talk of the planets of our system joining in a common movement from the sun? They all have a movement of their own, it is true, but they cannot resist the attraction of the great centre of the system they belong to. There is a centrifugal force, but the centripetal force is greater.

All sorts of by-reasons for the failure of Christianity are assigned by Protestant journalists. The Editor of the *Catholic Review* assigns but one. "The true cause," he says, "is to be found in this, that men no longer believe. They are not, with few exceptions," he adds, "hostile to religion; they have simply turned away from it as belonging to an age that has passed."

A demonstration of Catholics was held on April 15 at the St. George's Hall, Liverpool, on the education question. Cardinal Bourne, who was the principal speaker, said that

the Government could deal with the education question in four divisions—one representing the Roman Catholics, another Nonconformists, a third the Church of England, and a fourth the Jews. Of course, it was beneath Cardinal Bourne's notice that a section of the British people, certainly larger than the Jews, were on principle opposed to the State teaching any religion in State schools. But either it does not suit the Cardinal's game—which in this instance is that of Christians in general—to admit that this class exists, or he was indulging in the common assumption that it was only the convictions of religious people that need be bothered about. This, we repeat, is the usual policy of Christians, and it indicates how much genuine concern they have either for education or for social justice. Education is treated as though it were no more than a mere scramble for church or chapel influence. So long as these are satisfied, everything is assumed to be all right. Nor ought one to blame either church or chapel overmuch for so acting. The real blame rests with the general public which allows the educational future of the children to be either sacrificed or made the subject of dishonorable "deals" between religious organisations and a Government that sees what is right, but lacks the courage to do its duty.

We quite agree with Cardinal Bourne that it is an outrage on Catholic common sense to ask them to be content with a religion in the schools that is "rank Protestantism." Protestants only agree to the religious instruction because, if it is not *all* they require, it gives them nothing they object to. On the other hand, the very form of the religious instruction is contrary to what the Catholics desire, and we believe they would prefer religious instruction being left out altogether. The truth is that neither religious party can get what they really want, because what they want can only be obtained at the cost of other parties in the State. Archbishop Whiteside said at the same meeting that Catholics were the real enthusiasts for education because of the trouble they took to educate their children. We beg to submit that the Catholic Church is enthusiastic for nothing of the kind. Its enthusiasm is best seen in a country like Spain, where education is in a more backward state than anywhere else in Europe. In England everyone is forced to send children to school, and the Catholic Church has to choose either between directing that education itself or handing the children over to schools in which no Catholic teaching exists. And the leaders of the Church know quite well what that means ultimately. Such sacrifices in money as the Church makes is, therefore, not for education at all. It is money spent in the interests of the Catholic religion. It must either educate the children, and pay something towards it, or it must refrain from paying, save by way of ordinary rates, and face the practical certainty of losing a large proportion of the rising generation. This is the essential fact of the situation. All else is mere cant.

Gravesend Sabbatarians have received a well-deserved defeat in their attempts to close the picture palaces on Sundays. The local clergy had been working hard to induce the Council to refuse a seven day's license, with the result that some pretty hard raps were given them by some of the councillors opposed to their efforts. One councillor said plainly that the licensed victuallers were the ones who had cause for complaint, and another councillor said that publicans had complained to him that they didn't do as much trade when the picture shows were open. The Chief Constable had also informed the Watch Committee that it would be in the interests of good order if the Sunday performances were continued. Councillor Cunningham said that he had visited the cinema himself on Sunday and found that "four-fifths of the people present were young men, many of whom might otherwise have been rollicking about the streets." Several councillors referred to the Sunday concerts at the Wesleyan Church at which collections were taken up; and one speaker said that, in his opinion, the only difference between the Church and the cinema was that one took a collection going in and the other on going out. The Mayor, in closing the debate, said rightly that the question of Sunday entertainments was secondary to that of the character of the entertainments themselves, and he showed his opinion of them by voting for their continuance. In the end, the vote in favor of Sunday opening was carried by fourteen votes to four—a handsome majority, on which we congratulate the Gravesend Council, also on the general level of the speeches delivered.

What a fuss is made over a Christian service being held at Peking, at the request of the Chinese Government, to offer prayers for the success of China at the present critical juncture. The dear *Daily News* topped the report with the bold headline—"Christianising of China." But what, after

all, does the Government's request amount to? Let us look at the text of this document:—

"Prayer is requested for the National Assembly now in Session, for the newly-established Government, for the President yet to be elected, for the constitution of the Republic, that the Government may be recognised by the Powers, that peace may reign within our country, that strong, virtuous men may be elected to office, that the Government may be established upon a strong foundation.

"Upon receipt of this telegram, you are requested to notify all Christian Churches in your province that April the 27th has been set aside as a day of prayer for the nation. Let us all take part."

This was sent to Catholic and Protestant bodies alike. It is simply another evidence of that spirit of toleration for which China has always been distinguished. "Let all take part"—that is the key-note of the appeal. If there is any good in prayer, let us have the benefit of it all round.

The very language of this document, apart altogether from its distribution, shows that it is not specially addressed to Christians. The Celestials know quite enough about Christian history, and Christian practice, to be aware that Christian prayers are not specially likely to secure the election of "strong, virtuous men" to office. Would anybody in his right senses imagine that this description could apply to our own House of Commons?

In the leaderette it devotes to the matter, the dear *Daily News* suggests that the Christian nations should show China a better example of Christian virtue. Good! But why doesn't our contemporary make a beginning in that line itself? It has so little regard for common veracity that it represents the Chinese Government's appeal as addressed exclusively to the Christians. What was it that Herder said? Christian veracity deserves to rank with Punic faith.

The Christian policy is plain. If the Republic weathers this religious storm without any serious accidents, it will be looked upon as a direct answer to prayer; but if it gets on the rocks and is seriously damaged, if not utterly smashed, it will be regarded as a sign either that the prayers were faulty, or that China's day of grace has not yet arrived. In either case, a desperate attempt will be made to convince the Chinese that their only hope of individual and national salvation lies in their wholeheartedly embracing the Christian religion, which, in reality, is the vainest of all hopes.

Sir Robertson Nicoll is in tears because "a savage lust for talk" has taken possession of the Nonconformist Churches. The charge is quite true, but weeping over it will do no good. The truth is, that talking is the only thing left for the Churches to do. All other privileges they have lost; but the privilege of talking at large, being a comparatively harmless exercise, is still theirs. Hence the great multitude of conferences here, there, and everywhere, with infinite floods of nonsensical talk. Nearly all the talkers are professionals; talking is their trade. Sir William thinks they ought to stay at home and work, instead of wasting their time at conferences; but they are wasting their time anyhow. The Churches are dying, in spite of all attempts to revivify them; and so what can the poor parsons do but talk?

The *British Weekly* has been inviting a correspondence on the subject of "What are the Main Elements in Your Unhappiness?" The editor observes that "Religious reasons for unhappiness are the most numerous." We are not at all surprised, and the editor's discovery has an interesting bearing on the claim of the amount of happiness religion confers on people. The truth is that the more sensitive and the better the nature, the less likely is religion to confer a peaceful and lasting serenity of mind. Coarse and brutal natures are far more likely to find happiness in this direction. And it is a striking fact that the really better types of religionists have very often, if not usually, found their reasons for exaltation followed by periods of acute depression, and have dwelt as fervently upon their torments and doubts and unhappiness as upon their religious joys. And the curious thing is that the unhappiness caused by religion is purely artificial. It is a product of the belief that is supposed to confer happiness. When people write that their unhappiness is caused by doubts and fears of Christ's existence, by doubts as to the existence or providence of God, we are not dealing with sources of unhappiness which arise from the unavoidable conditions of existence, and are so far inescapable; we are dealing with beliefs that are a product of misguided education, and which for a really healthy mind would have no existence. It is religion that provides the element of unhappiness in such cases, and the

better the man the more he is exposed to its incidence. That is why we find the coarse-featured, coarse-natured evangelist shrieking about his happiness in Christ, and the finer and more refined character sorrowfully confessing to the doubts and pains brought about by his religious convictions.

The Rev. R. Marks has a wonderfully ingenious mind. The other evening he delivered a lecture at the All Saints' School, Burton-on-Trent, the subject being "The Great Pyramid of Egypt." According to the *Burton Daily Mail* for April 11, the rev. gentleman described this pyramid as "a wonderful astronomical monument," and also as "a witness to the Bible truth." All modern Egyptologists are convinced that all the pyramids, without a single exception, are tombs of royal and august personages. Only a man of consummate inventive genius could find in them any witness, direct or indirect, to the truth of the Bible. But Mr. Marks' genius is inexhaustible. To him the Great Pyramid is not only "a wonderful astronomical monument," not only "a witness to the Bible truth," but also a storehouse of lessons to "our nation." We congratulate the reverend gentleman upon his apologetic ingenuity and prophetic skill, and we envy the Burtonians their great intellectual treat.

If we are to judge from an article in the *Christian World* by Mr. H. M. Wallis, who writes from Sofia, the world has seriously misjudged the Allied forces in the Balkans. Their course has generally been marked by forbearance, and appeals to the good sense of the conquered Moslem peasantry. Thus, in one village, after peace had been made with the villagers, "the victors insisted on baptising their vanquished neighbors and removing the women's veils. That was the extent of the reprisals, save that a few old grudges were worked off, and a man or two killed." In another village only three were killed, and the Bulgarians "passed on without burning, plundering, or ravishing." More than this, they were touchingly anxious for the spiritual salvation of the conquered. "Let us try persuasion," they said. So a committee made an appeal to the Moslems. "The hearers knew the appeal was honest, well-meant, and kindly." The two or three who protested "were told to go home if they did not want a thrashing." Then the whole village came to "running water," and was baptised. The women—Christian women—then went into the houses and the "womenkind were talked over." At another village, where those who "dreaded the coming of the schoolmaster, and enlightenment, and Christian ways," protested, "they were warned, and then beaten." After that, more conversions. But, on the whole, quite a beneficent proceeding. The *Christian World* says that Mr. Wallis is "anxious to speak up for his friends." He appears to have done so.

Meanwhile we note that other pictures of the amiable Allies continue to appear. Thus, in a letter to the *Daily Chronicle*, Mr. E. N. Bennett writes:—

"The lives and properties of Moslems would appear to be outside the ethics of some of our Liberals nowadays. The infamous massacres perpetrated in Macedonia and Albania by the Christian Allies, the unprecedented claim of the conquerors to take possession of the private property of the conquered, the refusal of the Montenegrins to convey to Essad Pasha the orders of the Porte for the departure of the non-combatant population of Scutari—scarcely a voice is raised in England in condemnation of these things."

If Mr. Bennett will read Mr. Wallis's article he will see how grievously he has misjudged the Christian Allies. Why, whole villages rushed to be baptised! And does not that prove the kindly nature of the methods used? True, one or two were killed, and a few beaten, but such things will happen over a disturbed area.

Mr. A. E. Fletcher, once the Christian Socialist editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, and now the writer of "Notes on New Books" in *Reynolds'*, labors under the notion—which is odder than odd in this case—that Secularism and Freethought are low "materialistic" things except when they spell themselves "Rationalist." He also labors under the notion that he understands Shelley, whom he regards as a Christian Socialist too—or, to be still more precise, a Fletcherite. Last week he had occasion to quote four lines from Shelley, though it is not quite clear that he knew the lines were Shelley's. This is how he managed the quotation:—

"We look before and after,
We pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught."

It was shockingly bad taste to emit the lovely last line of the stanza:—"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought." But the false rendering of the second

line was sheer carelessness or vulgar impudence. There are twenty good reasons against beginning the line with "We," but the strongest reason of all is that Shelley wrote "And." The difference between the two words in this position is immense; all the difference, in fact, apart from elegance of composition, between the music of the skylark, singing out of sight in the blue heaven, and the creak of a cartwheel in a country lane below. Mr. Fletcher tempts us to quote another great poet. It was Coleridge who, after noting a certain emendation proposed in Shakespeare's text by one of his commentators, exclaimed "What a noble pair of ears the worthy Theobald must have had!"

Lord Alfred Douglas told the court in the recent libel case that in the days when he wrote certain articles, etc., used against him he "really had no religion at all," but for "two years past he had been a Catholic." What was he, we should like to know, when he took to crusading in the *Academy* against the *Freethinker*, and bombastically calling upon Messrs. Smith & Son to cease selling it? His attitude and his language were pious enough, anyhow. Then as now, also, he had too little common sense and too much self-esteem.

In the Lord Mayor's Court the other day (see *Daily Mirror*, April 18) the judge refused to hear the evidence of a boy because he was not taught about God. More knowledge, and perhaps more sense, might have satisfied the judge that the boy would make an exceptionally good witness. It was a wiser judge than this one who, when a K.C. was browbeating a youthful witness who was badly posted up in the matter of theology, and inquiring whether he knew where boys who tell falsehoods go to when they die, stopped the nonsense by saying from the bench, "I'm sure I don't know: do you?"

The Rev. Dr. Campbell Morgan cannot name the hour or place of his new birth, but he knows whom he has believed. Many people think they know when they don't. Furthermore, it is sheer nonsense to talk about *knowing* an object of *belief*. No doubt Dr. Morgan sincerely believes in Jesus Christ, and he has trained, disciplined, and prayed himself into the *feeling* that he knows him; but all genuine knowledge is intellectual, not emotional. Religious experience never yields knowledge, because it is experience not of actual realities, but of those objects which are realities only to faith. Why is Christ's saving power dependent upon faith? Simply because apart from faith it is non-existent, like Christ himself. Let Christ prove his existence and his power by snatching an unbelieving brand from the burning, and the whole world will be at his feet in no time; but he has never done it, and never will do it.

The Rev. A. C. Hill, of North London, is profoundly eager to preserve the Christian Sabbath. It is not as a day of rest and recreation, however, that he is so anxious to have it perpetuated, but as a day set apart for public worship. Being a conductor of public worship, he naturally thinks highly of its merits. It is a custom that induces people to be serious, conduces to reflection upon life, and teaches us "to be quiet while someone else is speaking." To our thinking, those are spurious merits, existing only in Mr. Hill's imagination. Then he assures us that "the men who are engaged in promoting it [public worship] are not afraid of their competitors." "The picture palace and the museum, the art gallery and the park, do not frighten us," he tells us. But, if they only want "a fair field and no favor," why do they use all their resources to have the picture palaces closed on Sundays? Why did they so strenuously oppose the opening of public libraries and art galleries on their parade-day? And why do they exhaust their eloquence in bitter denunciation of the least suggestion of Sunday theatres and music-halls? It is because they are afraid of competition, being well aware that in competition they would certainly go to the wall.

The *Church Times* announces "with regret" the death of the Bishop of Richmond. Unless the *Church Times* has room for doubt as to the ultimate destination of the late Bishop, we fail to see the reason for "regret" at his departure. From a Christian point of view the Bishop's friends ought to express pleasure at his translation.

A centenarian named Perkins, who has been married seventy years, has been the recipient of a congratulatory message from the King, in which he is informed that the event is "almost a unique record." His Majesty's daily Bible reading, of which we hear so much in the press, evidently has not yet extended to the lives of the patriarchs.

Mr. Foote's Engagements

(Lectures suspended till the Autumn.)

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1913.—Previously acknowledged, £115 Os. 5d. Received since:—Elizabeth Adams, £2 2s.; W. Wells (per H. Saill), 5s.; H. E. Voigt, 5s.; T. A. Matthews, £1.

Mrs. MORRISON.—We are sorry in one way to hear of your husband's death, for though it was probably a great release to him, the survivors cannot but feel the blow of bereavement when it falls. We are glad to know that our small act of consideration in sending him the *Freethinker* weekly when he could no longer afford to pay for it brightened so many of his weary hours. We are also glad to know that the note we published brought him help from other quarters. And we add your address now, in case anyone should feel moved to "remember the widow and the fatherless in their affliction":—Bonnie Burn Cottage, Bonnyhill, Bonnie Bridge, N.B.

T. WIGO (New Zealand).—Thanks for your interesting and encouraging letter. It is pleasant to learn that your own efforts have increased the number of our readers in your locality from three to twenty-four. We are glad to hear also of the "powerful propaganda" carried on there during the last eighteen months by Mr. H. Scott Bennett, some time M.P. for Ballarat in the Victorian legislature. We note that one of your vivid recollections of the old country, which you left more than thirty years ago, is hearing us lecture in London. Also that the late article on "Charles Southwell" was much appreciated by yourself and your fellow readers.

ELIZABETH ADAMS.—Thanks for your "very best wishes." To some extent we think they may be realised.

W. J. WILDES.—Haven't you seen in the *Freethinker* that Mr. Foote has been very ill? The "Globe" Shakespeare would meet your case, but the type is very small. There is an edition in three one shilling volumes in the "Everyman's Library." If you want Shelley's prose as well as his verse you could get it at a feasible price only in Shepherd's edition in five volumes.

"SPICER."—We are obliged for your trouble in sending us the article, but we are afraid that we cannot bother about the Rev. Waldron on such a subject as "Personality." When such men gain prominent positions they are useful chiefly as illustrations of the dearth of mental ability in the Churches.

H. E. VOIGT.—We quite understand that it was not possible, even if it would have been wise, to confine the Sunday Athletic Club to *Freethinkers*. With regard to the difficulty of obtaining the *Freethinker* while travelling, we would gladly print from time to time a list of newsagents who supply it, but compiling such a list is a very great difficulty. We do not come in contact, in the way of business, with many local newsagents. Our business is mainly done with the wholesale agents who supply "the trade." And we have met with a very unsatisfactory response when we have asked our readers to send us the names and addresses of their own newsagents. We may make another attempt presently.

T. HUGH PEBKINS writes: "I hope Mr. Foote is well again. Never was there more need for such outspoken sincerity as he always exemplifies. I should like to see the circulation of the *Freethinker* extended to equal that of the London daily papers, but I suppose that will never be until enough money for lecturing and educational work is forthcoming."

E. B.—Much obliged, but is it worth while returning to the poor creature? Many thanks for cuttings.

W. P. BALL.—Much obliged for cuttings.

ELIZABETH LECHMERE.—You will see that your wish is gratified.

OWING to pressure of space, answers to several correspondents are held over until next week.

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 Editor.

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

Sugar Plums.

Provincial and other N.S.S. Branches should by this time have their Conference arrangements well in hand. Delegates to the Conference should forward their credentials to Miss Vance without delay, so that their cards may be properly authenticated. Visitors requiring assistance in procuring accommodation while in London should write Miss Vance, who will do her best to meet their requirements. The class of accommodation and the length of time for which it is required must be stated. The Secretary and members of the Executive will be present at the Bay

Malton Hotel, 160 Great Portland-street, W. (within three minutes' walk of Queen's Hall), on the Saturday evening before the Conference (May 10), at 8 o'clock, to receive visitors and delegates.

Mr. Forbes Phillips, the vicar of Gorleston, near Great Yarmouth, is known as an unconventional clergyman, and he was never more so than in writing the following postscript to a letter to our publishing office:—

"I hope Mr. Foote is steadily improving in health. I do not agree with all his opinions, but I do admire his honesty of purpose, and his grit. Perhaps you will convey to him my sympathy and my hope that the enforced rest may mean more life. After all men like machines must have a rest sometime."

We feel that we are breaking no confidence in printing these sentences, for this is not the first time that Mr. Phillips has openly expressed himself to the same effect.

Mr. Foote has paid his first visit to the office to-day (Tuesday). But he is not quite able to resume the editorial chair yet, and he continues his thanks to Mr. Cohen for continuing to occupy it.

Mr. J. T. Lloyd lectures twice to-day (April 27), afternoon and evening, at the Alexandra Hall, Islington-square, Liverpool. We hope the local "saints" will rally round him in strong force.

Members of the Glasgow N. S. S. Branch are requested to note that their Annual Business Meeting takes place at 12 noon to-day (April 27). A full attendance is most desirable. The Branch has held no meetings for some time owing to the hall it used on Sundays being burnt out with the premises in which it was situated. Even the members' list was destroyed in the fire. Members will therefore see the importance of this notice. To-day's meeting takes place at the Ramshorn Rooms, 122 Ingram-street.

Mr. E. Morris Young is lecturing to-day (April 27) at the Secular Sunday School, Pole-lane, Failsforth. He has come over to the Freethought platform from the Anglican pulpit.

The course of lectures held at the Stratford Town Hall was brought to a successful conclusion on Sunday evening last with a lecture from Miss Kough. A few questions were asked, but there was no regular opposition. The audiences have been good throughout the course, and the local Branch naturally regrets that a longer course of lectures was not possible.

A South African reader of the *Freethinker*, who has been spending most of his time for several months in travelling and voyaging, hastens on his return home to renew his acquaintance with this journal and set himself right with it financially. "I have admired your journal very greatly indeed," he writes, "ever since I first got it, but I never really appreciated how much till I found out how keenly I missed it during my life on the ocean wave."

Our readers may remember an excellent notice of Mr. Foote's "Meredith" article in the *English Review* for March, which we reproduced from the columns of the *Daily Herald*. Soon afterwards we received a review copy from the *Herald* office of a collection of cartoons by Will Dyson (price sixpence), but we fell ill just then and we have only just been able to give the matter attention—in the hope that it is better late than never. The cartoons are powerful, and novel to English taste, being the work of a young Australian from the "black-and-white" school of the *Sydney Bulletin*. They deal with all sorts of social and political topics, with which we have no special concern in the *Freethinker*. But there is one cartoon, at least, to which we may call special attention. It is entitled "Cross and Crescent—Turkey, 1912." A typical Turk is nailed up on a Cross, bleeding at the hands and feet, and with collapsing body and drooping head, weighed down by intolerable misery. Birds of prey are waiting to devour his flesh, and underneath we catch the gleam of bayonets and the fluttering flag of Christ. "And the meek shall inherit the earth," is the apt quotation clinching the meaning and moral of the picture. That one cartoon is worth the price of the whole collection.

In recognition of the many years' faithful service to the Freethought cause in Birmingham, the friends and admirers of Mr. J. Partridge are presenting him with a testimonial on Sunday evening (April 27) at a meeting to be held in the King's Hall, Corporation-street, at 7 o'clock. There will be speeches delivered in the course of the proceedings, with other arrangements that will make the evening a pleasant one.

The Clamor Against Portugal.

THE *Times* and the *Daily Mail*,* together with a number of other journals in this country, have just given a large mead of publicity to a sensational "Appeal to British Public Opinion" by the Duchess of Bedford. The appeal, on the face of it, is evidently a grossly exaggerated statement of affairs—I cannot say facts. For instance, we are told that in Portugal "spies are in every household"—a self-evident over-statement, at least, and a highly improbable, and practically impossible, condition of affairs, even if the friends of the Portuguese monarchy and of the Portuguese Church could take the country back to the times of King Carlos, or the good old days when the Inquisition ruled Portugal with an even firmer hand than that which it spread out to destroy Spain.

Two statements in this appeal are open to grave suspicion. First, take what is said in reference to the political prisoners in Portugal (these belong to two categories; actual rebels taken arms in hand when fighting and plotting against the established Republican regime; and, secondly, the priests guilty of infractions of the law with reference to the conditions of neutrality imposed in the conduct of hierophantic exercises). We are told that "convictions are determined beforehand; false witnesses can be had for the asking; an acquittal might be followed by murder." As to this, it is hard to believe that the lamented Pigott, so dear to the heart of the *Times* which is now ventilating this highly colored appeal, has sprung up afresh in Portuguese soil, and multiplied his progeny in the interests of a Republican form of government. The other statement is one the credibility of which will certainly not be accepted without scrutiny, and certainly not on the strength of a bare assertion, from whomsoever it may emanate. "It is well known"—we are told—"that judges repair from the provinces to Lisbon to receive their orders before passing sentences." Who knows this? Does Dame Rumor say so? If the facts can speak, then why are they kept in the background? All this smacks too evidently of partisanship. Fancy some Portuguese Suffragette writing in *O Mundo* that English judges repaired to London before passing sentence on the "Votes for Women" prisoners! One exaggeration is not more feasible or credible than the other.

Then there is the declaration that "since the fall of the monarchy the clergy belong to a doomed class." Well, the Church has been disestablished and disendowed, but the present holders of sacerdotal offices and endowments have been permitted, on conditions that presuppose their acceptance of the existing form of Government, to retain a life interest in their respective jobs. Unless the faithful come to their assistance later on and maintain the Altar and its ministers by free will offerings, certainly the "class" will be doomed, like any other class of public caterers and entertainers, sacred or profane.

When we read that "the chapel exists no more, and the name of God is forbidden," one can only remark that the first member of the sentence is flagrantly impossible, for the chapels exist galore, and as to the second member, the declaration has no meaning, and certainly has no real foundation. There is nothing to prevent a Portuguese from praising God to-day, all day long, in his own time and in his own place.

As regards the complaints made of the rigors of prison treatment accorded to the political prisoners, I am, quite frankly, not inclined to believe that prison accommodation in Portugal, after two years of a Republic, is as spacious and humane as an ideal penal administration would demand, nor am I concerned to defend any proved injustice or harshness of treatment, even against the conspirators of reaction and

superstition who form the majority of those on whose behalf the appeal is made. When the inflamed language of the aristocratic article tells us that "the Republic has definitely undertaken the extinction of the Christian faith, and the children in the national schools are decorated with a little badge bearing the words 'No God, no religion,'" all this (apart from the legendary little badge) only means that education has been made secular; that the priest has been left outside the school precincts; that religion has been relegated to its proper sphere as a voluntary "extra" to be provided not by the State but by the parent, or by those directly paid and appointed by him out of his own pocket for that purpose.

The *Daily Mail*, of course, puts its approving *imprimatur* upon the appeal. It tells us that the Portuguese Republicans "are maintaining their rule by a system of more than mediæval inquisition." This, of course, is blatant editorial bunkum. If the editor had read a score or more verbatim accounts of mediæval inquisitorial trials he would probably moderate the violence of his senseless exaggeration. The *Daily Mail* demands, with threats of armed intervention and all kinds of pains and penalties, the release of the political prisoners—a demand that would smack less of the bully if addressed to Russia, where political prisoners are many and unfriended. "There must," says the *Daily Mail* "be an immediate amnesty for political prisoners"—a quite excellent doctrine which the *Daily Mail* might also address to our own Government as affecting "politics," whether in England, Egypt, or India; it might also be addressed to Spain, Italy, Austria, Russia, and Germany; but perhaps it is safer, less heroic, and more easily befitting the imperial swagger of the Imperialist soul if addressed, as in the present case, exclusively to Portugal.

I am writing to Portugal for full particulars and explanations of facts concerning these ducal documents, and have entreated the friends of the present regime to make a full disclosure and an ample reparation if any proved wrong has been inflicted. Already, since these lines were written, *O Mundo* (Lisbon, April 11) has commenced a series of articles refuting the *Daily Mail* asseverations. I hope, later on, to return to this subject armed with more reliable data than the uncorroborated *ipse dixit* of the Duchess of Bedford.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

The Eternal Priestess.—II.

(Concluded from p. 253.)

THE Christian world does not have, and never can have, so long as it founds its dogmas upon the Bible, the idea and conception of the absolute equality between the sexes. Such was the teaching of the Bible. The early Christian Fathers elaborated and emphasised those teachings; they carried them to their logical conclusions. They said, "Woman is the mother of sin and the door of hell." "They said, "She was subordinate and unclean by nature;" that she was a necessary evil; that marriage was an evil, but permitted as necessary for the perpetuation of the race; that it could only be solemnised by the Church, because the Church, by its act of officiating, lessened the inherent evil of marriage. Because Paul had said she was to keep silent in the Church, woman was not permitted to join in the singing. One of the offences charged against the Huguenots was that they permitted their women to sing at their religious services. On St. Bartholomew's Day thirty thousand men, women, and children were put to death—for what? For the enormous crime of women singing in churches.

The early Fathers did not allow a woman to take with ungloved hands the communion bread. Her touch would pollute the body of Christ. Some of the Church Fathers contended that woman had neither reason nor a soul. They held that she was

* See *Daily Mail* of April 7 and other journals *passim*.

an intermediate being, on a plane between brute and man.

From these teachings, there could come, there has come, but one deplorable result, the utter subjugation of woman through the Christian centuries. Neither her reason, nor her conscience, nor her will were her own. If she was married, her reason, her conscience, her person, her property, her children, all were her husband's. They went so far as to say that the children to whom a mother had given birth were not related to the mother—they were related solely to the father. Under those teachings the husband had the right of life and death over his wife. If he tired of her, he could put her out of the way, or hire an assassin to do it. Husbands sold their daughters, sometimes brothers sold their sisters; woman was a chattel, a wife was an "unhallowed thing." Her subjection by the civil and the ecclesiastical law became complete. It has not been fifty years; it has not been twenty-five years—the day has not arrived yet in some parts of this land, where woman stands on an even and equal plane of civil and political rights.

The old idea of inferiority and subordination of woman is in the blood of the Christian world. With such ideas regarding woman, it was but an easy and a logical step to the development of the celibate priesthood. The Roman Church worked long and arduously to establish that. It was not accepted universally by the Church until the fourteenth century. Until that time Roman Catholic priests, as a rule, were married men. When that doctrine was finally enforced, every priest was compelled to turn his wife and children as beggars out in the streets, while all of his and her possessions reverted to the Church. Women of wealth and possessions were impelled by the Church to renounce the world and enter the convents, in order that their property might revert to the Church. With the celibacy of the priesthood came immeasurable immorality. The celibate was a reprobate. In the centuries that followed, Europe reached a degree of depravity, an enormity of crime, a hideousness of disease, paralleled nowhere in the annals of any people since the writing of history began. The testimony of historians in these matters is uniform and explicit. So great was the moral corruption of the priests that the Church permitted them, after paying a tax to the Church, to keep concubines. They found ample authority and lofty precedent for this in the blessed Bible. So infamous were the practices of those centuries that the mothers and sisters of priests were not permitted to live in the same house with them. No ties of relationship were so sacred, no bond of kinship so close as to protect a woman. There was no respect by anyone, clerical or political, high or low, for woman as woman.

When the serf of the feudal lord took to himself a wife, the feudal lord under an old law claimed the bride for his own.

We are reaping the harvest. Ideas persist in their effects after they themselves have been abandoned.

Christian dogmas have dishonored and degraded the mothers of the race. I hope not to appear indifferent or callous to crime. I hope not to be counted unmindful of the shame and the disgrace of it all, but I hope to be clearly understood when I say that nothing we can do in the red-light district, nothing that we can do among the ranks of the proscribed, will have any other effect than to "skin and flim the ulcerous places, while rank corruption mining all within infects unseen." We must strike deeper than at the symptoms or the superficial conditions. We must have more to do with the causes and less with the consequences. Woman must be restored to her original status. Man must be emancipated from the superstition that he himself is first or superior in the order of nature or in the sight of God. We are not giving woman anything. We have nothing to give. We are not making her the beneficiary of our masculine generosity. We are simply endeavoring to restore to her the rights, liberties, and justice that have

been taken from her, and through the deprivation of which she has been crushed and disgraced. The restoration to woman of the heritage of which she has been robbed involves first her economic freedom and equality. If she does the same work that a man does, and does it as well, then she is to receive the same wages. And if she works at all for any wages, she must be assured of a decent living wage. Temptations will throng her path; without and within there will be dangers to encounter and foes to face. Let not those temptations be made tragic by privation and poverty. She must be absolutely free and equal with man in all civil and political rights, privileges, and responsibilities. It is not a question of expediency or sentiment. It is a question of simple justice—let us say, of two-fold justice, of justice to the woman, of justice to the man. No part of the race can subject another part without injuring itself. Master and slave descend together—woman must be freed from religion. She must be rescued from the priest. I am not saying that woman must be irreligious, or non-religious. I am saying that if she is religious at all, it must be by virtue of her own reason, her own convictions, and for her reason and her conscience and her faith she must depend on no authority save that of her own reason.

It is a matter of amazement that woman is not worse than she is. Consider what the Church has been to her. Think of the auricular confession. If woman will have religion, let her think it out. Let her not ask, as Paul said, "her husband." Let her not ask, as the Church says, "the priest." She must get and keep her own intellectual self-respect. If there are to be priestly confessors, then let there be women confessors for women. There never was a more formidable conspiracy against womanhood than that involved in a celibate priesthood and auricular confession.

When woman asserts her right to herself, to her own reason and conscience, and accepts the responsibility; when woman is capable of looking any priest in the world in the face and telling him to mind his own business; then the emancipation of woman is at hand.

I believe in the nobility of man. I believe in the nobility of woman. I believe in equality, freedom and comradeship. I believe that the interests of man and woman are mutual in all things, civil, religious, political, and inseparably one. I believe mankind can advance only as man and woman, standing erect and equal, side by side, mutually working, planning, achieving, and hoping, free, equal, unafraid, confident and glad, meet and greet the coming morning of the ever nobler day.

—Truthseeker (New York). J. E. ROBERTS.

The Irony of So-Called Revelations.

THE claim to be a revelation from the supernatural is a characteristic common to all religions. Patriarch, priest, seer, and prophet of all times and places have claimed to have received visions from the gods in which mysterious things of alleged momentous importance to man were revealed. Bible and Koran are proclaimed sacred books because they contain such revelations. We propose, therefore, to examine this claim, and see to what extent the contention is valid. There is nothing absurd in the idea that man was made the recipient of a revelation. Nothing could ever be more rational and fitting, for he stood in need, not only of one, but of many revelations. From the lowest rung of his nature to the highest—from his advent till now—he has always been destined, through lack of knowledge, to a heritage of suffering. This predicament is unique to the human race; for out of the million species of sentient forms which now tenant the earth, none but man needs a revelation, and none but man could

use it if he had it. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the fish of the sea, and all creeping things possess the sure instinct that guides to life, detects danger, and avoids death. But man is practically bereft of these internal guides, and therefore needs to be taught and piloted from without. He wanted someone to point out to him—that is, to reveal to him—how to avoid those paths that would imperil his life, or would involve it in much suffering.

It is true that he had awakened to self-consciousness, and had become a rational being; but reason without knowledge is power of locomotion in darkness—the possession of feet without light to show one where he can plant them with safety. That was the pitiable condition of man for upwards of a million years—a plight that made the need of a revelation both desperate and tragic.

In urgency of want, in pitiableness of destitution, and in intensity of suffering man's predicament resembled that of Hagar and her child when sent forth by Abraham to wander in the wilderness of Beersheba. The little water provided in her bottle was exhausted, and, as the sandy desert stretched away in all directions to the far horizon, there was no means within ken of having it replenished. The two tales are wonderfully alike in their beginnings; are they also alike in their endings? That is our inquiry. We are told that an Angel of God called out from heaven to Hagar and drew her attention to a well that was close by. Did the like ever happen to man? Were his eyes ever opened to behold wells of urgent knowledge gurgling forth at his side at which he could quench his dying thirsts? To convey a very brief summary of the answer supplied to this question by man's own story is our present task.

Let us therefore pass in review the various channels through which any relief has ever come to him, be it in respect to his organic cravings, to his social needs, or to the hungers and thirsts of his mental and moral nature, with a view to finding out whether their source was in heaven or on the earth. I propose to take them in the order of their evolution. His organic wants will therefore come in for first consideration.

1. Now, the lion of his bodily cravings is hunger. To have a continuous supply of food is the premier of the *sine qua non* conditions of his continued existence; yet for man the earth's surface truly resembled a vast barren Beersheba with only a few oases, scattered here and there, where he could replenish his wants. But now, in the light of modern science and industrial arts, we know that, as in the case of Hagar, the wells were close by. For Mother Earth is as bountiful in her supply of means to allay his hunger as she is to quench his thirst, if man were only supernaturally presented with the key which unlocked her larder. But alas! instead of being consoled and instructed by an angel, as in the legend, man was left, for untold æons, in his crass ignorance to eke out a miserable existence in cave and forest, and to subsist on any edible he chanced to find and which did not happen to poison him.

Until he stumbled upon the device of taming wild animals, and of converting the seeds of wild grasses into corn and bread, only few parts of the earth could, with any pretence or approach to plenty, provide for his daily wants—a fact which was the origin and the perennial cause of mutual hostility and of war.

I pass by the obvious moral obligation on the part of the gods to provide for man—which manifestly was their imperative and palpable duty if it were true that hunger and its pangs were implanted by them in his nature. For it is not man's sufferings, however acute or unjust, that reveals the irony of the so-called revelations, but the tragic hollowness of the remedies with which the priest attempted to appease his wants. It invariably aimed at stupefying his sensibilities by stultifying his mind. What was, then, the revealed secret with which he claimed to be able to unlock the golden treasures of the soil? *Mirabile dictu!* It was the potency of occultism and

magic. Certain magical ceremonies had to be performed. And then—the crops would grow!

The priest, therefore, went forth to the fields, meadows, and vineyards, and blessed them in the name of the gods. He proclaimed, moreover, a national feast at sowing-time and harvest, and bade the people to celebrate them with great solemnity and awe. He further ordained that an impersonation of the earth-god should be annually slain, and that its blood should be poured over the soil to the accompaniment of incantation and magic gestures. At first the victim was a human being; but when man's conscience became more enlightened and humanised, an animal was substituted. In this manner people were taught that priestly invocation, conjuration, and sacrifice were an Aladdin's lamp with power to tap nature's store of vital energy, and to cover land and meadow with corn and pasture, and to laden their trees with fruit. That is to say, it was through the agency of magic that revelation assisted man to allay his hunger. It is a pathetic example of asking for bread and receiving a stone.

2. But man had other physical needs besides hunger and thirst. He was naked, and yet was exposed to all the inclemency and fury of the seasons and the elements. Nature had provided him with neither a fur coat nor with a thatched shelter; and what was still worse, he was not even endowed with the instinct or with the knowledge how to make them. Nevertheless, revelation never offered to teach this miserable, shivering wretch the arts of spinning, weaving, and building. He had to learn how to do these himself in the school of misery, suffering, and death.

But that neglect, though serious, is only a trivial charge compared to the wicked advantage the priest took of man's sorrowful plight; for lo and behold! he meanly used it to exploit the emotions of fear and terror to enthral the human mind. He taught them that nature's giant forces were instruments in the hands of the gods to punish mankind for neglecting its religious duties.

Having now prepared the soil by thus paralysing the human spirit, he brings forth from his supernatural armory the "revealed" brand of protection, and in the name of the gods he flings around "the exposed and the helpless" the priestly mantle of invocation and prayer as a magic shield against the ruthless fury of the elements. That was the sole function of prayer in its origin, and that has been its essence at all times. In fact, it was revelation's panoply against all evils; the priest therefore bade man to pray devoutly and fervently to the demons or divinities hidden in the forces or powers of nature, or to the gods who controlled them, with a view to soothe their spirits and calm their rage.

We need not go to savage lands or sacred books or ancient times for exhibitions of this degrading superstition; it still survives in Catholic countries, as was pitifully displayed in South Italy in 1909, when that terrible earthquake occurred at Messina. The priest who preached in the Cathedral of Taormina on the day of the earthquake told a crowded congregation that it was sent by God because no preparations had been made for keeping the feast of St. Pancrazio on the next day! How dreadful! How infamous! Practically everybody throughout Calabria looked upon that catastrophe as a visitation from God, and the people flocked to the churches to pray. Yes, prayer was the only shield ever devised by the priesthood as a protection for impotent man against the deaf and pitiless powers of nature. Just think of the irony of it. Prayer to the inexorable, the immutable, and eternally deaf! as a safeguard against their ravages.

KERIDON.

(To be continued.)

AN ANECDOTE.

Boy: Can God do everything?

Mother: Yes.

Boy: Can he hang a picture without a nail?—*Sphere.*

National Secular Society.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

CLAVIER HALL, PRINCES STREET, REGENT STREET,
London, W.

WHIT-SUNDAY, MAY 11, 1913.

Agenda.

1. Minutes of last Conference.
2. Executive's Annual Report. By PRESIDENT.
3. Reception of Report.
4. Financial Report.
5. Election of President.
Motion by Bethnal Green, North London, and Kingsland Branches:—
"That Mr. G. W. Foote be re-elected President."
6. Election of Vice-Presidents.
(a) The following are nominated by the Executive for re-election: J. Barry, W. H. Baker, J. G. Bartram, E. Bowman, R. Chapman, Victor Charbonnel, E. A. Charlton, C. Cohen, W. W. Collins, H. Cowell, W. Davey, F. A. Davies, J. G. Dobson, R. G. Fathers, Léon Furnémont, T. Gorniot, John Grange, J. Hammond, W. Heaford, Eugene Hins, S. L. Hurd, R. Johnson, Miss Kathleen B. Kough, W. Leat, J. T. Lloyd, A. B. Moss, James McGlashen, G. B. H. McCluskey, J. Neate, R. T. Nichols, J. Partridge, S. M. Peacock, C. Pegg, Mrs. M. E. Pegg, W. T. Pitt, C. G. Quinton, J. T. Ross, Miss Mary Ross, G. Roleffs, Mrs. Roleffs, Thomas Robertson, Victor Roger, S. Samuels, T. Shore, H. Silverstein, W. H. Spivey, Miss Alma Stanley, Charles Steptoe, W. B. Thompson, T. J. Thurlow, John H. Turnbull, Miss E. M. Vance, F. E. Willis, C. J. Whitwell, Frederick Wood, G. White.
(b) Proposed by Executive:—
"That Mr. T. H. Elstob and Mr. W. Dodd be elected Vice-Presidents."
(c) Proposed by Mr. F. Wood:—
"That Mr. Louis Brandes be elected Vice-President."
7. Election of Auditors.
8. Motions by Birmingham Branch:—
(a) "That one Sunday in the year be called the Charles Bradlaugh Sunday, and that all Branches be requested to arrange for lectures or readings to be given bearing on the life and teachings of Charles Bradlaugh, thus perpetuating the memory of our late great leader."
(b) "That all motions carried at a Conference shall be dealt with in the course of the three months following the Conference, and a report stating the progress made be sent to the Branch responsible for the motion."
9. Motion by Executive:—
"This Conference protests against the London County Council's deliberate and continuous effort to cripple, and if possible to destroy, the traditional right of public speech and discussion in all parts of the metropolis under its control; and the Conference protests especially against the mean attempt to injure advanced bodies generally by a perfectly uncalled-for attempt to deprive them of the immemorial right to make collections for their funds within the limits—and only within the limits—of their permitted meetings."
10. Motion by Mr. C. Cohen:—
"This Conference deeply deplores the growing activity of the military spirit in Europe, and the ever-increasing expenditure on preparations for war, and calls upon Freethinkers everywhere—since the Christian Churches are so impotent in the cause of peace—to do all in their power to stem the tide of international envy, hatred, and malice, which is driving the so-called civilised nations on the abyss of mutual destruction."
11. Motion by Executive:—
"This Conference calls upon the Liberal Government to countenance no more prosecutions for "blasphemy" or "profanity" (which are only persecutions of weak or friendless Freethinkers for the gratification of Christian bigotry), but to introduce, or allow time for, a short Bill abolishing the odious laws under which such proceedings are still possible in a country that boasts of its religious freedom."

12. Motion by Mr. J. T. Lloyd:—

"The Liberal Government having declared its intention to deal with the Education question again in the early future, this Conference warns it that it has already failed three times in trying to settle the problem on Nonconformist instead of Church lines, and trusts that its next attempt will rise above all sectarian lines by proceeding upon the principle which is fair and just to all—the principle of Secular Education."

13. Motion by Mr. G. W. Foote:—

"That the N. S. S. be represented as far as possible at the forthcoming International Freethought Congress at Lisbon, partly as an encouragement to the Portuguese Freethinkers who have taken such a great part in the recent work of progress in Portugal, and also as a protest against the malicious falsehoods so industriously circulated to their detriment by religious bigots and political schemers in England."

14. Motion by West Ham Branch:—

"That, in pursuance of the declaration made in the Society's 'Immediate Practical Objects,' namely, 'The Equalisation of the legal status of men and women, so that all rights may be independent of sexual distinction,' this Conference recognises universal adult suffrage as the most effective method of abolishing sex disqualification and of placing all citizens on an equal footing at the poll. It therefore expresses its sympathy with that movement."

15. Motions by Kingsland Branch:—

(a) "That an Organising Committee be appointed by the Executive, with power to confer with and advise London Branches when necessary."

(b) "That all Branches of the National Secular Society be invited to issue an annual record of their income and expenditure, together with the number of meetings held during the year, and that the Executive be instructed to avail itself of the material for the purpose of publishing an Annual Report of the Society's work."

16. Motions by South Shields Branch:—

(a) "That, in the opinion of this Conference, the Scholarship Scheme should be open to all *bona fide* members of the N. S. S. without regard to the length of time during which they have been members; and that all candidates shall pledge themselves to work for the objects and principles of the Society if successful."

(b) "That public demonstrations be arranged in such places and districts where, from various local causes the Freethought movement is not making satisfactory progress."

17. Motion by Mr. W. Heaford:—

"That this Conference welcomes the proposed exchange of visits between London and Paris Freethinkers, and instructs the Executive to take whatever steps it may find necessary to bring the proposal to a successful issue."

This Conference will sit in Clavier Hall, Princes-street, Regent-street; the morning session lasting from 10.30 to 12.30, and the afternoon session from 2.30 to 4.30. Both are purely business meetings. Only members of the N. S. S. can speak and vote. A public meeting will be held in the evening at 7 o'clock in the Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, W. The President will occupy the chair on all three occasions. A luncheon for delegates and visitors is in course of arrangement, particulars of which will be supplied at the Conference.

By order of the Executive,

G. W. FOOTE, *President.*

E. M. VANCE, *Secretary.*

AN EPITAPH ON THE TOMB OF DR. MESSENGER MONSEY.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL, 1778.

Here lies my old limbs, my vexation now ends,
For I've lived much too long for myself and my friends;
As for churchyards and grounds which the parsons call HOLY,
'Tis a rank piece of priestcraft and founded on folly;
In short, I despise them; and as for my soul,
Which may mount the last day with my bones from this HOLE,
I think that it really hath nothing to fear
From the God of mankind, whom I truly revere.
What the next world may be little troubles my pate;
If not better than this, I beseech thee, Oh! Fate,
When the bodies of millions fly up in a riot,
To let the old carcase of Monsey be quiet.

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.

OUTDOOR.

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Edmonton Green): 7.45, J. W. Marshall, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.): W. Davidson, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

FAIRSWORTH (Secular School, Pole lane): E. Morris Young (ex-Anglican Clergyman), "Atonement the Child of Fear"; 6.30, "Did Christianity Make Good Men or Did Good Men Make Christianity?"

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LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Alexandra Hall, Islington-square): J. T. Lloyd, 3, "Freethought and Morals"; 7, "The Lying Gospel."

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