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Our missionary offices to America as to Africa, consist I believe principally in the stealing of land, and the extermination of its proprietors by intoxication.

—JOHN RUSKIN.

The Dead Jew.

THE ancient Jews occupied an insignificant place in the world's history. The land they inhabited, as Gibbon says, was of the size and fertility of Wales. Yet the chosen people described it as a land flowing with milk and honey. In the same way, they made themselves out to be the most important nation on this globe—which they regarded as flat, as we should be if we believed in their nonsense. God Almighty was always thinking about them. Even when they got into trouble it was only his way of showing his concern about them. Their chastisements were a sign of his love.

The plain truth is the opposite of their patriotic boastings. The Jewish nation simply existed on sufferance. Its existence as an independent kingdom was remarkably brief. It disappeared as soon as one of the great empires stretched out its paw for the mouse of Palestine.

What did the Jew contribute to the world's civilisation? In science, art, and philosophy he was absolutely barren. But he was a fierce religionist. He clung to his god Jahveh with invincible tenacity. His god was himself, immensely magnified; and he was therefore worshiping himself in disguise. His religion was patriotism, as his patriotism was egotism. It was the Jew against the world, and of course the world got the best of it.

Nevertheless, the Jew had his revenge. He imposed himself on the modern world by proxy. As luck would have it, his prophetic Scriptures were the starting point of the new universal religion which arose out of the wreck of the old national religions of the Roman Empire; and the Jewish spirit of fanaticism was necessary in the apostles of a faith which was to triumph over civilisation as well as the imperial authority.

Christianity bound up its own Scriptures with those of Judaism, and is only now, after a lapse of nearly two thousand years, beginning to make a separation, through what is called "The Higher Criticism." Christian "scholars" took Hebrew as the centre of learning, Palestine as the centre of the world, and the petty squabbles of Jewish tribes as the centre of universal history. But all this has been changing since oriental studies, scientific researches, geographical exploration, and world-wide intercommunication, have broadened our minds and enlightened our conceptions of the past. Not to put too fine a point upon it, the ancient Jew is played out. He is a detected fraud. He lied himself into

a fine reputation, and Christianity, for reasons of its own, supported him in the imposture. Wider knowledge has exposed his pretensions. When we were shut up, century after century, to slender sources of information, it was easy to deceive us. We were like the boy, who thinks a lot of his village pond, until he gazes on the mighty ocean.

Yes, we are getting over that Jewish delusion. We have studied ourselves out of its history and science, but there still remains a final act of emancipation. Christianity goes on worshiping a dead Jew. It adores him as a veritable god; it also affects to regard him as a transcendent man. It makes him the be-all and the end-all of humanity. The thought of going beyond him is blasphemy. He is first and last, and there is none beside him. Salvation is still of the Jews, through the worship of Jesus Christ. They are dead in everything else, but they live in this, little as their modern descendants suspect the fact.

The godhead of Christ is at its last gasp. The reactionaries see that it can only be perpetuated by a tyrannous abuse of our system of national education. If the child be not captured the man is lost. This is the admission of the Trinitarians. Nor is this all. God the Father is once more asserting his predominance in Christian theology, and the Son is falling into a place of subordination. By this means he will pass out of godship altogether. It is only a question of time. Will it indeed be very long before Christendom exclaims—Great Christ is Dead!

We know how mythical is the "history" of Christ. His career is a plagiarism of that of the old sun-gods. His very crucifixion is a shifting anniversary, with the sun and moon; and his resurrection marks the real birth of the year at the vernal equinox. And thus, if Judaism has survived in Christian teaching, Paganism has survived in Christian rites and ceremonies. The old nature-gods are hard to kill. They have a deeper life than the gods of yesterday. Men will bask in the sunshine and cry "Hail!" to the "god of day" after Christ is swept down to oblivion.

What remains when Christ is gone? The man Jesus. And what is he? A dead Jew? Simply this and nothing more. And why is a dead Jew better than a dead Greek, a dead Roman, a dead Hindu, a dead Chinese, a dead Egyptian, or even a dead Englishman? It was once asked, Can any good come out of Nazareth? It is greater folly to ask, Can any good come *except* out of Nazareth? Such narrow parochialism is unworthy of the human spirit. The world is greater than Nazareth, and Humanity is greater than Jesus. We will not bend for ever over the tomb of the Nazarene. It is a slavery to keep us there. We will be eclectic. What good Jesus taught (if he ever really lived) we will accept. But we will also reject the rest. We will not worship a dead Jew.

G. W. FOOTE.

Religious Epidemics.—III.

(Continued from p. 323.)

ONE enduring and inevitable consequence of the prevalence of monasticism has not, I think, been sufficiently noticed by many writers. That is, its influence on the ideal of marriage, on the family, and on the domestic virtues generally. Gibbon said that the Pagan world regarded with astonishment a society that perpetuated itself without marriage. Unfortunately, this perpetuation was only secured by the sacrifice of some of the dearest interests of the race. For in general one may say that any appeal to the idealistic aspect of human nature affects precisely the class that are in least need of such a stimulus. The world would indeed lose little, and might possibly gain something, if many who become parents died without leaving descendants. But there is no evidence that monasticism, with its preaching of celibacy, ever attracted this class. The safe assumption lies in quite the opposite direction. Monastic Christianity made its appeal for celibacy on behalf of purity and religion. The sexual relations of men and women were deliberately labelled as "unclean." Married persons had undergone "defilement." Neither the social nor individual value of marriage and the family were recognised, but were at best permitted as inescapable evils.

Hardly any movement ever struck so hard and so disastrously at social wellbeing as did monasticism. Wives were encouraged to desert their husbands, husbands to desert their wives, children their parents. Parents, in turn, were exhorted to devote their children to the monastic life; and although, at first, those who had been condemned to monasteries by their parents were allowed to return to the world on reaching maturity, this liberty was taken from them by the Fourth Council of Toledo in 633.* Some few of the Christian writers of this period protested against children forsaking their parents; but, in general, to trample upon affections of this kind, was treated as the supreme proof of excellence. St. Jerome fully expressed this in the following passage:—

"Though your little nephew twine his arms around your neck; though your mother with dishevelled hair, and tearing her robes asunder, point to the breast with which she suckled you; though your father fall down on the threshold before you, pass on over your father's body. Fly with tearless eyes to the shadow of the cross. In this matter cruelty is the only piety.....Your widowed sister may throw her gentle arms around you.Your father may implore you to wait but a short time to bury those near to you, who will soon be no more; your weeping mother may recall your childish days, and may point to her shrunken breasts and to her wrinkled brow. Those around you may tell you that all the household rests upon you. Such chains as these, the love of God and the fear of hell can easily break. You say that Scripture orders you to obey your parents, but he who loves them more than Christ loses his own soul. The enemy brandishes a sword to slay me. Shall I think of a mother's tears?"†

The consequences of such teachings are not difficult to forecast. Marriage as an institution became coarsened and brutalised. Dean Milman said that in all the discussions concerning marriage and celibacy he could not recall a single instance where the social aspect appears to have occurred to the disputants. Children are rarely mentioned except as an illustration of some point, as one might use any other natural object. Dean Milman's remark is not only true of early Christian literature; to some extent it holds of Christian literature as a whole. That much-admired evangelical classic, for example, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, shows a curious obliviousness to the value of family and social life. Individual salvation is its keynote. Nothing is to be allowed to stand in the way of that. But neglect of the social and humanising aspects of family life

inevitably lead to a hardening of character and brutalising of social relationships. The brutal ferocity of the theological disputes of this period has never failed to arouse the comments of historians. But there was nothing to soften and humanise them. Everything was dominated by the theological interest. Next to the sin of heresy in oneself was the tolerance of heresy in others. And we owe it in no small measure to monkish activity that the tolerance of Pagan times, with the widespread respect for truth-seeking, was replaced by the narrow intolerance of the Christian ages, and which has never been eradicated in Christian Europe.

Following upon this influence was the almost total extinction of the civic life and civic virtues that had been so striking a feature of the old Roman Empire. "A candid examination," says Lecky, "will show that the Christian civilisation has been as inferior to the Pagan ones in civic and intellectual virtues as they have been superior to them in the virtues of humanity and chastity." One may justifiably question the accuracy of the concluding part of this statement, but the opening portion admits of overwhelming proof. Celibacy is not chastity, and the reduction of sexual relationships to mere animalism does not result in purity. And it is difficult to see how the coarsening of character that Lecky himself describes can be consistent with a heightened humanity. But there is no question that the growth of humanity spelt disaster to the civic life and institutions of the Empire. Nothing the Romans did was more admirable than their organisation and development of municipal life. They made no attempt at a uniform organisation, but gave as much free play to local feeling and liberty as was consistent with imperial order and peace.* Civic life became, in consequence, well ordered and persistent. It was far less corrupt than administration in the capital, and freedom persisted in the towns for long after it had practically disappeared in Rome. Indeed, but for the influence of Christianity it is not improbable that the urban municipalities might have provided the impetus for the rejuvenation of the Empire.

Against this, however, monastic Christianity was in antagonism from the outset. To begin with, its object was individual salvation, not social development. And to this social activities presented themselves as a decided hindrance. People were exhorted to the monastic life, and praised because of their neglect of civic duties. And as this exhortation naturally affected the more thoughtful and the more conscientious, the immediate consequence was to lower the character of municipal life by throwing its direction into the hands of a less worthy class. Next, the frenzy for individual salvation, and the growing influence of monasticism, made even association with non-Christians, if not a sin, at least in the highest degree undesirable. Theology became the one absorbing and the one important topic. The figure of the monk becomes supreme, and his ideal infects and paralyses the healthful activities of the mass of the people. The Pagans would have understood by a "good man" one who spent himself in the interests of his country. The Christian understood by it one who succeeded in saving his own soul by the sacrifice of all family and social affections. Monasticism, vampire-like, fed itself upon the life blood of the empire, and the civic life and ideals of Rome sank into a mere tradition, to inspire long after such men as Rienzi and those of the French Revolution.

I have no space to more than notice another religious epidemic, also of great significance in the history of both religion and civilisation. This is the various crusades for the recovery of the Holy Land. Pilgrimages to the burial places of saints and other sacred spots connected with Christian history had long been in vogue, and had formed both a source of revenue to the Church and of inspiration to the

* Lecky, *History of European Morals*, vol. ii., p. 131.

† Cited by Lecky, vol. ii., pp. 134-5.

* For a fine sketch of Roman municipal life see Dill's *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, ch. ii.

faithful. Among these places of pilgrimage, Jerusalem held a prominent place, and for purposes of protection and comfort, the pilgrimage usually included a large number of people. Towards the end of the eleventh century, pilgrims who returned home complained of ill-treatment by the Mohammedans. Recent events in Europe have shown how easy it is even to-day to rouse Christian feeling against a Mohammedan power, and it was considerably easier to do so in the eleventh century, and with a people only just recovering from such an epidemic as monasticism. Between them, Pope Urban II. and Peter the Hermit—the former from political reasons, and the latter from sheer fanaticism—succeeded in rousing Europe to a maniacal desire for a recovery of the Holy Land. And for nearly two hundred years the world saw a series of crusades on as absurd an errand as ever engaged the energies of mankind.

Ordinary histories lean to representing the Crusades as a series of armed expeditions, led by princes, nobles, and kings. This gives a quite inaccurate conception of the movement during its most virulent stages. It was, in reality, a psychological epidemic. No custom, howsoever ancient, no duty, no law, was allowed to stand before the crusading mania. Peter himself led a huge concourse of people, ill-armed, and including a large number of sick, aged, and even children. Some of the bands were led by a goose and a goat—a curious felicity in selecting symbols. Although on a religious expedition, small regard was paid to humanity or decency. Defenceless cities *en route* were sacked, women outraged, and men and children murdered. The Jews were murdered wholesale. Generally, the slaughter of Jews at home was preparatory to crusading abroad. Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, although themselves providing contingents for the crusading army, suffered heavily by the passage of these undisciplined, lawless crowds.

The most remarkable of all the Crusades, and one which well shows the character of the epidemic, was the Children's Crusade of 1212. It was said that the sins of the Crusaders had caused their failure, and priests went about France and Germany calling upon children to do what the wickedness of their fathers had prevented their doing. The children were told that the sea would dry up to give them a passage, and the Mohammedans stricken by the Lord on their approach. A peasant lad, twelve years of age, Stephen of Cloyes, received the usual vision, and was ordered to lead the Crusade. Commencing with the children around Paris, he collected 80,000 children, without money or food, and commenced the march. A German army of 40,000 children was also mustered, led by a boy of ten years of age. The result of this Crusade may be told in a few words. About 6,000 of the French contingent, having reached Marseilles, were offered a passage by some ship-owners, and were sold into slavery. Many others met the same fate, the girls being reserved for a more sinister traffic. Thousands died on the march over the Alps. Some succeeded in getting home again, ruined in both mind and body.

Probably about 5,000,000 lives were lost during the period of the Crusades. And what were the results? First, there is no question that the religious feeling was strengthened. Persecution of heretics and unbelievers assumed almost a mania. Crusades were initiated in other directions—against the Moors in Spain, against the Albigenses, and against other heretics. Failure did not cure fanaticism—it fed it; the returned Crusaders brought their religious intolerance home with them, and it was not the policy of the Church to allow this intolerance to remain idle. This is one side of the picture. The other side is a more favorable one, although it did not immediately show itself. But the Crusades, for the first time, brought the uncivilised Christian West into intimate contact with the civilised Mohammedan East. Large bodies of people had met a people with a courage equal to their own, and with a humanity that was greater, and possessing a culture and a civilisation to which they could lay no claim. Hitherto, Moham-

edan culture had only influenced Christendom through the medium of the Spanish schools and universities. Now, the influence became more general. A taste for greater comfort began, literature began to improve. We approach the period of the Renaissance, and to that new birth the indirect influences of the Crusades, despite their religious intolerance, and cruelty, and fanaticism, offered a contribution of no small value.

C. COHEN.

God and Nature.

IT is a remarkable and highly significant fact that every fairly old church or chapel is surrounded by a graveyard. The popular impression is that the church or chapel antedates the graveyard; or, in fact, that the graveyard is there because it is, in a sense, subservient to church or chapel. Indeed, it is generally taken for granted that a church is a place of worship, and that the dead are buried in its vicinity because it is customary to hold a Divine Service prior to interment. Only the other day a clergyman asserted that "the ancient Britons built Stonehenge because they were awed by the terrors of the Universe and sought to propitiate the sun-god with human blood." The truth is, however, that the graveyard is older than the church, and that the latter owes its origin to the former. There is abundant evidence to show that, originally, what we call a church was not a place of worship at all, but a slab to mark the place of burial, a heavy stone laid on the grave to prevent the dead from rising, or a heap of stones supposed, in many instances, to be inhabited by the ghosts of the deceased. Major Conder (quoted by Grant Allen in his *Evolution of the Idea of God*, p. 41) describes the various stones employed in the following manner:—

"Rude stone monuments, bearing a strong family resemblance in their mode of construction and dimensions, have been found distributed over all parts of Europe and Western Asia, and occur also in India..... They include *maenhirs*, or standing stones, which were erected as memorials, and worshiped as deities, with libations of blood, milk, honey, or water poured upon the stones; *dolmaens*, or stone-tables, free standing—that is, not covered by any mound or superstructure—which may be considered, without doubt, to have been used as altars on which victims (often human) were immolated; *cairns*, also memorial, and sometimes surrounding *maenhirs*; these were made by the contributions of numerous visitors or pilgrims, each adding a stone as witness of his presence; finally, *cromlechs*, or stone circles, used as sacred enclosures of early hypaethral temples, often with a central *maenhir* or *dolmaen* as statue or altar."

There was no unanimity of belief as to where the souls or ghosts of the dead dwelt. Many imagined that they lived on with the bodies in the tombs. Professor Flinders Petrie says:—

"In Upper Egypt at present a hole is left at the top of the tomb-chamber; and I have seen a woman remove the covering of the hole and talk down to her deceased husband. Also funeral offerings of food and drink, and even beds, are still placed in the tombs" (*Religion of Ancient Egypt*, p. 12).

Others believed that the ghosts of the dead were in the stone or stones on the top of the tombs, and the living came and feasted with them there. According to another system, all the dead belonged to Osiris, whose kingdom was thought at first to lie in the marshlands of the delta, then somewhere in Syria, and last of all in the Milky Way, which was devoutly sung as the heavenly Nile. According to another system still, the soul at death entered the sun in the west, and was taken along in everlasting light.

Thus we learn that churches were not originally places of worship, but places sometimes of entertainment, and sometimes, alas, of bloody sacrifices, offered to conciliate departed spirits. Such, in brief, was the starting point of the evolution of God and his worship. This was a personally guided evolution, an evolution of which the priests of the different religions have had full charge. The ancient Britons

did not build Stonehenge "because they were awed by the terrors of the Universe," but because they were anxious to honor and, perhaps, solicit the favor of, their heroic dead. Nennius, who flourished in the ninth century, and who is the first writer to mention Stonehenge, assures us that "it was erected in commemoration of the 400 nobles who were treacherously slain near the spot by Hengist in the year 472." The Welsh Triads furnish a similar account of the object of its erection. It is an incontrovertible fact that around it there is a ring of nearly three hundred barrows. Even those who regard it as a temple, in which the men of the Bronze Age met to worship the sun, candidly admit that most of the old circles mark out burying places. It is true enough that our far-off ancestors were often "awed by the terrors of the Universe," but that was not because they believed in supernatural powers which were hostile to them, but because they were ignorant and took it for granted that all natural forces were living beings, capable of smiling or frowning upon them. It was Nature of which they stood in such unspeakable awe; and it was this awe, rooted in primal stupidity, that gradually led to the inference of a Super-nature, of a something behind and above Nature which was the cause of all her activities. And so people were found thinking and talking about Nature *plus* God, or about Nature as a sort of machine worked by a Supreme Being. Curiously enough, from the very first, this Supreme Being, who ran the Universe, was believed to cherish some spite against mankind, and to take delight in doing it almost all the harm he could. He was a Being who needed to be wheedled, cajoled, bribed into something like friendship, or whose placation could be effected only by the costliest sacrifices conceivable. That is to say, God was interpreted in terms of Nature; and, ignorant as these ancestors of ours must have been, their account of God was perfectly rational. If God exists, and inanimate Nature is his instrument, his attitude to the human race, and, indeed, to all other races of living beings, is undoubtedly that of an enemy, or, at least, an indifferentist who cares not what happens.

In the *Christian World* for May 22, "J. B." quotes Proudhon thus:—

"God is evil. If God exists he is essentially hostile to our nature. We attain to science in spite of him; to society in spite of him. Every step forward is a victory in which we crush the Deity."

Proudhon was a man who devoted his whole life to the service of oppressed and suffering humanity, and who found it impossible to believe in a good God while face-to-face with such oppression and suffering. Of the Being so violently anathematised by the great revolutionary writer, "J. B." says: "Assuredly, it is not the God we know." But just as assuredly the God "J. B." claims to know permits all the cruel wrongs and evils the contemplation of which filled Proudhon with such infinite disgust. It is amazingly easy to charge orthodoxy with misrepresenting religion, with being an influence that denied justice and fought against it; but the fact remains that if God exists he not only permits injustice to prevail, but actually employs lightning, flood, earthquake, and volcano as instruments of the most cruel and wanton destruction. The God of the *Christian World* is not one whit better than the God of the *Christian* or the *British Weekly*. The truth is that Theism in all its forms is an utterly discredited, self-condemned system. "The Something Behind" has completely failed to justify the belief in it. Justice simply means right relations between man and man and between the human race and the rest of the kingdom of life; and these can be secured alone as the result of our own exertions. "J. B." speaks of a Divine anxiety for the worst sinners living; but the continued existence of the sinners proves the perfect futility of the Divine anxiety.

"The Something Behind" is a metaphysical speculation of the flimsiest character. It can be talked and written about to any extent, but bring it to the touchstone of actual life and its absolute

unreality becomes instantly established. Nature and Life we know, but "the Something Behind" is wholly without witness. Take the question of beauty, which "J. B." uses as an illustration, and you will realise the force of the argument. "And what is beauty?" he asks. "It is a question which Materialism can never answer. It is so essentially an affair of the soul." This he says after giving a very eloquent description of the inimitable beauty of Spring—"the trees clothing themselves—the oak, the ash, the elm putting on their dainty attire, the chestnut throwing up its milk-white cones, the laburnum with its golden gleam, the meadows pied with daisies, the bluebells showing as though the heavens were coming up through the earth." "This is beauty, so essentially an affair of the soul," he then exclaims. We maintain, on the contrary, that the beauty so well portrayed is essentially an affair of the material eye transmitted from the material world without to the material brain within. This is not explaining beauty, we admit, but neither does saying that it is "so essentially an affair of the soul" tell us what it is. "J. B." is an Idealist who does not believe in a material existence at all, who has the temerity to assure us that a stone is nothing "but a mass of congested thoughts," and who coolly asserts that the stone's existence, its present, past, and future, its shape, coherency, weight, color, divisibility—that "all these things are ideas, and have no meaning except as appeals, signals from one mind to another." Well, if we were to take that stone and fling it with all our might at "J. B.'s" face, we incline to the opinion that it would impress him as something more substantial than "a mass of congested thoughts."

We are firm believers in Nature, but not in Nature and God. We accept the Universe, but reject, with thanks, "the Something Behind," it. And we must add that it is quite unfair, on "J. B.'s" part, to claim Huxley as an ally. That great scientist was certainly not an Idealist of the "J. B." type; nor was he a Theist of any type. The Prologue to *Controverted Questions* makes it sufficiently clear that he was not a supernaturalist. He resented being called an Atheist, but he was without God; he repudiated Materialism; and yet invariably spoke of life in terms of Matter.

J. T. LLOYD.

Christianity and the Chinese.—III.

(Continued from p. 325.)

"All the societies of the Far East are founded, like that of Japan, upon ancestor-worship. This ancient religion, in various forms, represents their normal experience, and it offers everywhere to the introduction of Christianity, as now intolerantly preached, obstacles of the most serious kind. Attacks upon it must seem, to those whose lives are directed by it, the greatest of outrages and the most unpardonable of crimes."—LAFRADIO HEARN, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, 1905, p. 517.

"I am aware of a so-called English missionary who rampages about Central Asia with the funds supplied by societies at home, and who, taking with him a portmanteau full of Bibles, thinks that by dropping its contents here and there, he is winning recruits to the fold of Christ. What is the educated Chinaman likely to think, for instance, of Samuel hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord, or of David setting Uriah in the forefront of the battle, and commissioning Solomon to slay Shimei, whose life he had himself sworn to spare, or of Solomon exchanging love-lyrics with the Shulamite woman? Even in the New Testament, the bidding to forsake father and mother for the sake of Christ must to the Chinaman's eyes be the height of profanity, whilst if he can follow the logic of St. Paul, he accomplishes that which is beyond the power of many educated Christians."—LORD CURZON, *Problems of the Far East*, 1896, pp. 290-1.

"Nowhere is missionary work as difficult as in China. Think, for instance, of the difficulty of explaining to an ancestor-worshiper such words as, 'If any man come to Me and hate not his father, he cannot be my disciple. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father.'"—REV. E. J. HARDY, *John Chinaman at Home*, 1905, p. 317.

EVEN if, after enormous labor, the missionary masters the Chinese language, his pathway is still

beset with difficulties. As Dr. Morrison observes:—

"I believe that it is now universally recognised that the most difficult of all missionary fields—incomparably the most difficult—is China. Difficulties assail the missionary at every step; and every honest man, whether his views be broad, or high, or low, must sympathise with the earnest efforts the missionaries are making for the good and advancement of the Chinese. Look, for example, at the difficulty there is in telling a Chinese, who has been taught to regard the love of his parents as his chief duty, as his forefathers have been taught for hundreds of generations before him—the difficulty there is in explaining to him, in his own language, the words of Christ, 'If any man come to Me and hate not his father, he cannot be my disciple. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father.'"*

We have noticed the apathy displayed by the Chinese regarding the existence of a God, of a soul, or of heaven and hell. This, combined with their ancestor-worship, forms an almost insurmountable obstacle to their conversion to Christianity. Mr. A. H. Smith, who was himself for many years a missionary in China, tells us that: "The Polytheism and Pantheism of the lower classes of Chinese are matched in the upper classes by what appears to be pure Atheism." And "there never was on this earth a body of educated men so thoroughly agnostic and atheistic as the mass of Confucian scholars."† And, farther, the same author declares:—

"It is frequently quite impossible to interest a Chinese in the question whether he has three souls, one soul, or no soul at all.....he is very likely to care nothing either about his 'souls' (if he has any) or about theirs, unless it can be shown that the matter is in some way connected with the price of grain" (p. 308).

Moreover, he adds, "the idea of solemnity appears to be foreign to the Chinese mind." But "this does not prevent his conformity to the rite. The ancients did so, and he does as they did. Whether it is of any use 'who knows'" (p. 300). Just as among our upper classes they attend church as a social function and because it is the thing to do.

It must be confessed that the Chinese character provides very unpromising material for Christianity to work upon. But the rock against which the waves of missionary enthusiasm beat in vain is ancestor-worship.

To quote Mr. A. H. Smith again, whose work, *Chinese Characteristics*, is acknowledged to be the best and most authoritative work dealing with things Chinese:—

"It is a melancholy comment upon the exaggerated Chinese doctrine of piety that it not only embodies no reference to a Supreme Being, but that it does not in any way lead up to a recognition of His existence. Ancestral worship, which is the most complete and ultimate expression of this filial piety, is perfectly consistent with Polytheism, with Agnosticism, and with Atheism. It makes dead men into gods, and its only gods are dead men. Its love, its gratitude, and its fears are for earthly parents only. It has no conception of a Heavenly Father, and has no interest in such a being when He is made known. Either Christianity will never be introduced into China, or the ancestral worship will be given up, for they are contradictories. In the death struggle between them the fittest only will survive" (*Chinese Characteristics*, p. 185).

We do not believe that in that struggle Christianity will emerge victorious, unless by altering its creeds and dogmas it accommodates itself to the spirit of ancestor-worship, and then it will not be Christianity but something else.

Let us try to realise the strength and vitality of the cult of ancestor-worship as practised in the Far East. Says Lafcadio Hearn:—

"By aid of that cult have been evolved all ideas of duty to the living as well as to the dead—the sentiment of loyalty, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and the spirit of patriotism. What filial piety signifies as a religious force can best be imagined from the fact that you can buy life in the East—that it has its price in the market.

This religion is the religion of China, and of countries adjacent; and life is for sale in China."*

When the Panama railroad was being constructed—many years ago, before science rendered the place healthy and habitable—the laborers, black and white, died off like flies before the unhealthy conditions then prevailing, until not sufficient could be procured for the work. Says Hearn:—

"But labor could be obtained from China—any amount of labor at the cost of life; and the cost was paid; and multitudes of men came from the East to toil and die, in order that the price of their lives might be sent to their families.....Where this religion prevails, the individual is ready to give his life, in a majority of cases, for the family, the home, the ancestors.....Out of filial piety, indeed, has been developed the whole moral power that protects the State—the power also that has seldom failed to impose the rightful restraints upon official despotism whenever that despotism grew dangerous to the common weal" (p. 58).

The Chinese, the Japanese, and the Korean, says Mr. Arthur Diosy in his fine work, *The New Far East*:—

"has ever present to his mind the thought of his forefathers. He lives surrounded, as it were, by a crowd of ghostly relatives, eagerly scanning his every action. With the Japanese, racial instincts cause the feeling to predominate that prompts them to add fresh lustre to the ancestral roll of honor by valiant deeds in war, or by acquiring civic fame in times of peace" (p. 231).

To the Chinese it seems to have been narrowed down in the majority of cases, says the same writer, "to a slavish adherence to the ways that commended themselves to his forefathers, and an intense dread of offending them by any departure therefrom."

A Chinaman may be a Buddhist, a follower of Confucius, or a Taoist, but before and above all, he is an ancestor-worshiper. Ancestor-worship is older than any of these systems, which only obtained a footing in China by accepting it as it stood. Mr. Chester Holcombe says:—

"The worship of ancestors is literally universal in China. There are no exceptions to the practice, except in the case of Christianised Chinese, and on no other ground do these receive so much criticism and abuse, amounting in individual cases to persecution, as for the neglect of this solemn duty. So far as can be discovered, the worship is as old as the race. It is the most deeply rooted of all forms of religion in the very fibre of the Chinese character, and, beyond all question, it will be the last of all forms of false faith to die out among them."†

As is well known, China, at the end of the seventeenth century, came within measurable distance of being Christianised by the Jesuits. Under their influence, "Christianity," says Mr. Arthur Diosy, "flourished for a time to a remarkable degree, numbering its churches by hundreds, and its adherents by hundreds of thousands."‡

Mr. Davonport says it "progressed by leaps and bounds, extending over all Northern China, even beyond the Great Wall into the old Chinese province now called Shing King, in Manchuria." And, further on, he remarks: "The progress of Christianity was, perhaps, more rapid than has ever been known in any other part of the world."§

How is the remarkable success of the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, and the undeniable failure of the hundred-fold more numerous missionaries of to-day, to be accounted for? There are several reasons.

In the first place, the Jesuits had the field to themselves. There were not a multitude of Christian sects contending with one another for converts, each sect being regarded by the Chinese as a different religion.

Then, as Mr. Diosy points out, the modern preachers began "their labors at the wrong end"; they "devoted their attention almost exclusively to

* Lafcadio Hearn, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, 1905, p. 57.

† Chester Holcombe, *The Real Chinaman*, 1895, p. 123.

‡ Arthur Diosy, *The New Far East*, p. 220.

§ Davenport, *China from Within*, pp. 231-5.

* Dr. G. E. Morrison, *An Australian in China*, p. 69.

† A. H. Smith, *Chinese Characteristics*, 1906, pp. 292-3.

the lower strata,"* the corresponding class from which the Salvation Army recruit their ranks in this country. The Jesuits, on the other hand, says the same author, "wasted no time, but proceeded straight to the fountain-head of local authority; they—

"ingratiated themselves with the highest in the landestablished themselves in the Palace at Peking, erecting their church within its pink ramparts, and became the trusted high officials and intimate friends of at least three of China's greatest Manchu Emperors."

But, then, these Jesuits were learned men, conversant with Western science, who made themselves very useful to the Emperors as mechanicians, astronomers, and in the practice of medicine. Matthew Ricci, the Jesuit missionary, says Professor Parker in his *China and Religion* (p. 191), was "a profound mathematician, very erudite, and also patient and courteous to boot, he greatly impressed the educated natives." Of Verbiest, another of them, the same authority observes, "He was all the more able to obtain good terms by his readiness to cast brass guns of large calibre.....and by his handiness in arranging diplomatic difficulties with the Russians" (p. 197).

Then, again, the Jesuits saw that it would be useless to contend against ancestor-worship, so they incorporated it in their own faith. Says Lafcadio Hearn:—

"In China, the Jesuits were quick to perceive that the power of resistance to proselytism lay in ancestor-worship; and they shrewdly endeavored to tolerate it, somewhat as Buddhism before them had been obliged to do. Had the Papacy supported their policy, the Jesuits might have changed the history of China; but other religious orders fiercely opposed the compromise, and the chance was lost."†

It was the Dominicans and Franciscans who— attracted to China by the success of the Jesuits—acquainted the Pope with the heretical proceedings of the Jesuits, and they were formally condemned by the Holy See:—

"The worship of Confucius and of ancestors was condemned as pagan, so that missionaries were not allowed to attend any festivals or sacrifices connected therewith; Chinese philosophy was deemed to be altogether heretical, and even Chinese books were not to be admitted into the missionary schools, because they contained superstitious and atheistic matter."‡

This practically put an end to the Christian propaganda in China. The Emperor Kanghsi was highly offended; "he was justly incensed at the assumption of the Pope in issuing edicts and interfering in the internal affairs of the Chinese Empire,"§ and forbade any missionary to remain in the country without his permission. His son and successor, in the year 1724, issued an edict strictly prohibiting the propagation of Christianity.

(To be continued.)

W. MANN.

The Resurrection of the Dead.

THE Christian Burial Service is based on the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, notwithstanding that its teaching respecting the resurrection of the dead is contrary to that of Jesus Christ. Is it not so? Well, let us consider the point.

Paul, the self-styled apostle, was a conceited bigot, who claimed to understand "those mysterious points which are inscrutable to man." Said he: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (v. 3, 4).

"According to the scriptures"! What scriptures? They could not have been the New Testament, for

not a line of it had then been written. They must, therefore, have been those Hebrew writings part of which now form the Old Testament. But where in the Old Testament is there the slightest allusion to a Christ who should "die for our sins," and be "buried and rise again the third day"? There is not one. The only so-called prophecies regarding a Ruler in Israel speaks of him as being a man, and not a supernatural being; as one who should be a powerful potentate, not a spiritual myth—a barbarian conqueror like unto Joshua, who should exalt the Jewish nation above all the other nations of the earth. Paul, therefore, was either ignorant of the "scriptures," or he deliberately told an untruth respecting them. What a pity it was that he did not, as he suggested others should do, "awake to righteousness and sin not" (v. 34).

Having spoken thus, to the "shame" of those whom he was addressing, he proceeded thus:—

"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; and to every seed his own body" (v. 35-38).

Was ever a more nonsensical statement made? And yet Paul calls the man to whom he is addressing himself a "fool"!

Says Paul: "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Does not common sense teach us that *dead* seed does not quicken, and that it is only *living* seed which germinates and produces a living plant?

Says Paul: "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain." Is not such so-called reasoning simply pitiful? The dead body of a human being when placed (that is, sown) in the grave is not "grain" of any kind, and, being dead, cannot reproduce itself. To liken it to, or to compare it with, "wheat," which it "may chance" to be, "or some other grain," is mere silliness. Animal life—and physically man is an animal—is absolutely different from, and can have no affinity with, vegetable life.

Then we are told that "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; and to every seed his own body." There is no "chance" here. But how can a dead body, whether in or out of the grave, be given a body? And, were it "wheat or some other grain," God could not—as is proved by the words "to every seed his own body"—give it any other body than that which naturally belongs to it; for does not common sense teach us that "every tree is known by his fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes" (Luke vi. 43).

Paul endeavors to cover up his blunder by perpetrating another, for he says: "It is sown a natural body, and is raised a spiritual body." But on what fact does he base such an assumption? Is not this unsupported assertion plain proof that "on those mysterious points which are inscrutable to man" he was as ignorant as all other human beings are? If the body raised be not the body that was placed in the grave, no resurrection can have taken place; for resurrection means, and means only, *the rising again of the dead body that had been buried in the grave!*

Paul's assertion that "this mortal must put on immortality" (v. 53) is equally absurd. Immortality is not a garment that can be put on and off. That which is immortal never had a beginning, as it shall never have an ending; and, therefore, the being who possesses it must have possessed it from all eternity.

This, then, is the teaching of Paul. What is the teaching of Jesus Christ? Here it is:—

"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that *one of thy members perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.* And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable that *one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.*" (Matt. v. 29, 30).

* Diosy, *The New Far East*, p. 218.

† Hearn, *Japan*, p. 361.

‡ Daveoport, *China from Within*, p. 235.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

These were the words which Christ spake in his Sermon on the Mount, and what could they mean but that the corpses of all human beings will, at the Judgment Day, be raised from the dead even as, at his crucifixion, "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many" (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53). And that he meant what he said is proved by the fact that, on a subsequent occasion, he reiterated his statement, saying:—

"Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Matt. xviii. 8, 9).

And, *mirabile dictu*, Paul, when writing to the Thessalonians, contradicted the assertions he had made to the Corinthians. For, when speaking of the Last Day resurrection, he said: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thes. iv. 16, 17).

J. W. DE CAUX.

Acid Drops.

Edward Clodd is surely rather "previous" in saying, as he does in a recent letter to the *Daily Chronicle*, that—"If the vicar of Great Clacton and all other ministers of religion would agree that the Bible should be included in the curriculum of public elementary (and other schools) as literature (than which there can be no greater and nobler) they would carry the whole country with them." We hope the Association of which Edward Clodd is Chairman would not endorse this utterance. Nor did we think that their Chairman was so "childlike and bland." Keeping the Bible in the schools as "the highest literature" is the game of the Rev. Dr. Clifford and similar representatives of the Nonconformist Conscience—which, by the way, is no conscience at all. These gentlemen know very well that the Bible may be kept in the schools as a book of literature, and used there as a book of religion. That is what it is used there for. It cannot possibly be used as a book of literature until it is dead as a book of religion. We venture to suggest, also, that when it is dead as a book of religion it will be much less praised as a book of literature. What remains to be said is that Edward Clodd appears to be only half emancipated. He sees through religion—yet he trusts the clergy. George Meredith knew better. That is why he preferred our methods of attacking Christianity to Edward Clodd's.

As we expected, there was more in the Chinese Government's request for prayers in the Christian Churches than met the eye. No one but a fool or a fanatic could have imagined for a moment that the Chinese authorities were really convinced of the value of the prayers of its Christian subjects. We said at the time that it was a political dodge, although it suited the game of the missionaries to take the appeal at its face value. Now we see that the advanced Republicans in China are asserting that the call to prayer was nothing more than a move to gain support, at home and abroad, for one political party. The internal condition of China is very unsettled, and the Government appears to be putting down opposition in a very high-handed manner. The *Chinese Republican* (Shanghai) accuses the Government of resorting to assassination, and publishes documents in support of its statements. Christians at home may yet regret that they permitted themselves to be so easily fooled by their leaders, whose chief concern appears to have been to raise more funds.

It is amusing to note how widely the men of God differ on the most important subjects. The annual breakfast meeting of the Lord's Day Observance Society was recently held under the chairmanship of the Dean of Canterbury. Dr. Wace held that the fourth commandment is still in force; that is to say, that we are under a moral obligation to keep the Sabbath Day holy. Archbishop Whateley, however, pronounced such an idea "utterly unintelligible"; and surely the Archbishop was as competent to judge as is Dean Wace. The truth is that for the religious sanctity of Sunday there is not one sound argument.

The Rev. S. J. Poole, vicar of St. James's Church, Gravesend, is determined to do his very utmost to preserve the sanctity of the Sunday. A second sermon by him appears in the *Reporter* for March 17. In the first, he argued quite rightly, that the existence of Christianity depends upon the preservation of the sacred character of the Day of Rest. In the second he contends, erroneously, that the preservation of the weekly rest-day is conditional on its perpetuation as a day of worship. In this he is certainly wrong. Is he not aware that the State is continually providing additional days of rest for the people? Has he not heard of the Shops Act of 1912? There is absolutely nothing to indicate that if Sunday ceased to be a sacred day it would be lost as a public holiday.

The remedy for the "evil" of Sunday secularisation, says the *Church Family Newspaper*, lies in the hands of the people themselves. We do not agree in the "evil," but otherwise we concur in the sentiment expressed. If people do not want Sunday entertainments, let them stay away. They may be assured that none will be kept going if an audience is not forthcoming. But it is wholly vicious to ask the State to stop people attending because others desire to stay away. And it is stupid to ask for them to be closed lest people should be tempted to enter. The Freethinker asks for no more than that the matter should be left in the hands of the people themselves. Let those who wish to go do so. Let the others stay at home, or go to church. There will then be perfect liberty all round in a matter which permits absolute freedom without injuring anyone.

The Evangelical Union of South America held its annual meeting a few days ago. The Rev. C. Inwood is a missionary recently returned from South America, and although he has lived and labored there, he calls it "a continent of dead souls." In a leaflet issued by the Union the question is asked, "Do you know that it is a continent without Christianity and without God, and that its people have never heard of a Savior from sin, but are in utter darkness?" Speaking at the aforesaid meeting, Mr. Inwood, referring to Argentina, said that "unless something special happened in a few years, they would have a civilised and a degraded Heathenism rampant in their midst."

Now, what are the facts? Take the Argentine Republic, to which Mr. Inwood alluded in such disparaging terms, and you will find that 991 per 1,000 of the population are Catholics, while only 7 per 1,000 are Protestants. We have no faith in the moralising influence of any form of Christianity, but we are convinced that the missionaries misrepresent Catholic South America quite as grossly as they misrepresent Pagan China. Is Protestant Britain free from corruption, immorality, illegitimacy, and crime? Does not Mr. Inwood know that we require 68 722 policemen to render life fairly safe in the United Kingdom? We boldly affirm that, morally, Protestantism is every bit as big a failure as Catholicism, or that Christianity is everywhere a wholly discredited religion.

Warriors of the Cross again! Look at the following passage from the *Daily Chronicle* of May 24, in the course of a telegram from its Vienna correspondent, dated May 23:—

"A Sofia report describes the exasperated feeling prevailing there at the Serbian outrages committed at the Bulgarian village of Zagra. The report throws particular light on the morals and behavior of the Servians. Servian officers were assaulting girls, and the indignant villagers shot the officers, whereupon Servian soldiers burnt the village. Six Bulgarians were killed and 80 wounded."

Onward Christian soldiers!

A missionary, writing to the *Guardian* from South Africa, says that Christianity altogether fails there to hold its own against Mohammedanism. He says there is scarcely a town in South Africa where Mohammedanism is not daily making converts, not only from the natives, but from the mixed races. In Capetown he refers to three whole streets that have now become Mohammedan which formerly were Christian. His conclusion is that "Instead of winning Mohammedans to Christianity, we cannot even win back our own who have become Mohammedan."

A model of the skull of the "oldest woman in the world," which was found at Piltdown Common, Sussex, by Mr. Charles Dawson, F.S.A., has been added to the collection at the Natural History Museum. Scientists consider that the original lived about 50,000 years ago. This was long before the time of old Father Adam.

The *London Budget*, in a recent issue, contains an account of a new manuscript of the Bible, stated to have been found in Egypt. By a singular coincidence, the same number of the periodical also contains an article, "Antiquities Made to Order."

Royal personages learn nothing and forget nothing. The procession through the streets of Berlin, in which the "God-anointed" monarchs journeyed, with soldiers all around and the despised populace at a very respectful distance, might easily have been paralleled in the days of the first Pharaoh.

The Rev. Prebendary F. S. Webster advises open-air preachers to avoid argument. We can assure him that all we have heard usually do so. If he could only induce them to avoid misrepresentation, the manufacturing of fictitious experiences, and cultivate truth-speaking, it would be a move in the right direction.

Seven offertory boxes in Brighton churches have been rifled in the course of a single week. A case of "Let us Prey."

The *Guardian* heads its report of the East London Fund for the Jews Annual Meeting, "The Appeal of the Jew." We are not aware that the Jews have been appealing to Christians to come and convert them, and certainly the results do not lead one to believe that they are anxious to "come in." It is rather the appeal of impertinent Christians for funds to carry on a work that is without even the apparent justification of ordinary missionary labors. No Jew is made better by becoming a Christian, and, although we should like to see the whole Jewish race merged in the populations amid which they reside, it is absurd to expect that they would be benefited by becoming Christians. The natural growth of the Jew is not from Judaism to Christianity—that is certainly not an advance, and it might be plausibly argued that it is a distinct retrogression. His line of growth is from Judaism to Freethought. And that is the line that is actually followed all over the civilised world.

Miss Evelyn Underhill, authoress of *The Mystic Way*, believes that there are two Christianities taught in the New Testament, one for "the many," the other for "the few"—the one *exoteric*, the other *esoteric*. Miss Underhill is in error. There are *three* Christianities in the New Testament—the Jerusalem, the Pauline, and the Johannine—and each one is a complete negation of the other two. Yes, even at the very beginning, three distinct Gospels were preached—The Gospel of Jesus, the Gospel *about* Jesus, and an attempted combination of the two. Paul's was the Gospel *about* Jesus; and in the Billingsgate of his day he vigorously cursed every other, by whomsoever preached.

The Christian Church is nineteen hundred years old, but we learn from the organ of the New Theology that up to the present moment she has not evolved "a positive message." "The conviction is deepening that the time has arrived when" she should do so. We are told that there is great need for it, and that there are "provided indications of the awakening of the religious mind"; but so far *the* "positive message" is conspicuous only by its absence. The truth is that the Church delivers innumerable positive messages, every one of which contradicts all the others; and this is one reason why she is dying.

The increase of the expenditure on armaments between 1905 and 1912 was as follows:—

Russia	from 51 to 76 millions
Germany	50 " 71 "
France	43 " 59 "
United States	42 " 65 "
Austria-Hungary...	18 " 32 "
Italy	16 " 25 "
Great Britain	61 " 73 "

The total increase between 1905 and 1912 was from 281 millions to 400 millions. Such is the upshot of the Gospel of the Prince of Peace! That 400 millions, wisely spent, would soon redeem the world.

That women will in time take the place of men as parsons is the belief expressed by the Rev. Anna Shaw, who, with Mrs. Charlotte Gilman, occupied the pulpit at the Ethical Church, Bayswater, on a recent Sunday. In America there are already 3,000 women in the pulpit, while the number of men is decreasing. As the congregations of all churches are largely composed of women, this irruption of women in the pulpit promises to make religion purely a Feminist movement.

Drapers have declared war upon the farthing rates which figure so prominently in retail drapery transactions. The last refuge of this despised coin will be, in all probability the collection bag at churches.

Dr. Len Broughton is an exceedingly popular preacher, and preaches every Sunday to crowded congregations at Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, London. As is well known, he is an American who settled in this country a year ago. The following extract from a sermon preached in his own church on Sunday evening, May 18, is, therefore, eminently significant:—

"Everywhere I go I hear the wail of the loss in membership and of the shrinkage in congregations. The great rank and file of the world, say what we please, is moving away from the Church of Christ. And if this present moving of the masses of men from the Church of Christ continues at the present rate, it does not take a prophet to say that the day will come when the Church is doomed.....Something is radically wrong, and it behoves us to cease our bragging, and our fear of being charged as pessimistic, to face honestly the situation, and, if possible, find out for ourselves what the trouble is."

"Zoo in hysterics," runs a headline in an evening contemporary. Perhaps it is the arrival of a crowd of those little creatures which showed the magicians of Egypt "the finger of God."

Replying to a correspondent, who suggests the closing of churches during a portion of the week, as protection against militant Suffragettes, the *Guardian* thinks that with police outside and watchers inside the danger may be minimised. But what is the matter with God? One would think it was his business to guard the churches against attack. They are all solemnly consecrated to him, and the least he could do would be to look after his own property. To fall back upon policemen and volunteer watchers seems an awfully common, secular way of doing business.

The Dean of St. Paul's thinks that the special task of the next generation ought to be "the promotion of a better understanding between religion and science in all matters of social life." Immediately after expressing that opinion the Very Rev. Dr. Inge went on to say that already in this country religion is almost a thing of the past. On his own showing, Christianity has been and is a colossal failure amongst us. The following are his words:—

"Never before in our history has there been such a throwing off of all restraint, and all reverence—such contempt for rule and custom—such greedy pleasure-seeking in all classes. I fear we are rapidly becoming the least industrious, as we have long been the most wasteful, of the nations of Europe."

What a sad, humiliating confession for an ambassador of the infinite, omnipotent, and all-loving Christ to make!

In a non-stop piano-playing feat a Manchester clerk rendered 1,400 pieces of music from memory. He was fed, washed, and shaved while playing. Was he practising for the eternal Hallelujah Chorus in heaven?

"Any contribution to funds such as the South London Church Fund," says the Duke of Devonshire, "ought to be regarded as an insurance." Precisely! A fire insurance.

"Many preachers," says the *Christian Commonwealth*, "faced by the fact that the old certitudes and convictions are irretrievably gone, make no attempt to replace them with new." This is a fair sample of the kind of thing that passes muster with some people for sound thinking. How on earth can a certitude ever go? A conviction may disappear, but a certitude remains such to the end of the chapter. What people took for certitudes in the field of religion are now to all capable minds exploded fallacies. And there is really more to admire in the preacher who sees this much, and says so, than in the one who is looking about for new ones—which in practice means a more or less conscious misinterpretation of acknowledged facts, or a building up of new beliefs on a basis of sheer ignorance. There are no certitudes to-day in the field of religion. There are certitudes in science, and in morals, and in life in general; but these have nothing to do with religion. Secular science provides the only possible clues to an understanding of man and the world; and there is no need whatever for a religion that, if honest, can only re-echo its teachings, and, if otherwise, can only serve as an obstruction to rational life.

"The Perfect Three" is a *Daily Mail* heading. It does not refer to the Christian Trinity.

Mr. Foote's Engagements

(Lectures suspended till the Autumn.)

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1913.—Previously acknowledged, £136 13s. 5d. Received since:—Mr. and Mrs. Deakin £5 5s.

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

G. THACKRAY.—We cannot act as a medium of book loans and book exchanges between our readers. If we took the first step, how could we resist the second?

E. B.—Your cuttings are always welcome.

J. BROOKBANK.—We appreciate your feelings in the matter, but it is quite impossible for us to send competent Freethought speakers to Dr. Saleeby's meetings to deal with his vagaries. It is possible, also, to attach over-much importance to an alleged "Rediscovery of Design in Nature." The myth of design in nature was exploded long since for all with intelligence enough to discern its character, and we are not afraid of its re-establishment at the hands of Dr. Saleeby. Neither he nor anyone else can discover what does not exist; but for minds that are only partly freed from superstition there is a natural fascination in unscientific ideas, and speakers of that class will always succeed in attracting their like.

J. WILLIAMS.—The Welsh pastor you quote may be quite correct in saying that some pitboys' wages are more than those of some Congregational ministers. We do not know if this be the case, but we feel pretty certain that the pitboy who does his work well deserves more. And, after all, these ministers do not take the low wages from choice. Their wages are low for the same reason that another person's wages is not high. We do not agree with sweating in any direction, and those who engage ministers ought to pay them. But there is something profoundly insincere in this cry about the poorly paid clergy, as though it were due to conscious forbearance on their part. If more was offered them they would take it. And we do not know that many of them would be earning more in any other profession, and some would certainly be earning less.

W. AINSLEY.—Thanks. We are always pleased to receive cuttings or items of news that correspondents think will be likely to prove of service.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S office is at 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the secretary, Miss E. M. Vance.

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.

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

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.

A special meeting of the Committee for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, of which Mr. Foote is a member, was held on Tuesday evening, May 20, to consider the Bill for Amending the Blasphemy Laws that we reproduced *in extenso* in last week's *Freethinker*. It was decided to give a general support to the Bill at once, but to approach the introducers with a view to certain improvements. Another committee meeting will be held soon to consider the introducers' reply. Mr. Foote will therefore reserve his editorial criticism of the Bill until that committee meeting has been held, as he wishes to act loyally with his fellow members. There is no need, of course, for any hurry.

On Mr. Foote's suggestion and motion a copy of Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner's excellent little book on the Blasphemy Laws is being sent to every member of the House of Commons, with a covering letter drawing special attention to its value and importance.

We congratulate the Glasgow Corporation on exhibiting a little common sense (under pressure) in connection with Sunday closing. The Council had decided to close all ice-cream shops, restaurants, fried-fish shops, etc., on Sundays, besides insisting on 10 o'clock closing during the week. The Sheriff Principal, however, refused to confirm these bye-laws, with the result that the Council has now passed bye-laws allowing Sunday opening from 10 to 8, closing at 10.45 on week-night and 11 on Saturdays.

There seems quite an epidemic of common sense in Glasgow—we mean so far as Sunday is concerned, for we do not believe there is any lack of it in other connections. The Caledonian Railway Company continues its Sunday excursions to pleasure resorts, and has even promised an enlargement. The Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church has observed this "with pain," and "respectfully warns" the railway company that "God will certainly punish transgressors for this form of iniquity either in this world or that which is to come." Meanwhile the company is content to risk punishment in the world to come for the sake of better dividends here. We congratulate them on their decision.

The Wood Green Branch is holding some very successful open-air meetings at its old station on Jolly Butchers Hill. Miss Kough had a large meeting there on Sunday last, and Mr. Davidson on the Sunday previous. What the Branch needs most at present is more local help. If some of the sympathisers who attend the meetings, and who are willing to help in the actual work of the meetings, will give their names and addresses to the chairman, their services will be much appreciated.

A special meeting of the Kingsland Branch will be held to-day (June 1) at 7.30 p.m. at Mr. Davy's, 21 Castle-street, Stoke Newington. Important business has to be considered.

Mr. E. Torday, in his *Camp and Tramps in African Wilds*, gives an interesting comment on the supposed danger to white women amongst natives. He does not profess an acquaintance with the "half-civilised" natives of the coast, but as they are under European influences one ought not, in any case, permit their conduct to influence our judgment of other Africans. So far as the natives of the interior are concerned, he says emphatically that they are "utterly unlikely" to insult white women. "Even in the most dangerous parts of the Congo, where a man would require a strong military escort, a white woman would always be able to pass unmolested." But, he says, "the natives respect the white man, and expect you to respect their wives and sisters." Unfortunately, that, we expect, is precisely what the white man often fails to do. He goes out with certain notions as to the character and morality of the natives, and, once among them, thinks any conduct good enough. And it is just a question how far missionary activity is responsible for this. Missionary societies have flooded the world with accounts of native life that are to a large extent prepared with an eye to creating support for missionary work. The natives are represented as little better than animals, plunged in all sorts of degradation, and because their customs are different to ours, regarded as being destitute of morality. The consequence is, that the white man starts off with an utterly erroneous notion of the character of the native, and thinks any kind of treatment good enough for him. Then when misconduct brings reprisals, there is an outcry; and this still further confirms, to superficial onlookers, the gross inferiority of the native races.

Mr. Torday says he has twice crossed the Congo Free State and has never come across a tribe that was not naturally good tempered. This quite bears out what many other travellers have said. More than one has expressed the opinion, based on actual experience, that the white man who deals with the natives fairly and honestly, respects their customs, and treats them as human beings, is quite safe. Exceptions to this rule arise usually when the natives are smarting from wrongs inflicted by other white men. And in such cases their action is as indiscriminate and on the same level as the treatment of an English crowd to a foreigner because Great Britain has trouble with the country from which he comes. Mr. Torday says that all the natives ask is to live in peace themselves, and let everyone else do likewise. Unfortunately, this is what the white races will not permit. The trader exploits them in the interests of profit, and the missionary in the interests of religion. And often the latter, with his "Industrial Mission" and private trading, combines both.

Rudyard Kipling.

"Amid littleness and detail he detected the genius of life, the old cunning Proteus, nestling close beside us."—EMERSON.

THERE has been, perhaps, something of a slackening of public interest in the works of Mr. Rudyard Kipling during the past few years; but the production of an *edition-de-luxe* of his writings, a rare compliment to a living author, has met with so ready an appreciation that it augurs well for a revival of his fame.

Few writers ever took the field with so instant and signal a success. Emphatic, impetuous, audacious, he voiced contemporary passion and sentiment with no uncertain sound. Its possibilities and dangers were both mirrored in his stirring talent. First came the rumor of a new genius from the Orient, after the manner of creeds from time immemorial. Then "Plain Tales from the Hills" put many of us in an uncritical stage of admiration, "Soldiers Three" and "In Black and White" completed the conquest, and subsequent works in prose and verse caused the reading public, like Oliver Twist, to ask for more.

After centuries of the religion of the "Man of Sorrows," it is good to think that Mr. Kipling is a power. Since Dickens few English authors have roused so much hearty laughter. "The Taking of Lungtuppen" and "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney" recall the open-air humor of Marryat and the animal spirits of Fielding and Smollett.

To have made India a reality to dwellers in the United Kingdom is, in itself, no mean achievement. Meadows Taylor, Marion Crawford, and other novelists had reminded us that there was such a place. Phil Robinson humorously discussed the beasts and birds, but Kipling awoke the stay-at-homes to the real India, including the places—

"Where the best is like the worst—
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments,
An' a man can raise a thirst."

The studies of native life collected under various titles have importance far beyond their relative size. Mr. Kipling's versatility is unquestioned; but few were prepared to find that the hand that sketched "In Black and White" should also have produced the far more subtle "Jungle Books." "Without Benefit of Clergy," "The Man Who Was," "The Drums of the Fore and Aft," and a dozen other short stories are little masterpieces. With De Maupassant, his aim is for color, air, and light, with his eyes on the supreme moment only. His art is as modern as Maeterlinck in its breadth, and as classical in its restraint as the pages of old-world Homer.

Like Meissonier, Mr. Kipling succeeds best on a small canvas. "The Light that Failed," "Stalky & Co.," and "Captains Courageous" are magnificent failures; but the short stories are in every way admirable. Despite his limitations, he is one of the most popular writers of the day. With Bret Harte he presents us with infinite riches in a little room. The best of his work would hardly bulk more largely than one of the novels of old Samuel Richardson, which used to draw tears from the eyes of our great grandmothers. For readers of to-day like their sensations brief and pungent. Realism and romance meet within the covers of Mr. Kipling's books. The art which conceals art is made subservient to the human nature of his characters. In their warm-blooded, and often lawless, natures we feel no shackles of convention cramping their actions, or rendering them less true to life as we know it. Had his stories been told in the manner of the "penny-dreadful," devoid alike of grace and grammar, we had yet read them with pleasure, so vital are they in essentials.

Mr. Kipling possesses other gifts, and he has sought the bay leaves of the poet. Although lauded extravagantly as a singer, it must be admitted that he is seldom other than a brilliant and spirited rhymester. "Departmental Ditties" are clever society verses; "Barrack-Room Ballads," "The Seven

Seas," and "The Five Nations" are more evidence of a poet in heart than of an artist in expression. They are stirring, these clever metrical and verbal effects, but they are not the "linked sweetness" of real poetry. The golden music of Swinburne or the quiet dignity of William Watson is never paralleled in Mr. Kipling's pages. The exquisite audacity of "Tomlinson" serves only to remind us what such a theme might be in the hands of a great master of melody. The "Recessional," if we have any canons to measure it, must show cleveralty rather than poetry as the result; but we dare not dwell too closely upon Mr. Kipling's rhymes. To the great public, to the people who admire the verses of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Mr. Kipling may seem a poet; but to the lovers of real literature he is first and foremost a romancer, who can hold his audience surely with his stories.

Much has been made of Mr. Kipling's piety. The young lions of the Tory press proudly acclaim him as the most religious poet since Dryden, and the Nonconformist journalists sorrowfully retort that he has no "soul." This, however, is the merest partisanship. Of all the gods created by men in their own likeness, the Anglo-Indian deity of Mr. Kipling is the most astonishing. Such sentiments as those expressed in "The Young British Soldier" ought to make the pious penmen shy of claiming Mr. Kipling as a lineal literary descendant of Dr. Watts:—

"When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
An' the women come out to cut up your remains,
Just roll to your rifle, and blow out your brains,
And go to your Gawd like a soldier."

He uses Biblical illustrations with a freedom which reminds one of Sir John Falstaff:—

"Said England unto Pharaoh, 'You've had miracles
When Aaron struck your rivers into blood; [before,
But if you watch the serjeant he can show you something
He's a charm for making riflemen from mud! [more,
It was neither Hindustani, French, nor Coptic,
It was odds and ends and leavings of the same,
Translated by a stick (which is really half the trick)
And Pharaoh harked to Serjeant Whatsisname."

Now and again Mr. Kipling leaves this fluent fingering of the keys and strikes a deeper note. He has reproduced in most startling fashion the wondering amazement of the Hindoo brought face to face with the Christian religion:—

"Look, you have cast out love! What gods are these
You bid me please?
The Three in One, the One in Three? Not so!
To my own Gods I go.
It may be they shall give me greater ease
Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities."

In "White Horses" the piety has become tinged with patriotism, and he hints that the very sea is bestowed by the Almighty for the purpose of destroying the enemies of England. In the "Recessional" our wonderment is by no means lessened. The second verse, if it stood alone, might pass, though its best line, "An humble and a contrite heart," is by no means novel. How curious is the association of the reference just quoted to that other sentiment:—

"Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the law."

We would not close upon this note. Writing at a time when so much of contemporary literature is neurotic and "tommyrotic," Mr. Kipling has kept always to the white road of pure fancy, the path that winds between fragrant hedgerows and leads into the shadowy woods. How fresh it seems, how young, how invigorating, to take the old road with Mr. Kipling, and walk once more with the soldiers three into the beckoning forest of romance. We never grow too tired or too old for that quest and that recompense. Read with admiration to-day, we wonder if the charm of Kipling's witchery will last. It matters little, perhaps. He has an audience, and in the future the secret of immortality is beyond us, as the greater secret was alike to old Omar and his lustrous lover. To discover how much choice of subject and novelty of incident has prejudiced us in

his favor is not worth trying. "Nature's infinite book" is open to all. If Rudyard Kipling finds themes to move his readers to laughter or to tears where others had but found poor material for dreary books of travel, so far from degrading such talent, ought we not to yield him praise for the pleasure he has given the English-speaking world?

MIMNERMUS.

The Co-operative Habits of Animals.

PITILESS as the eastern blast which sweeps earth and sky in the early days of spring, the processes of nature have, nevertheless, been materially tempered by the co-operative devices incidental to plant and animal life. Vegetable organisms club together for strength and security, and in the animal kingdom various ingenious contrivances have been evolved which soften the harsh influences of frigid unemotional nature. The social instinct has worked wondrous benefits to those creatures which associate for mutual aid and support. And the crowning product of evolution, the human family, has profited immensely through the shielding influences of social solidarity. What the most earnest and heartfelt supplication to the gods has failed most utterly to accomplish has been achieved through that social instinct which animates the world of life as a whole. A thousand and one instances might be recorded in which solitary animals would readily succumb to the unfavorable factors that environ their lives, but which are enabled to multiply and replenish the earth as a result of their gregarious habits and instincts.

The social insects such as ants and bees have risen in consequence of their co-operative habits to a very advanced stage of social and intellectual evolution. They, at least, have learned the lesson which mankind has so far failed to master, that those members of the community that render no service to the State are merely a burden upon the working population. They who produce nothing, either mentally or physically, are relegated to their proper position in a commonwealth whose existence is dependent upon the mutual benefits rendered by those who form its social and economic assets.

Travellers and naturalists have often remarked upon the extreme friendliness which the fiercest birds of prey manifest among themselves. The co-operation of all kinds of aquatic and terrestrial birds against carnivorous enemies is also well attested by careful and competent observers. Among migratory birds the co-operative spirit attains a high degree of development. Birds which were previously scattered over a wide range of territory assemble in the spring and autumn at appointed places before proceeding upon their perilous journeys over land and sea. And if we may judge from the deluge of talk in which they indulge, they seem to be debating as to the ways and means of their projected travels. Those very eminent authorities, Seebohm and Dixon, fully corroborate the accounts of earlier ornithologists concerning the animated discussions of migratory birds when they return to their northern resting stations in spring. "For many days in succession," says Prince Kropotkin, "sometimes one month, they will come together every morning for one hour before flying in search of food—perhaps discussing the spot where they are going to build their nests."

Ascending to mammalian life, we find that social species are far more numerous than those few unsocial carnivorous quadrupeds which still maintain their position in places where man's influences have as yet little force. The far spread herds of antelopes, buffaloes, gazelles, and deer; the immense flocks of undomesticated goats and sheep, are all social creatures. Vast congregations of squirrels formerly abounded in Siberia, and the grass-lands of Eastern Africa are still the pasture places of immense herds of zebras and antelopes. The in-

tensely social beaver was abundant in all the running waters of Northern America and the Siberian streams until man waged a war of wholesale destruction upon these highly intelligent rodents. Such markedly colonial rodents as marmots, ground-squirrels, mice, and other animals continue to flourish in almost incredible profusion in favorable habitats in all the mainland masses of the earth's surface. In the tropics troops of sagacious elephants still survive, and the most numerous monkeys belong to species which are most distinctly social in habit. The social reindeer is the outstanding feature of the sub-Arctic regions, and the leading animals of the Polar areas are the gregarious musk oxen and Arctic foxes. The seals and cetaceans are mainly fraternal animals, and, despite their unrelenting persecution by man, they still survive in large numbers. All the wild horses, camels, and asses are in their natural state markedly social, and immense herds of these organisms still pasture in the great plateau of Central Asia. The gregarious creatures, when totalled, number very many millions, while the unsocial or solitary carnivores are, in comparison, very few.

Among the more numerous flesh-eating mammals, however, the social instinct is more pronounced. Nor are the lions, tigers, and other large cats quite so unsocial as was formerly supposed. Chalmers Mitchell has given us a very pleasing picture of the family life of the lion. Sir Samuel Baker noted the co-operation of the king of beasts when seeking for prey. Another characteristically carnivorous class—the entire dog family—is notoriously sociable. All the wolves appear to hunt in packs, as also that other member of the dog family, the jackal. Even the surly bear is not indifferent to the society of his fellows. As a matter of fact, social desires dominate the world of life in general, although they exist in various degrees of development.

It is a noticeable circumstance that social solidarity is most highly evolved among animals who would be comparatively defenceless if they stood singly and alone. Co-operative phenomena are most elaborate among social insects, birds, rodents, herbivorous mammals, and our monkey cousins. Hundreds of species of monkeys are known to science, and the co-operative factor varies very considerably among them. We possess little knowledge of the habits of nocturnal apes, but they appear to prefer a secluded and isolated life. Small family groups are formed by the howling monkeys, and among the man-like apes the orang-utan has always been seen alone or in small troops, while the gorilla appears strictly as a strong family man. But all the other members of the monkey tribe, the mandrills, chimpanzees, baboons, and the rest associate in large groups on the friendliest footing, and even strange species are sometimes permitted to enter their congregations. Most monkeys become melancholy in solitude, and their poor health and high mortality in captivity is often solely attributable to this cause. In their native forests, when beset by enemies, the cries of those who have wandered from the main body cause the other animals to rush to their assistance. They co-operate when attacked, and are frequently successful in beating off their enemies, particularly the smaller beasts of prey and carnivorous birds. Even the imperial eagle considers discretion the better part of valor where a band of monkeys is concerned. The devoted love of the female for her offspring is well known to all students of natural history. One of the fine plates in Chalmers Mitchell's recent work, *The Childhood of Animals*, represents a monkey fondling and suckling her young. This illustration was taken in the Zoological Gardens, and the whole attitude of the mother and babe is most remarkably human in appearance. The most trustworthy eye-witnesses affirm that several species of monkeys manifest the deepest concern for their wounded companions, and refuse to leave them until they are certain that they are past recovery. James Forbes and his fellow-hunters were so much impressed by the grief of some monkeys at the sight of a dying

comrade—a victim of one of their guns—that they solemnly resolved “never again to fire at one of the monkey race.”

Herbert Spencer, the greatest of all modern philosophers, has shown us that the primitive association of living cells into colonial groups laid the firm foundations for all subsequent evolution. In a steadily developing degree, this co-operative organisation most certainly distinguishes every ascending rung in the ladder of evolution. Therefore Prince Kropotkin is fully entitled to assert that in the course of this evolutionary advance the social trend becomes more and more conscious.

“It loses its purely physical character, it ceases to be purely instinctive, it becomes reasoned. With the higher vertebrates it is periodical, or it is resorted to for the satisfaction of a given want—propagation of the species, migration, hunting, or mutual defence. It even becomes occasional, when birds associate against a robber, or mammals combine, under pressure of exceptional circumstances, to emigrate. In this last case, it becomes a voluntary deviation from habitual modes of life.....It also takes higher forms, guaranteeing more independence to the individual without depriving it of the benefits of social life. With most rodents the individual has its own dwelling, which it can retire to when it prefers being left alone; but the dwellings are laid out in villages and cities, so as to guarantee to all inhabitants the benefits and joys of social life.”*

It appears a self-evident proposition that the protective factors bound up with corporate life constitute a powerful instrument in the struggle for existence. Communal life fortifies weak insects, puny birds, and defenceless mammals from the assaults of their foes. Other things equal, the gregarious mode of life secures greater longevity and promotes the maturity of sufficient offspring to maintain, at least, the average number of the species. It is fully realised that numerous other factors are involved in the maintenance of the race. But it will be conceded by those best acquainted with the complex conditions which govern animal life, that the immense importance of the social factor is hard to overrate. Intelligence, for instance, is of inestimable value to the organisms which possess it in any high degree. But mental faculty is probably more largely indebted to the social factor than it is to any other. It has been said that “Language, imitation, and accumulated experience are so many elements of growing intelligence of which the un-social animal is deprived.” Given highly evolved organs of touch, and combine such organs with an environment in which facilities are constantly afforded for gaining new experiences, and we find such eminently sociable animals as ants, parrots, elephants, monkeys, and men which combine the greatest gregariousness with the most highly evolved mental powers.

Against the elements the social factor is practically powerless amongst most organisms below man. Bird life in Britain is always more richly represented after a succession of mild winters. A hard and prolonged frost usually takes a terrible toll of bird and insect life. In Sussex, after the severe winter of 1885-6, the skeletons and feathers of what once had been plump blackbirds, were quite numerous near the farms and hamlets. A dozen dead birds might have been picked up in one orchard alone. Sir George Trevelyan mentions an outstanding American instance of a similar kind. He writes:—

“January, 1779, was the coldest month recorded in a series of observations which had been carefully and continuously noted down in Pennsylvania over a space of nearly two centuries.....The snow lay from four to six feet deep over the whole country. Wild animals were almost exterminated, from deer and turkeys down to squirrels and partridges.”†

When, however, the fullest allowance is made for the survival value of strength, swiftness, protective and warning coloration, cunning, and power of endurance in the brute battle of life, the fact remains that the nobler qualities of reason, justice, sympathy,

and love find their fitter nurseries among those organisms whose social proclivities serve to evolve a state of existence in which the weak and helpless are to some extent guarded from danger. Society life helps to limit the physical struggle, and thus assists the evolution of the higher æsthetic and moral emotions and desires. The securer the social structure, the greater the amplitude and duration of human life. With the deepening of life's processes thus rendered possible, we may confidently anticipate a future of sublimer artistic, literary, and ethical achievement than any the world has so far witnessed. For whereas in past ages the advantages conferred by culture have been almost entirely confined to a favored few, the day is now dawning when the higher things of life will become so democratised that they will be placed within the reach of all who care to cultivate, create, or enjoy them.

T. F. PALMER.

Another Lie Nailed Down.

I SEEM to have a nose for a lie. I suppose it is because I have spent so much of my life in attacking Christianity—which is the most lying religion on earth. The German historian and philosopher, Herder, who was not a fanatic nor even a partisan, went to the length of saying that “Christian veracity” deserved to rank with “Panic faith.”

What a lot of Christian lies I have nailed down in the pages of the *Freethinker*! To enumerate them all would take a good deal of space. I must leave them, therefore, at present, to the memory of my readers.

Some of the lies I have run down were big ones—such as the Torrey lies about Paine and Ingersoll. Others were of a middling size, and others again were small ones—hardly big enough for a Freethinker to refute or a Christian to invent. I leave my readers to determine the size of the one I am now bringing to their attention.

An old reader of this journal, Mr. A. Hopkins, in the course of a letter I received from him dated May 15, wrote as follows:—

“Last Sunday week I heard a Christian Evidence lecturer reading extracts from a letter in Hyde Park. I neither heard the commencement nor the end, but the letter had to do with the close of the late Mr. Wheeler's life. So much as I heard showed how the Christians had cared for him, and how, at a meeting in a small attic in Judd-street, Euston-road, the sick man had ordered Mrs. Foote and others out of his room because they were not converted or saved. All this and more was read from a many-paged letter by the lecturer. Unfortunately I could not stop to challenge the speaker; for I was with friends from the country and could not stop till the end.”

Mr. Hopkins has made inquiries at my request, and the lecturer appears to have been a Mr. H. A. Marsh. I think I have heard that name before. Was it not the name of the Christian gentleman who, with the aid of a Christian local newspaper, gave such a brilliant exhibition of Christian charity at Streatham Common a few years ago? An exhibition which ended with a threat of bringing up three hundred Billingsgate porters and King's College divinity students to drive one poor Atheist speaker off the field; thus showing that the friends of Christ were many as well as select.

I have heard again from Mr. Hopkins. He attended the Christian Evidence meeting in Hyde Park last Sunday (May 25) and questioned the chairman, a Mr. Allen, about the letter from which Mr. Marsh had been reading.

“He was quite familiar with the matter, and said that as far as his recollection served the writer of the letter was a sister of Mr. Wheeler. He further told me that the letter was in possession of Mr. Richards, who lived in Tramway-avenue, Lower Edmonton. It appears that Mr. Allen is in regular attendance at Hyde Park on Sunday mornings, and he told me that he will be pleased to be seen any time to give further information on the matter.”

* *Mutual Aid*, p. 53; 1902.

† *George the Third and Charles Fox*, vol. i., p. 290.

But there is no need for Mr. Allen to concern himself about "further information." I will supply it myself, and I am a better authority than he is on this subject. Mr. Wheeler was my oldest and dearest friend. I loved him while he lived; I have never ceased to love him since he died. He has been dead for fifteen years, and for fifteen years he was my sub-editor on the *Freethinker*, and my comrade in many other Freethought enterprises. He was a vice-president of the National Secular Society to the last breath he drew. That Society paid the cost of his funeral, and I, as its President, delivered an address at his graveside. And I found that he had appointed me executor to his will. Yes, I think I ought to know something about the last days and hours of Joseph Mazzini Wheeler. And I say that the statements now made in this precious letter read at Hyde Park are absolute lies,—as I will prove in next week's *Freethinker*.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

The Coming Education Bill.

MANIFESTO BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
SECULAR EDUCATION LEAGUE.

DURING the past few years it has been repeatedly declared by supporters of the Government that certain political questions must, as far as possible, be dealt with and settled in order to give time and opportunities for the consideration of other matters affecting the welfare of the people at large. The speech of Lord Haldane at Manchester on January 10, made on behalf of the Cabinet, intimated that chief among those important subjects will be the ever-recurring question of National Education. It is evident from Lord Haldane's speech on that occasion, amplified on various occasions since by other members of the Government, that an effort will be made to deal with the question in a more comprehensive and systematic way than has hitherto been attempted. Such a settlement would probably fix the conditions of our educational system for a considerable time.

There is one aspect of the question—that of religious education in State-supported colleges and schools—on which it is quite hopeless to expect a satisfactory settlement except on the lines of the fundamental principle that the State, composed as it is of citizens of all creeds and no creed, should have nothing whatever to do with the teaching of religion in any of its educational institutions. It is inevitable that in any proposed new legislation on this subject attention will be directed largely to the proposal for eliminating the religious difficulty by the adoption of the Secular Solution; and it is of the highest importance that the most careful thought should be given to it by every citizen, in order that, if possible, the divisions among educationalists which have so long obtained on this particular subject shall be permanently removed and the ground cleared for united effort for the real educational progress of the nation at large.

It is a lamentable, but acknowledged, fact that for many years the controversies that have arisen on this subject of religious teaching in the State Schools have markedly hindered the cause of true education. Time and energy that should have been devoted to the physical training and mental culture of the children of the nation have been diverted to unprofitable discussions as to what religious dogmas should or should not be taught in the schools, and real education has continually suffered in consequence. In spite of carefully prepared syllabuses, the children have been taught, as was inevitable under the circumstances, dogmas on which neither the sects nor the nation were agreed; while unfair religious tests, expressed or unexpressed, have been imposed on all those who have suffered accordingly. It is incumbent on all those who have the cause of true education at heart to use every effort to ensure that, whatever the new proposals may be, this old ground of contention shall once and for ever be removed, and the way made clear for the working out of those wide and far-reaching principles on which all citizens, whatever their private or personal beliefs, can unite and harmoniously work together for the common good.

It is unnecessary to enter here on the controversies of the last two or three generations. It is sufficient to point out that the Education Act of 1870, which, with its Cowper-Temple compromise, was supposed to bring peace on this vexed question, brought on the contrary a sword, which up to the present day has continually been sharpened by the sectarian controversialists. Since 1870 every effort to settle

the question in the various Education Bills which have been introduced by both the great political parties has broken down, by reason of the continual clinging to illogical and unjust compromises, which have satisfied no one, but have actually increased the confusion, both of thought and attempted action. This has again and again been acknowledged by the great political leaders on both sides. Mr. Gladstone stated that he had never been strong against secular education. He said: "It seems to me impartial, and not, if fairly worked, in any degree unfriendly to religion." Mr. John Morley said that on this question the Act of 1870 was a most "deplorable illustration of refusing to examine ideas alleged to be impracticable." As lately as 1906 Mr. Joseph Chamberlain said: "There are only two means of settling this question. One is that the State should pay for no religious teaching, and the other is that the State should pay for all religious teaching." He had always given his support to the first. And the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman stated that in his opinion nine-tenths of the Liberals, if they had their own way, would ask for the Secular Solution.

What is the Secular Solution? Not that the State in its schools should be hostile to religion, but that it should simply be neutral. The secular position is that the State, which, in its collective capacity, is the custodian and expender of the taxes that are drawn from all citizens, irrespective of their religious opinions, should refrain from supporting any such opinions through its educational institutions. The believer in Secular Education would object as much to State support of Secularism or Atheism as he would to the support of Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, or Nonconformity. The advocate of Secular Education holds that the responsibility for providing religious teaching rests with the parents and the churches, and that with it the State, as such, should have nothing to do.

The present system of illogical compromise and injustice satisfies neither parent nor teacher. The time has come when it should be swept away in favor of a system which, besides being perfectly logical, is also—which is even more important—perfectly just. The only system which meets these necessary requirements is Secular Education. The Secular Education League confidently appeals to all citizens to use their utmost endeavors in the coming educational campaign to determine that once and for all the nation's schools shall be freed from sectarian controversies and religious disputes, so that National Education may be promoted in harmony with those humane principles on which all citizens are agreed.

These are the principles on which the new measure must be framed, if it is to produce harmony and lasting peace.

"The Miracle" is the title of a remarkable film now being shown at various cinematograph halls through the country. Since the good old Bible days it appears to be the only miracle which has attracted general attention.

According to the *Evening News*, a Liberal candidate "hopes to attend one service in every place of worship in the City." This proposed increase in the congregations of the derelict churches will, if carried out, cause great joy in ecclesiastical circles; but politicians will not be likely to accept it as a precedent.

Dr. Herbert Gray, writing in the *Evening News*, says that the football captain is "a demi-god." Why demi? Is it because he does not make it so hot for his opponents as the more popular deities?

The clergy have made begging a fine art. Recently the personal column of a daily paper contained an appeal by a vicar who wished to take his wife abroad "free from cost." Another advertisement was from a young Anglican clergyman who desired "adoption," and still another from a parson's widow who asked for help to educate her boy. Why do these people advertise instead of praying?

A pecess has been writing to the *Times* in indignant tones concerning such dances as "Turkey Trot" and "Tango," which she describes as "horrors of Negroid origin." What would the titled lady have said of David's demure dance before the ark, described in the Bible? That dance would make any turkey trot.

In the course of a recent action to determine the copyright of a dramatic sketch, the author stated that he was not indebted to anybody for his plot, and added that "the incidents were as old as Adam, perhaps a little older."

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.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand) : 3.15 and 6.15, Mr. Gallagher, Lectures.
 CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park) : 3.15, a Lecture.
 CROYDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Katharine street, near Town Hall) : 6.30, a Lecture.
 EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Edmonton Green) : 7.45, a Lecture.
 KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley-road) : 11.30, Miss Kough, "Lying for the Glory of God."
 NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill Fields) : 3.15, A. D. Howell-Smith, "Christianity and Civilisation."
 FINSBURY PARK : 6.30, R. H. Rosetti, a Lecture.
 WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.) : 7, Miss K. B. Kough, a Lecture.
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